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## Ethnography and Analysis of the Effects of Racism and Creating a Black Family Tree

Courtney Garvin

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Ethnography and Analysis of the Effects of Racism and Creating a Black Family Tree

A Capstone Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements of the Renée Crown University Honors Program at  
Syracuse University

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and Renée Crown University Honors  
May 2016

Honors Capstone Project in Communications & Rhetorical Studies

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## **Abstract:**

This research looks at the effects slavery and racism has had on the ability to make an accurate family tree. This research is spurred by both the desire to document my family and by the unfortunate events of the Mother Emanuel AME Church massacre on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in Charleston, South Carolina. Using archival research, interviews, and family documents to build an accurate family tree, this research looks at the ways in which systematic oppression has played a generational role in my family. By looking at my own family for this research, I look at the stigmas, behavioral, regional, and generational differences that affect my family and relate to a larger Black community. The photographs taken as part of this project are from the series *In These Clasped Hands*.

## **Executive Summary:**

This project is a research based independent study that analyzes the steps and research involved in creating a family tree for a Black southern based family in the United States. The U.S.'s 400 year long history of chattel slavery has created and upheld several forms of institutional oppression. Some of these institutions include redlining, the school to prison pipeline, the U.S.'s war on drugs, and use of stereotypes to racially profile and subject Black bodies to police injustice. Defined by the 2015 Oxford Dictionary of Geography, redlining is the "Limiting or charging more for things such as banking, insurance, health care, or even supermarkets, to people who live in what are seen as high-risk districts. 'The practice originated in the 1930s, when federal agencies encouraged lenders to rate neighbourhoods for mortgage risk. Since the 1960s, especially in the US, it has been associated with disinvestment, racial discrimination, and neighbourhood decline. It has always been viewed as a feature of the inner city'" (Mayhew). Some of the laws passed as part of the War on Drugs include a much harsher sentencing for those caught with small amounts of the less potent crack cocaine than those caught with large amounts of the more potent powder cocaine. This unfairly targeted poor and Black communities where crack was more accessible than powder cocaine.

The effects of racism continue to negatively impact the lives of Black Americans while benefitting the lives of white Americans. One of the ways that racism has continuously affected Blacks is by separating the Black family. With this research I attempt to look at the ways that systematic oppression has played a role in my family throughout different generations. By researching my own Black family, I sought to build my own family tree while looking at the physical, tonal, and generational behaviors of some family members. To do this, I conducted

interviews of three family members including my mother, uncle, and my great-grandmother. These interviews were audio and video recorded in their homes. In addition to the interviews, I observed family members during conversations on and off camera and found documents such as census records, death records, newspaper clippings, and obituaries. Using these methods in conjunction with each other, I was able to fact check information from oral history and written documents and build an accurate family tree. These methods also lead to identifying and analyzing some of the stigmas and cycles that racism has forced on my own family that are also found in larger Black communities.

One of the goals of racism has been the erasure of Black history. This research serves as a platform to archive oral history within my family and leave behind a tree that can continue to be expanded upon by myself and other members of my family. A large part of this research calls for dialogue and discussion between different generations. This project has the potential to foster an environment that provides the opportunity to learn about how family secrets and cycles came to be, the ways it affects family members, and possible ways to dismantle or cope with them.

## **Acknowledgements:**

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## **Chapter One: Introduction:**

The United States has a long history of racism and racial injustice that has yet to fully addressed. Being one hundred and fifty years from the emancipation of enslaved Africans has not erased the attitudes and actions that allowed the institution of slavery to exist and prosper for almost 400 years.

My mother has many sayings but there is one in particular that sticks with me. “Energy is never lost, it’s transferred,” has always been said to me as a reminder to put positive energy out into the world. Similar to the Golden Rule and the concept of Karma, she believes that what you put into the world comes back to you. However, this same statement applies to how race culture, and class is and has been exploited and manipulated in this country. My mother’s saying can also be applied to the ways in which racism has bounced between de jure and de facto forms of segregation. For almost 400 years enslaved Africans were separated from their culture, traditions, practices, their land, their religion, their names, and their families. They were deprived of an education, freedom, humanity, and autonomy over their own bodies. Viewed as property and subhuman animals, enslaved people were chained, bred, beaten, whipped, maimed, branded, sold, raped, humiliated, lynched, and used as both bait and target practice.

The United States is built on the backs and necks of my ancestors and breastfed and raised by my foremothers. I have always found it interesting that slave owners have characterized enslaved people as animals but sexually assaulted and raped of Black bodies. This contradiction suggests a tension and intersection between religion, bestiality, and perversion.

I began my research by looking at how Black families were portrayed in different visual mediums in the U.S. throughout history. I later decided to examine my own Black southern family. The self serving and patriarchal systems of the United States are built on the guise of protecting the safety and honor of white women. This guise has long served as the excuse for violence, racism, and the creation of stereotypes against Black bodies. Black men are often generalized as savage, sexually driven, lazy, strong bodied-weak minded individuals; while Black women are seen as too strong, emasculating, angry, hyper sexualized individuals who will breed Black children that will grow into one of these categories. These stereotypes, created to maintain and justify racially charged oppression and violence were damaging before slavery, during slavery, after emancipation, throughout the Civil Rights movement, and remain detrimental today. Although today whites do not own slaves and Blacks are not brought over chained together on ships, the impacts of slavery and racism continue to disproportionately benefit white people at the expense of Black people.

In a time where social media is prevalent and news and information is directly accessed by everyday people, the result gives people who have been silenced a platform to speak out. With the ability to interact directly without government mediation, we end up with a front row seat to brutality and violence. Social media also provides access to a community that shares allegiance for protest and a drive to create change. Through this network, peaceful protestors in Ferguson have learned to flush their eyes with milk after being teargassed by cops who were ready for war. This access to information has allowed us an unfortunate opportunity to bear witness to the assault of Black bodies while often times only hearing the story from the perspective of power. It has been a place to express the anxiety, stress, frustration, and negative effects that these experiences have had on us.

As has been proven throughout history, there are few places where Black people can feel safe. From slavery to the Red Summer of 1919, which resulted in the deaths, injuries, and homelessness of over 1,000 Black families, to the 1921 bombings of Black Wall Street also known as the Tulsa Race Riots, Black people have been forcefully and systematically stripped of their rights. The school to prison pipeline, redlining, de jure and de facto laws of Jim Crow also play a role in oppression. The brutal and disfiguring murder of 14-year-old Emmett Till in 1955 for flirting with a white woman and the 1963 bombing of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama also serve as examples.

Recent incidents include the 1991 beating of Rodney King by police officers. The fatal shooting of Oscar Grant III while he lay handcuffed on his stomach<sup>1</sup>. The killing of Tanisha Anderson by a Cleveland officer who slammed her onto the concrete, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, and Dontre Hamilton. John Crawford III was shot in an Ohio Wal-Mart for carrying one of the guns sold in the stores sporting section. Dante Parker died in police custody after the use of a stun-gun, the police shooting of Ezell Ford, and Akai Gurley who was shot by a patrolling officer when he entered the stair well of a residence in Brooklyn. Tamir Rice, a twelve year old boy was shot and killed in a park, Trayvon Martin while walking home, Romain Brisbon was shot due to an officer mistaking a small bottle of oxycodone for a gun.

Phillip White died in custody after being hit by police and attacked by a police dog. Jarame Reid and Tony Robinson were unarmed and killed by police. Eric Harris was murdered by a reserve deputy who mistook his gun for a Taser. Rekia Boyd was shot in the head by an off-duty cop. Walter Scott was shot in the back as he ran from an officer, who then attempted to stage the crime scene unaware that he was being filmed. Freddie Gray died in custody after enduring spinal cord injuries from police. Bettie Jones was shot in the neck by officers dealing

with a domestic violence call at her neighbor's house. Leroy Browning, Tiara Thomas, Yvette Smith, Cornelius Brown, and Jamar Clark were unarmed, shot, and killed by police officers. Chandra Weaver and Stephen Tooson were both killed in officer related car crashes. Michael Lee Marshall died after being restrained by police. Alonzo Smith also died in police custody. Yvens Seide, Wendell Hall, and Christopher Kimble, were struck and killed by police vehicles. Anthony Ashford, Paterson Brown, Keith McLeod, India Kager, Shereese Francis, Tyree Crawford, and Felix Kumi were shot and killed by police.

Christian Taylor, who was also unarmed, was shot and killed after hours at a car dealership. Asshams Manley, Troy Robinson, and Michael Sabbie were killed by police. Samuel Dubose was shot and killed during a traffic stop. Billy Ray Davis, Darrius Stewart, Albert Davis, Sandra Bland, Jonathan Sanders, Spencer McCain, Zamiel Crawford, Jermaine Benjamin, Kris Jackson, Alan Craig Williams, Ross Anthony, Bryan Overstreet, Terrance Kellom, David Felix, Terry Lee Chatman, William Chapman, Samuel Harrell, Norman Cooper, Dominick Wise, Brandon Jones, Anthony Hill, Bernard Moore, Naeschylus Vinzant, Natasha McKenna, LaTanya Haggerty, Jordan Davis, Timothy Russell, and Malissa Williams, are only some of the unarmed Black people who have been killed in various locations. With the historical use of stereotypes, such as in *The Birth of a Nation*, we end up with descriptors of Black men in particular as demons, sex driven, and violent. The result includes having young boys portrayed as grown men such as twelve year old Tamir Rice described as a man "possibly in his 20's" (BBC). All of these reports position officers who are armed, some with a history of violence, as people who were terrified and in fear for their lives because they were in the presence of Black men and boys. While these officers are allowed to be afraid, they survive and live to tell their story. Black

people end up broken and battered, and often times their dead bodies are left lying in streets, homes, stores, libraries, parks, and churches, like a dog in the street.

On June 17th 2015, I woke up to an empty house and news of a racially fuelled massacre that took the lives of nine men and women at Mother Emanuel Church AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, fifty minutes from where I was staying. Reverend Clementa Pinckney, Cynthia Hurd, Reverend Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Tywanza Sanders, Ethel Lance, Susie Jackson, Depayne Middleton Doctor, Reverend Daniel Simmons, and Myra Thompson, were murdered by a young white man. Mother Emanuel Church has long been a site of refuge for African Americans dating back to the early 1800's. The shooter<sup>2</sup>, targeted a historically Black church, acted as a friend, sat in and participated in prayer service, almost changed his mind, and then opened fire. Almost immediately my Twitter timeline erupted with anger, shock, and hysterics- all things I also felt as I scrambled to figure out if the five-year-old girl who played dead to survive was my little sister. Realizing where I was in South Carolina and the fact that the gunman was still on the loose, I thought it best I stay inside. Despite the many photos that surfaced of the killer surrounded by confederate flags, a debate ensued between viewers and news outlets about whether or not the massacre was an act of racism.

Two days later as I was driving for a previously planned trip to visit my grandparent's graves, my sister and I stopped by a street sign with our last name on it to take a photo. I noticed a man come out of a driveway further down the road who immediately turned around upon seeing us. Being aware that the neighboring town used to openly welcome and host KKK meetings, I felt extremely uneasy. My first instinct was to keep my sister safe so I rushed her into the car and sped off down the road. As soon as I pulled off, my sister pointed out there were two men swerving down the road after us. Once we arrived at the church grounds, the men circled the

premises, waved, and drove off. If I hadn't tried to get away quickly, I could have ended up in a similar position as a 14 year old girl from McKinney, Texas. This documented attack took place earlier that month. It involved a teenage girl who was attending a pool party in McKinney, Texas being roughly forced face first into the dirt while an officer kneeled on her back. When her friends, who were also dressed in swimwear, approached her while she was being held down, the officer pulled out his gun and threatened to shoot her friends.<sup>3</sup> In the weeks following the Mother Emanuel shooting, at least eight Black churches were burned which continued to foster an environment of fear.

After the tragic events of this summer, I began to research organizing my own family tree and how racism and racial injustice has played a part in their lives. Using archival records and family stories as a way of verifying information passed down through oral interviews, I am examining how the multigenerational experiences of Black men and women in my family serve to represent a part of a larger Black community.

## **Chapter 2:Methods:**

Using ancestry.com, I began to create my maternal family tree by filling in known relative's names and their relationship to me. Ancestry was also used for document analysis. As part of my document analysis, I returned to South Carolina to visit the Department of Archives and History in Columbia. Using their databases, I was able to find numerous records and documents for the residents of surrounding areas. A second research method included talking to family members and conducting interviews. I was able to discover birth or death dates, residences, and information on their relationships. As I uncovered more generations through

document analysis, there seemed to be less information from oral history. As a way of fact checking the information I was getting from relatives, I cross-referenced documents found on ancestry.com. These documents include census records, death certificates, military records, and information regarding residencies. When ancestry's archival documents could no longer further my research, I began looking through the obituary collections of my grandmother and great-grandmother. By doing this, I was able to locate the names of deceased relative's parents, siblings, children, and spouses. Obituaries became a key part of continuing my maternal tree when memory was no longer enough.

Upon returning to New York City in mid July, I continued to work on my family tree and learn about the lives of family members. While I was doing this, the reports of unarmed Black men and women being abused and killed by police officers remained continuous. Sandra Bland and four other Black women including Kindra Chapman, Joyce Curnell, Raynetta Turner, and Ralkina Jones were all found dead in their cells in July of this year, at the hands of police. Sam DuBose was shot in the face by a University of Cincinnati police officer, who pulled him over because he said he was missing a license plate. In support of the officers pro confederate rallies continued to take place and discussions with members of different generations showed varying thoughts regarding topics such as police brutality, crime, respectability politics, hair, and more.

In the interviews conducted, I had a list of questions with some topics that I wanted to cover. I started by asking about family lineage, residences, childhood and regional experiences. In addition, I gave my family a chance to tell the stories they found important in relation to the topics at hand while probing into their stories to pull out information that would also help build a stronger family tree. This work is important to me because it takes both document analysis and oral history to create a tree. I also took portraits of family members and landscapes as a part of

visually documenting my discoveries. This research served as a way for me to get closer to my living relatives as well as learn the history of where I come from. More importantly it serves as a form of historical information that can be shared, built off of, and referenced in a society that tends to erase the history, traditions, and influences of Black people.

Each interview is video recorded, transcribed, and then color coded to represent emotions and give human characteristics to the speakers based off of tonal and behavioral communication analysis. The emotional coding key goes as follows:

Orange-embarrassed

Green-joy

Purple- frustrated/ confused

Blue-Positive reminiscence (eyes usually going back and forth off to side)

Pink- reluctant/ uncomfortable

Aqua- calm, reflection or silent thinking

Burgundy-dismissive

Yellow-Audible internal monologue

Lavender- Admiration/ Appreciation

Red-shock

Coral- non-pleasant memory recall

Beige- Nonchalant Storytelling

Transcription symbols were determined based off of data and work done by Gail Jefferson and Dr. Jeffrey Good. The key for the transcript is listed below:

Underlining: Vocalic emphasis.

(0.0) Timed Pause: Intervals of silence occurring within and between same or different speaker's utterance.

↓ ↑ Arrows: Pitch resets; marked rising and falling shifts in intonation.

(( )) Double Parentheses: Scenic details.

( ) Single Parentheses: Transcriptionist doubt. Inaudible Speech.

### **Chapter 3: Interviews & Transcripts**

#### **Interview #1: Jennifer**

In an interview done with my mother Jennifer, we discussed some of her childhood memories, raising a Black son, as well as her views and experiences with police. My mother was born in Bronx, New York to my grandmother Gracie but was raised in Denmark, South Carolina by her grandparents, Carrie and Arthur who she refers to as momma and daddy. My great grandparents raised her, my Uncle Ronald, their three remaining daughters Marilyn, Alfredia,

Mable, and their nephew. In the following transcript of this interview, Jennifer is referred to as J, and I am shortened to M.

Start video 8957

M: So the first question is um how did Granny and their family, uh end up where they are in South Carolina now?

J: In Denmark? Well my understanding is that daddy, great granddaddy to you got a job in Aiken um he was working at DuPont so he left first.

M: I'll ask the question again how did Granny and the family get to where they live now in South Carolina?

J: Ok. Daddy um he started- he came first. He went to DuPont where he got a job and then once he got a job and got lined up he had to try and find someplace that was economical or very cheap I should say for him to live so that's when he got set up in Denmark and then later on he went and got momma.

M: But do you know anything about where he was coming from before, where Granny came from before?

J: They came from an area, another poor county in South Carolina cus I think the county they moved to was Bamberg County and Bamberg County was one of the poorest in South Carolina and the one they were coming from was one of the poorest. Um I think it was near Hemmingway and Kingstree area, Johnsonville area. That's where they were coming from that's where they grew up. That's where they were born and he got a job in Aiken so he moved the family – he moved momma there and that's where they lived. No other family members were there at least not on their side.

M: Where did he work?

J: At DuPont in Aiken.

M: What is that?

J: DuPont. ((slight frown)) **Is a huge um company actually um** I don't know if he ever invested in their stock but he was there- **I never knew what he did there until basically he retired.** He was in maintenance.

End Vid. 8957

Start vid. 8958

J: **And we lived in a section of Denmark called Sato at first um there were some houses lined up like rock houses.** Um I didn't know that um it was probably considered a **mini ((wide eyed, air quotes)) project** maybe **but we lived there and from there we moved down the street into a big house with a big backyard.** And that's where I remember um most of the childhood during the elementary school years. It was there-

End vid. 8958

Start vid. 8959

J: But um- um let me see. Also after we moved from Sato area and moved to where Granny now lives, and that area and one of the things I can say I remember about growing up there- There are two things I can say that have impacted my childhood or adulthood I should say in regards to living there has been um **I don't usually buy generic brand food** and I think that stemmed from the fact that- **keep it real here-** my granddaddy who I called daddy-

M: **You don't have to explain who they are.** I'll do that when I write it out.

J: **-Oh-** went to um Red & White this grocery store and had brought groceries for I guess his girlfriend, his lover, his whatever you wanna call it. And evidently momma found out

about that- she found out and she went up to the grocery store and she went in the grocery store and he came out- he didn't come out with groceries. So we went in got the groceries and that was the first time I knew that Jiffy actually had peanuts in its peanut butter. I couldn't understand how he could purchase groceries for some other woman that's not his family and we would eat the peanut butter that had the grape jelly in it. No name brand peanut butter ((frowning looking up to left)) . So that's one thing that really impacted me as a child. Another thing is when we moved to the other house. I – we now had access to several phones whereas before it was just one phone. Now having access to the phones, if the phone rang and you picked it up you don't necessarily hear at the beginning whether or not someone had picked up the phone. Here is the reason why I don't eavesdrop. My grandmother told me that eavesdroppers never hear anything good. That happened to me because I heard my granddaddy on the phone with some woman and well at 13 I didn't know any better, I ran and told her exactly what I heard. I saw the hurt in her eyes and from that --((sigh))- that hurt that I saw on her face, from that point in my life I think I was about 13. I had decided that I would never go with anyone's husband because I did not want to cause that type of pain to anyone the pain that I saw ↓. ↑ And I figured that since he was cutting out for so many years that it wasn't an issue and nonetheless to my surprise it really was. She was really upset about it. I did learn if you have reason to eavesdrop I guarantee you not going to hear anything good. I don't eavesdrop but I'm not nosy either.

M: ..right.

J: But those were some of the things that I recall growing up when we actually got there to Denmark.

M: What did you mean by going out?

J: What do you mean?

M: You said that he would go out. What do you mean by go out?

J: Can you complete the sentence that I said?

M: No. You said (0.2 )that he would go out-

J: -Oh he would go out. Oh I was trying to put it nicely he would come in from work. He would shower, get dressed, and he would go spend the rest of the evening with his woman. And he would come back in maybe at 3 or 4 o'clock the next morning and he would shower and go to work. He always went to work and would work but when we lived in the old house I don't recall him spending any nights there except really Saturday night because he would always go to church on Sunday. And it's amazing he would always go to church on Sunday ((looks to her left)) and he loved cars but he would never wash his cars on a Sunday. Interesting. He had a girlfriend at the church too.

End vid. 88959

Start vid 8961

M: Go ahead.

J: I grew up with my aunts there was 3 of us that were there in the house besides my brother (in that town/time?) I recall that- my aunts saw physical altercations between momma and daddy. Me and my brother by the time we were coming up, we never witnessed any of that.

M: They fought? Like each other?

J: I don't know if she fought but I definitely heard about licks that she received from him. And I don't mean the type of licks like a lollipop either. Um I do recall one day my aunt sailing

a frying pan at him but I think that's the last time maybe he attempted to um strike my grandmother. I think that's the last time he attempted to strike her. I do recall one time she said that um she had used his car cus he would park his car up at the gas station in town cus (they parked/) and she said she used the car, went uptown in the car, came back. He found out that she used the car, came back, took his foot and kicked her. And that same leg- that he used to kick her is the same foot he used to drag. That foot, I don't know about how long after that he drags with now, when he was living, was the same one he had used to kick her. One of the things um in that town that we grew up with because of the struggles that she had, she worked in the cafeteria, um as a cook and she- it was important to her that you know all of the children got an education. She said where could I go cus I asked her well why didn't you leave? The funny thing about me asking her why didn't she leave, she said where is she gonna go with her 4 head of kids. She wasn't gonna go back on her mom. So she couldn't necessarily say she was gonna go and marry somebody else. There's people who do things to children that's not really nice and she didn't wanna take that risk. Well she said she would just stay there and deal with the brunt of what it was. But she wanted to make sure that her children got an education and we all did- every last one of us um- Gracie, you know, I think she got some college, but all of us graduated with college degrees and we basically all have our own homes you know um so that was a good thing.

M: Didn't granny have her cosmetology license?

J: She did! And I didn't find out that until I was an adult, had already left home, been married I didn't know. So I guess that's why I understand why she felt the need to straighten my hair. When she would do it, I would go down- the fact that the fire and

grease that would pop, it was like torture for a child to get their hair straight. But that's part of the culture there in the South. They don't like to see what we call kinks or naps. They have an aversion to it but they don't and that's exactly why now you know my hair is locked. I'll throw on a wig at times but a perm or a straightening comb will not touch my hair again and hasn't since I was 30 and I'm now 47.

M: I know how old you are.

J: What else with regards to that town and I do believe that some of the things that my aunts saw have affected the way that they live out their life.

M: Like what?

J: Umm, I think that there are some issues that they have. I think there's issues that all of us have, everyone have, it's just whether or not you decide to work on those issues ↓. ↑ But (0.2) I think um it has had some type of effect on them. I think they've stayed in marriages that weren't necessarily uh (0.2) healthy for them. Not to say that, you know, there weren't some physical altercations, you know, I can't speak of that necessarily but I know that there were situations that wasn't healthy but they remained in them. And myself, uh I recall when I left my marriage and I wasn't being physically hit or anything like that but it was just I didn't want to be there. They were all just stunned ↑ and thought that I was making a wrong decision that I really needed to rethink that because if I was being taken care of ↑ and I wasn't being hit or you know (shrugs) (0.2) there was no reason for me to leave. Why would- happy? What is that? That was (0.2) a concept that I think was kind of foreign to them. Um whether or not you were happy in a marriage shouldn't necessarily (0.3) –

M: -Be a factor.

J: Consider. Be a factor. Um but I just couldn't live my life like that so I did leave.

M: What were (0.3) What were- was important to them aside from being taken care of I guess?

J: As long as the man was able to you know provide. Um and the men that they married were providers they were able to provide. Uh they weren't alcoholics because that was one thing about daddy too he did not drink um so that was a good thing because I don't know if the drinking and the womanizing would have been a good combination. You know.

M: Mhm.

J: I recalled a conversation- I – odd to say I had a good relationship with daddy. Um I remember him one time he asked me, this is after the time he had gotten older and you know life had done slowed him down a bit, so he wasn't out chasing the women now, and he asked me did I like him. And he said because my brother had said no one liked- no one in the family really liked you.

M: **Uncle Ronald said that?**↑

J: Yea Uncle Ronald said said yehh wehll, you know Uncle Ronald and him had exchanged some. He said "Nobody in the family don't like you anyway." And he asked me – he was like "Jennifer" he said "you know Ronald said no one in the family really likes me. Do you like me?" I said daddy you know? I don't like the things that you've done and the things that I've heard that you've done (of that nature ↓). I said but I like you. I like the fact that you're a straightforward person. If he says something, and I think that's where I get some of that from, is straightforward it's to the point. I don't see him lying. You may not like what he has to say but I could never really call him a liar or say that you know what he lied. You know. He did what he did and if you asked him about it he would say whatever he wanted to say about it **but I never would um necessarily consider**

him a liar. I have some (0.2) good points about, you know, he helped me with my science project. I couldn't draw and I won. We went to the state fair. I didn't win when we got to the state but um you know I recall also gardening. I would go and meet him at the end of the road on Thursdays so I would get my little five dollars allowance. And even when I went off to University of Georgia he would come and he would actually um pick me up when I wanted to come back um (0.3), come back to Denmark. So (0.3) my grandmother said that out of all of her children that he did the most for me. But I remember the first time I saw him cry ever was when his mom died. (0.5)

M: What was his mom's name?

J: Mary Eaddy. (0.2) Um I asked momma again why did she um she stayed with regards to that. And she said he wasn't always like that. Cus I wanted to know that too.

End vid 8961

Start vid 8962 (1 second)

Start vid 8963

M: You asked her if sh-he was always like that?

J: Yea I asked her if daddy was always like that. Um she said "no he wasn't" (0.3) When he went into the army and he'd – he would send his money back here to his mom and he thought she was saving that money and when he got back he realized the money was all gone. (0.2) and from my understanding, she- he didn't like what she did with the money.

M: His mom or Granny?

J: His mom. And she said that did something to him and she think that's where it started. The funny twist is that even though I knew what momma went through (2.0) (coughs, then frowns) from a 7<sup>th</sup> grader's mind I told her I was glad that she stayed. (↑) Umm I said

because I had a chance to have him around (0.2) and I don't know if that was a good thing to say but it's just from a 7<sup>th</sup> grade standpoint, and I don't consider myself a selfish person, even then selfish but maybe because I didn't actually witness any of the physical altercations (0.3) I might have been more free to say that because he did contribute certain things and you know brought certain things to my life that I really enjoyed as a child.

M: Like what? Besides the drawing?

J: Gardening we would do the gardening. I wanted a dog , a puppy he was the one that went and got my puppy. Um we went tot raffles with the church, I would always win most of the time. I remember one time in his church they were were raffling a TV. I told him make sure he come back with my TV, I did win the TV. Like I said my science project. I couldn't draw. He was really good at drawing. He was really good. So the things that I needed on my poster board for my science project and things of that nature, he did. And my favorite types of foods you know we liked okras, we planted. We actually um planted a garden together during the summer and it was really nice and we watched it, you know, grow and things of that nature. Those particular things I really did enjoy. I enjoyed the walks (0.2) coming from meeting him at the end of the road (0.3) on payday and it wasn't just because it was payday but I mean that helped. (Laughs) But I did enjoy the walks you know and carrying the lunch his um lunch container and we walked on back to the house. I appreciated his straightforwardness. I think that's one of the things I did appreciate with regards to him. I may not like what he said but most of the time I, I, I, would not classify him as a liar.

M: Why do you think Granny never left?

J: I know she didn't leave because she didn't have the economical means to support herself and um her four children. He did have a good job. They had good benefits um down there you know Blue Cross & Blue Shield-

M: Do you know if um Granny's family ever left her anything because didn't her parents own a store?

J: Yea! Uh from what I understood about momma's mom and dad. *If it's any person in life who I would want to meet it would have been her dad. Because he owned a store and not only did he own a store, you know, he had his farm, he left his 13 children 93 acres of land. So-*

M: -Is that the Burgess Estate?

J: Yes. So when I think about that and I think about (0.2) now times now and what are people leaving back here for their children or (0.2) if they're saying times are difficult and I do believe that times could be difficult in different aspects but (0.3) I, I just really couldn't see making excuses for not accomplishing and doing things when I know that someone back in the 1800's um was able to, you know, acquire, you know, he had the land.

M: What kinda, how did he get the land?

J: You know I'm not sure how he got the land. But I do know he had it. He had 93 acres and I'm not saying it was in the richest of the neighborhoods *but he had something that he left back here to his children. And momma did say that in the area that they grew up in um there when she was a child (0.2) was um their family was the first Black family to have a car.*

M: What kinds, do you know what kind of store he had?

J: Well I know what candies. I know he sold, I know candies was part of it because I think grand um Gracie she would always say that she would always go to the store and stuff and she would get something so I don't, I don't exactly know everything and stuff that he sold. I know he used to cook too so if he had cooked and I assumed that he had cooked for um white people and stuff at some point. Um that but I do know he had enough children to help do that um (0.3) to do that farm. Momma was the youngest so she was responsible for cooking. I know Aunt Daisy always said that was hard work out there on that farm so she must've been field help ooo. But um-

M: What was his name?

J: I don't remember what his name honestly I don't. I know her mom name, **Richard! It was Richard and her mom name was Viola. Richard Burgess.**

M: you were talking about (0.5) um relationships in the family.

J: **(Sigh)** (1sec) Yes um I think I've been pretty fortunate whereas I get along with a lot of the members of the family. **But I do think that there's some dynamics between me and um (0.2) my mom and I (0.2) and which some people would say is natural – and it probably is natural but I do believe I was watching Iyanla and, and then I started piecing things together.** She's helping people with fixing certain things in their life or at least bringing things to the ↑ forefront and addressing those issues.

M: I know who Iyanla is you don't have to explain her.

J: Oh.

M: You're talking to me.

J: Oh. Anyway (0.4) **I looked at a pattern with regards to Gracie. And with relationships. Every relationship that she's had has been with a man (0.3) the relationship has been one of**

betrayal. (0.2) There is a huge pattern of betrayal there and I have to assume that it stems from something that happened in her childhood. It has to be because I can't possibly see how you can go, you're in a relationship for instance, let's say my brother and I, you know, let's say our dad was Theodore. Ok now. It's said that his dad is really Theodore and my dad would be Alexander and they're brothers. So if that's the case you know then that means she was with two brothers. Umm where was the line of boundaries there? She told me it was Theodore who was my father but my birth certificate doesn't have a name on it. But yet there had been talk with regards to that Alexander may have been my brother and in essence-

M: Your father.

J: My father. And in essence I think that may be true (0.3) because I shouldn't say because his favorite color is yellow and mine is((( (head leaned over looking off to her left))). But I know nothing about him but I do recall about him Gracie receiving a beautiful yellow blouse and then out of nowhere, and like I said I didn't know him, by the time I had moved upstate New York (0.2) you know, word had it that he died and she called me↑ to tell me he died and I saw absolutely no reason for that because I really didn't know who he was, had no relationship, had no conversations so I didn't see the point in her telling me um about his death. So↑ that was one thing with regards to relationships. Then (sucks teeth) (0.4) Outside of the relationship with regards to our father and then she moved and then you know had a relationship with um-

M: When you say our father, you mean...?

J: Me and my brother.

M: You said our father. Outside of your father so you mean Theodore Richberg?

J: Our father, yea. And you know my brother. Our father so when I said our-

M: -I didn't know if you were talking about Granny's husband or-

J: - No I was talking and stuff about biological

M: Ok.

J: My brother and I our biological father so. And I really don't care who he was honestly. I'm

just glad to be here. I was glad not to be aborted Woo↑hoo↓. Glad to be on the earth,

you know. (0.3) The next step would've been then my sister's and there was an eight

year gap with Kim. Her father. He was married. He was a married man. He was a

preacher. So where are the boundaries with regards to that? I know it takes two to Tango

but you know you decide whether or not you want to you know keep the legs together or

not but. Then from that there was another relationship.

M: Aunt Kim's dad was a preacher?

J: The irony of it all. Yes (laughs). He was a preacher. He drove the trains but he was a

preacher as well and I guess that was something-

M: Where?

J:- that was meant to be hush hush. In the city. In um the city.

M: Was he ever around?

J: Around whom?

M: Y'all. When you moved up to New York. Did he have a relationship wi-

J: -Oh no.

M: Aunt Kim?

J: Well he did see Kim every blue moon. And you know Gracie had said that once she was 18

the social security stopped when he died because I think that she always remembered that

Reagan did something to change it so that kids couldn't get the social security after they was 21. It was like they were 18 and that was it. So she remembered that. When he had passed and then his wife didn't now because she didn't find out til Kim was getting his social security, part of the social security.

M: (popping sound)

J: So um (0.2) that was a betrayal. Then there was a relative in the family.

M: Did grandma know he was married at the time?

J: Yea↑ she did and even momma had said when Gracie brought him there, had spoke to him and say "You have nothing to offer my child, cus you already married, except a baby. That's all you got." And sure enough a baby was offered. We had Kim. Woo↑hoo↓. So anyway um. From that! Then there was a relationship with Aunt Daisy the betrayal that came there cus Joe↓. Joe used to come around Aunt Daisy.

M: The relationship with Aunt Daisy?

J: well Joe used to come around and visit Aunt Daisy. Joe became her boyfriend and-

M: Visit, wait. He was visiting who?

J: Aunt Daisy. He would go and visit, visit with Aunt Daisy.

M: And then he became ↑grandma's?

J: And so then you know he saw Gracie and they started talking (0.4) and then next thing you know him and Gracie was an item. So I do believe Aunt Daisy had liked him and they were I don't know if they were trying to get something going but um (0.2) and here was a man and that was a betrayal cus I do believe that she had cared for him and she didn't put boundaries with regards to that. Everything couldn't be blamed on naivety, she's naïve

cus you think when you're young. I, I, I don't think that was the case. So. Then when I moved to New York and Joe asked me to be his girlfriend.

End vid. 8963

Start vid. 8964

J: -That have to have a male in their life and I think she fell into that category because she didn't feel that she was complete or whole if she didn't have a male as a partner. Um on her arm . So the information that I told her um when I was in high school. I was a junior in high school, just came to New York, loved the high school I was going to. I did remember telling um momma about it and momma said "well Jennifer you come back home". So I do know I recall that I went and stayed with Aunt Daisy and um for a while. Before even doing that (0.4) uh (0.3) he, I told her what he said "Oh you came and flagged my bus down and all and all" and talking about this or that. Now she-

M: What?

J: I told Gracie that when I spoke with him and when he asked me to be his girlfriend he was like "yea your mom comin here and stuff, you know, I didn't even want to talk to her. She flaggin my bus down tryna get me to stop by bus" you know and I told Gracie that ((hands for expression, looks down to her left)), part of that information I told her too when I told what he had asked me with regards to being, you know, his girlfriend. And years later she came back and said Jennifer you know I realize you were telling the truth cus there's no way you could've known that I went to where his bus, where his bus route was and was tryna flag to stop his bus (get his bus down?) I said but I told you that at the same time that I told you what he said. So it was evident that you know it's just that you

chose not to process that. So because of that mainly there's another betrayal with regards to relationships. Joe also was married. So he was married-

M: What?

J: And I told her well what's going to happen and stuff, something happen he's an older person also, get something out of the deal you know. Sure enough when he passed away his wife came along, she had to get out of the apartment because his name was on the apartment. So the betrayal, here's another person that's married and here it is that you're going, here's a person that I think Aunt daisy and stuff was fond of and liked (xx xx) and then that. And then here is a person that said certain things to your daughter and your daughter expressed and told you that and you still went and you got in the bed with that man. So I look at that and I say wow look at the pattern. Then you went and you did eventually, you know, get marry, and you're married, she married another- not another, this is her first marriage, and she married um and when she married this man who I think was you know, I think he was a wonderful, is a wonderful um person. I love him to death. (0.2) But ↑ there's another betrayal. ↓ She worked with the man's w..um wife. She worked with his wife, they used to hang out together, they'd go to (bars?) together and then next thing you know now she's married. She's, she's married to him. Not to say you know when I spoke with him he was like you know if the relationship wasn't good you can't say that I left my spouse and stuff because of that but it wasn't working out for me and he waited til his kids were a certain age and stuff basically finish high school or coming out um before he left. But my thing is still where are the boundaries? Why do you have to have to go around someone who you work with and hanged out with's spouse? It's just when I

look back at it now I just see a pattern of betrayal is there I am certain that in her youth, in her childhood (0.3) somebody betrayed her.

M: Do you think it had anything to do with Granny's relationship with um grandpa Arthur steppin out?

J: You know, I don't think-

M: Because wasn't she the first kid?

J: Well the first one that really survived.

M: Yea so.

J: Right. But um, I ↑ I don't even really think it's that. And you know, I, I was around daddy and I heard him, I heard him talk and although he was a womanizer and stuff like that I knew he didn't do anything and stuff (xx). But I do believe it was possible that she may have went to Hemmingway to where, uh, during visits while she was down there in Hemmingway. I-

M: Visit who?

J: Gracie. I believe when she was younger she wen to Hemmingway you know where her mo, her grandmother lived and I do believe that something happened to her while she was there.

M: Her maternal or paternal grandmother?

J: Maternal. Momma's mom.

M: Oh, Grandma would go visit.

J: (Nods) When she was young and I do believe that something happened. I do believe I think Aunt Daisy was back there already and I do believe that something happened to her there.

And when something happened somebody betrayed her and I think that's where that pattern of betrayal has come. And ↑ I asked her if anything has ever happened to her, you know, even and stuff if it was the brothers, if she went with the brothers and stuff. Honestly and stuff, you know what? I could care less. I'm just happy to be here. Something needs to be done with regards to that and I do think that I will have a conversation with her at some point and with momma because I do believe that momma has to know something. Um with regards to that as well. I do believe that but there are other family members they have their issues something too and I think those issues stem from (0.2) , you know, the household they grew up in in regards to, you know, some of the physical violence. I do think that it's played a part. (Is?) overall through um the childhood I know my childhood was really pretty good there. I'm thankful for you know actually growing up in a little, small, rural town. Um and then coming to a big city with having a sense of right and wrong. That appreciation for a small town.

M: Have you ever asked grandma about Theodore?

J: Um, she told me how he died. I asked about that, I knew, oh I could tell you about a situation where, oh my goodness ( hand to mouth) um (0.2) (sigh). I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and you know we were you know, so much happened in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and I look at my life now honestly-

M: What happened in 7<sup>th</sup> grade?

J: Starting at 7<sup>th</sup> grade so many things happened. Well we moved, found out with stuff, oh one person I was best friends with and you know, her boyfriend wanted to talk with me then we broke up as far as being friends ad we were extremely, extremely close.

M: Who was that?

J: Sheila , Sheila Hartwell.

J: Um (0.1) then (0.4) the cycle came at 13 you know, we, it was a lot.

M: In them Jordache jeans.

J: Yea. **In my Jordache jeans** but at least it was the end of the day. Um so a lot of things did occur with regards to that **and honestly I can trace things back with my life. I can do 13 then I can add years to it, add those years 13 to it. Add another 13 and stuff, and I can tell you at different times of my life from adding 13, different things were going on in my life every 13 years. I could see. So I could see a pattern of things** so that's why when 52 comes. 52, 51, I will be on the lookout with regards to decisions that I will personally be making.

M: Wait. **But I asked you** about Theodore and you started with you were 13 and something happened.

J: Ok um, with Theodore grandma didn't Gracie didn't really say too much other than the fact that he (0.4) **oh↑** I was saying I was 13 because he, not only was grandma pregnant with Uncle Ronald, he had another woman pregnant so Uncle Ronald was born in September. **The other girl he had pregnant was born in August.** And then they said that me and this particular girl looked alike. So when I was 13 in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade (0.3) , **she come and she have a baby and she had brung the baby up to me at the school** saying "Oh. Say hello to your aunt!" **I thought I was gonna fall through the floor. Because I was like-**

M: Wait. How old was she? Uncle Ronald's age?

J: yea. Her and Uncle Ronald were the same age.

M: **So** ...she was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade?

J: Yep.

M: And she found you...

J: She knew. And there was a resemblance now. But then there's a resemblance with all of the um Richberg clan there. But yea she, I was so embarrassed. So I mean other than knowing that there was a sister there named Vanessa so I knew about Theodore having another child. I knew he was coming home and he was home cus he was out of the military visiting and he was going back so he was going to a party and he was running from the cops or something they said, didn't stop, and hit a tree, a huge tree on Voorhees College Rd. and it had a big dent and I know they were talking about how his body parts, intestines were scattered all over the street and they had to block the road off and, you know, for days. And the dent was still there, I saw the dent when I was coming up. Other than that, I don't remember too much about him. I know Uncle Ronald said he, Ronald says he remember going to the funeral. I don't remember. I do remember being in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and some of them coming over. Well the aunts and you know, the uncles something coming over and I do remember um his mom and his dad going over there and stuff to visit. You know, every blue, yellow, orange, or green moon. Um but other than that it's not too much, it's not too much that she had said about him. Oh did she tell me, "Oh I loved him"? "I just loved your daddy to death or"? No. But what I heard was that those Richberg guys, boys were fine. A lot of girls wanted them so I guess a lot of girls had them and they had a lot of girls.

M: When I met Leon he said that um Granny used to come to their games. They played sports?

J: Ye- now one thing I do recall um form them telling me is that Granny was huge on sports with regards to like basketball and things of that nature.

M: I didn't know what sport he was talking about when he said games.

J: I'm gonna assume it was basketball because I know Mable played basketball. I do know as a child growing up she allowed me to go to every single basketball game that I wanted to. Couldn't go to all the parties, they said couldn't be a party girl, you can't be at a party every weekend. So you go to a party this weekend, but not the next weekend, the next weekend, but not the next. But the games? You could go to the games whether they were home or away. She allowed me to go to the games. But other than that, no I don't know too much, much n' stuff about Theodore other than that. I really didn't. ↓ I didn't see Gracie telling too much. And I was one of those kids and people (coughs), I was one of the ones who was like , you know, if you didn't really do anything for me when I was small (0.2) I really have no need for you when I become an adult, you know, so. I mean he died and I , you can't miss anything from death, you never knew it, or you can't miss what you didn't have. So um that part didn't (0.2) that part didn't really (0.2) interest me at all. I was being taken care of, you know, and I was pretty ok with that.

M: Have you ever had, you told me once about somebody called you in 7<sup>th</sup> grade.”

J: **That's true.** I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, see so many things happened in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. I tell you. I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and there was this, I think that the boy's name was Kevin. And he called and he told me that “Oh. I'm your um I'm your brother”. And (0.2) I took offense to that because he called and asked to speak to me, he overlooked Ronald. Now that I come to think of it, maybe he was overlooking Ronald for a reason. Maybe he was Alexander's child. I don't even know but I took offense for the fact that he called and

he didn't say um oh- He did not ask to speak to Ronald. He went, came, and wanted to speak directly with me. And I'm like well if you're my brother, then Ronald is your brother too.

End vid 8964  
Start video 8965

M: Continue.

J: The bottom line is I told him that my brother lived in the same house that I did. And I didn't know who he was so I would appreciate him not contacting me again. I'm not a huge fan (0.2) of children (2.0) just because they have the same father or same mother but they don't live in the same household, reaching out and contacting kids. Once they become 18 to me that's different but as you're- that's just too much. Um I think that's that was too much. And the fact that he didn't ask to speak with Ronald and Ronald was oldest I just didn't see any reason. Like I said my brother lived with me I didn't see anything that I was missing.

M: What was his name?

J: I ↑ think his name was Kevin. If I'm correct I think his name was Kevin. And not to be rude I know he was like wow she was so rude. I bet you he never called again though.

(Laughs and smiles)

M: Do you know anything else about Theodore Richberg's death?

J: His dad?

M: Theodore Richberg's death?- or his dad. You could do that too.

J: Well ↑ I told you about his death. They said he was leaving a party, they were celebrating the fact that he was getting ready to go back to the military, go back into the army.

M: He was in the military?

J: Yea he was in the army.

M: I didn't know that.

J: I do know he was in the army. My understanding was since he (0.2), he (0.2), since (0.5)

**his name was not on our birth certificate.** I, I don't- it's some story behind momma and daddy going over there to the house and Gracie was pregnant or whatever. (0.3)

I guess some words were exchanged. Because if we could've been receiving some type of benefit because he served in the military. His children would've been receiving some but (0.2) to my knowledge Ronald and I didn't receive anything um.. momma didn't get any thing with regards to that. **So I believe that there's some issue**

**around that. I do believe that there's some issue around that um I do believe there's something more to that than um (0.2) more than people are letting on** and after that

I, I don't think. I think they said um oh no we don't wanna be bothered with you guys or something of that nature and like I said first time I um saw any of them, I was in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. (0.3) As far as his brother and hi- his sister. But you know I liked the sister when I had met her and the brother and stuff seemed ok.

M: Which brother?

J: I remember Thomas. Thomas lived there and um in Denmark. And I remember Azilee because she was named after her mother and she was the only girl.

M: Mhm

J: And I remember um his dad. I remember going to see you know his dad.

M: Wait you went to go see them?

J: Yea↑ I went and visit them several times. Um.. several, **I shouldn't say several**. Several um  
I guess within a certain span. Ten time? No. Eight? No. Maybe in my entire life maybe  
four. Um

M: What was that like?

J: Oh it was comfortable. I felt welcome. I remember one time I was mad at momma I was  
like oh well, we got another set of grandparents now. I could move over here. Oh they let  
me now real quick that that was not an option. (Laughs) Really quick. “Well yea I know  
you get upset with them and stuff you know that’s to come. Alright, come visit me  
again.” That was a clear sign. Clear sign. Clear sign but um, no I didn’t know. Other  
than that. **I heard that he would hit on his mom when the dad was away because the dad  
worked also on the railroads.**

M: Theodore?

J: Yea I heard that and if that was the case, you know the Bible says honor thy mother and  
thy father the days will be long. So if that was the case his days couldn’t have been  
long. If he was doing that to his mom. You know. 0.5 Other than that, I never heard  
Gracie talk to me about him to tell me that she loved him or 0.4 or how they met or  
how she came to you know be with him, or none of that information. And you ↑ know **I  
never really had a desire to know. I really felt like I didn’t miss out on anything so I guess  
you know, cus if the question popped in my head I guarantee I would’ve asked it but  
(0.2) it never really popped in my head. (0.5) The only one I knew that I think that she  
said that she really loved out of all of them was um Kim’s dad. She said she loved him.**

M: The pastor?

J: Yea. (1.0)

M: I never knew he was a pastor.

J: Mhm. You live and learn girl. Live and learn. (0.5) One thing I could say and stuff with regards to um, I know that the betrayal is there and I know that she has um issues but one of the things I give her credit for I think that she, she has been –and she did say that you know she knew she was not the best mom. She did, you know, supply us with the materials and stuff that we needed, you know, as a kid. Clothing and things of that nature and stuff. Um she did try to expose us to certain things uh but she was as far as, ↑ as far as I'm concerned I think she was a fantastic grandmother. You know given that she got a couple little issues maybe a marble here or there might be loose ↑ but um I think she was a really, really good grandmother. (3.0)

M: Have you ever had any interactions or altercations with the police?

J: The police?

M: Yea or have you witnessed anybody that you know have anybody that you know have any with them?

J: No. I hear it on the news all the time. I ha-

M: I said anybody you know.

J: I ↑ haven't really had any altercations with the police. I remember um Marilyn was telling me at one point in time about an altercation and stuff where the police had pulled her over. I think she said Quincy was really small or something and the cop went to, you know looking or checking on something with the car and went to reach- she told him not to touch him. "You don't touch that boy." Um something of that nature but I haven't had any altercations (0.2) with the police. (0.4) I'm fortunate.

M: What about the time they came here?

J: Well it wasn't my altercation. The police came here because of ohh my little sweet son Solomon. I actually was going because I was being a foster mom for the first time and I was going to buy some balloons form Wal-Mart to welcome the foster kid that was coming. So I left Solomon here with you um where you were to come on the bed and I he's accustomed to being around me so if he got off the bed and I wasn't there I'm sure he went looking for me I didn't know he would do that. And the little fellow went looking so that he went outside opened the door and was sitting on the steps. You know looking. While I'm at Wal-Mart tryna get things for a foster kid who's gon be coming here cus we had so much room and stuff with the house so I said why not, and I'm putting up balloons and all. SO I guess you know the police came and spoke and stuff with you with regards to why the kid would be out there and stuff it's dangerous. But DSS did come but they found absolutely nothing. **They (0.2) actually said I was an outstanding parent just for even considering taking him back. Um.**

M: Wait. **What?!**

J: -to the doctor. "You go to a doctor? Your doctor's all the way in Westchester County" cus that's where we lived. That's where you went. "You would drive that far to take him?" And then we spoke to Dr. Saeed as well and you know she said, "**she's an excellent mom**". I don't do drugs. I don't smoke. I was nursing him too evidently I wanted **something that was you know healthy for him.** The little fella you know he just felt the need to try to find me I guess and you know just sat out there. But other than that I had no altercations with the cops. You know. They might have wanted to arrest you up in there.

M: What about the other time? They did not want to arrest me. I was in pain and I was asleep.

J: ((Laughs)) But no, there was no altercation. That I have had with them.

M: What about when they came for the car?

J: Oh!!↑ Well, of course, you know there was a time I was up here and I was um out of work and if you're working and you have a car note, and I did have a car note (0.2) but

End vid. 8965

Start vid 8966

J: Ok yea. There was a time that actually that I- Oh↓ that I called the cops to the house um .

You know I was um out of a job you know they let you go. It's a little challenging up here, upstate New York, with regards to finding employment even with all the education and experience that you have um (0.2) the opportunities does not come, present themselves I should say easily uhh for my African American brothers and sisters. But anyway so. I was out of work you know I was let go they did downsizing and I was of the, you know I'm of the belief that you know you work and you pay for what it is that you have. I had a car. I'm like I'm not working but the car was almost paid for and I knew that when I purchased the car it was something that was affordable. That I could afford. (0.2) So when they were coming to try to get the car, it was parked in the back of the gate. I'm like I know, I had my blue car, you know, the little dodge neon, and I tried to keep that car for as long as I could without buying another one. But I had to go back and forth to finish that Master's so I had to have a car, so that's how I purchased that van. But (0.4) in the loop of things they were downsizing and (0.3) I'd already paid on the van for years so the people came to actually repossess the car and this was with capital one. They came, they had the people came there and you couldn't get through the back of my gate now. The fence is very um high and it's locked. And I see somebody as though they're gonna crawl. Even if they crawl how were they gonna get the car out? There

was no way they were gonna do that. They would have to break, and I know that's against the law. So I'm like oh let me just call the cops here. And one thing about it, I do like the area we live. Called the cops and the cops came and the cops told him no you can't do that. You can't get back there because that gate is locked. Now if you had a court order or something like that you know you didn't have to. And I knew I didn't have nay reason to sit and engage them in conversation because there was no law telling me I had to speak to the people. The repo people. I can just not pay them any attention because the company itself if they wanted to take me to court they could do that. So↑ I eventually called capital one and they told me how much was needed. I do recall incidents where my daughter who was not accustomed to such things, you know, I wasn't accustomed to it but you know I had to go with the flow.

M: I'm right here.

J: I remember she wasn't accustomed. Yes you Courtney. I guess she got afraid and she called the family. Now I could have reached out to family and with regards and stuff to help, or I could've went into retirement funds to get that. But I wasn't gonna, do that. I left it right back there for a while because I knew that an opportunity was gonna present itself where as I would have funds again and be able and stuff to work something out. So other than that I had no altercation. I had no altercation and something did get worked out.

M: Well didn't you try to get them off of the property at first?

J: Didn't I? Oh! It's true. I actually told them oh you have to get off my property you can't get back there behind the gate. And they (0.2) politely looked at me and these were white, Caucasian men who said "Oh you don't own this property. You're probably just renting from here. It's not your property." I said oh you probably right. And that's when I called

the cops, and they did get off the property because they had no reason to be on here if they couldn't get back here. If it was out on the street or something of that nature but it was completely locked you couldn't get back in that gate. There's no way unless you would actually break something and you can't go breaking property and stuff to do that. But yes they didn't feel that an African American woman would have you know, the house is large it's a two family house but again then it's affordable. I am educated I did have a good job and you know I was working at the time. That was (0.3) more than enough with regards to paying a mortgage. I got something that was affordable. I always say based on the fact that I was a single parent that I, I would not get a mortgage that was(0.2) more than more than what I would get in unemployment. Should I not, find myself out of work. Since I was you know um a single parent and basically that had worked and stuff for a bit but I've had no other altercations. The cops and stuff actually when I had called them here. They come like that ((snaps)) and they helped and the person had to get off the property.

M: Do you know of any altercations anyone in the family has had besides Aunt Marilyn?

J: (2.0) Honestly I really don't. I don't know of any altercations with the cops. I know there a lot of things that are going on in the news and I do know that we do live in a um **we live in a racist society our country and stuff, we do. There's still a long way that we have to go** (0.3) **but there are people and stuff who are, you know, there are Black men and Black males and stuff** even though they have a hard time catching a cab. You out here tryna signal one they may not necessarily come **but there are many who have not been in any trouble at all with the police.** Have not. Some have not had any necessarily bad experiences with the cops. **You know, maybe with a cab or maybe going in the store.**

Now I can say going in the store you may have people following you so I don't know which is worse. But maybe- with the ones in the store following you at least they're not beating you across the head or shooting at you and tasing you. I would say that the cop experience would be worse but no I have not had really any altercations with the cops where they were um not helpful.

M: Um, you've said before that you wanted to get a camera in Solomon's future car. Why?

J: I wanna put a camera in his future car because he's a Black male child and um (1.0) evidence is out there of how um society and the cops treat you know Black males. And the camera in the car would help in regards to should anything occur it would be some type of evidence to help support should Solomon not be doing anything that he shouldn't be doing. Um but help support or at least help present what actually happened.

M: Have you planned to have the conversation with him?

J: Oh I've planned to have- oh yes indeed. The objective would be for you to remain alive. So you do what you need to do to remain alive. So when they come, you make sure and stuff your hands, I think it's 12, 6 or something like that. ((steering wheel hand motion))

M: Ten, three?

J: It could be that.

M: This is twelve, and this is six. ((Demonstrates hand motion))

J: Ok no. Your hands don't need to be down low Definitely not twelve, six. You sure it's not nine and three?

M: Might be. Nine, ten, it's closer than twelve and six.

J: I had heard of this and stuff ((steering wheel hand motion)) lately but I would have the conversation with him. The conversation would be your main objective is to stay alive so to stay alive it's not about whether this is right or this is wrong. The objective is to stay alive. So to stay alive this is what you need to do.

End video 8966  
Start Video 8967

\*Video starts at 1:40

J: Even when I was in the US on the university of Georgia campus they were helpful. Even though I bared in mind that you know momma said that twenty years ago they didn't even want you here on the campus. But um they were helpful. I think I couldn't get one of my locks open on my closest door. I couldn't open it. I called campus police they came. I looked at them as helpful. At the time, I looked at cops as helpful. (10.3) And in a way I still do. There's some bad seeds in all. There a lot but um I do believe and stuff that there are some cops that wanna do what's right. And I do believe that there are cops who are huge fans or maybe even KKK who wants to hide behind the badge and just continue you know to do, you know, the things that they have done to African brothers and sisters.

M: How do you feel about um (0.5) the killings that have been happening in the past (0.5) is it two years now?

J: It's been happening.

M: But especially since Michael Brown was shot. Cus I was abroad when it happened, that's when I first found out about it.

J: I feel sad. I can't even say I feel hopeful. I feel sad about the situation. I feel sad. The only thing that I can really think of is what is it that the Black people or the Latin people

or the ones who have not (0.3) had any real altercations with cops what is it that they can share, with other minorities to (0.3) help better the situation. Two, you may have where it's a lot of cops where it may not be patrolling and stuff the neighborhoods that some of these people have been in certain areas like Black communities they definitely patrol the areas and look for situations and stuff to do so. It's sad I don't feel as hopeful. I do like the Color of Change. I do believe that that organization, not much so the NAACP, I think the Color of Change has done a lot more I feel with regards to getting organized, getting us together with regards to signing things, calling you know calling on our senators, calling on the congressmen, calling on these people with regards to have change. I do believe that the younger generation just is not gonna tolerate certain things and stuff that other generations and stuff may have. And I think that is what's gonna help move things forward.

M: Any final (0.3) thoughts, statements about anything that's been covered so far?

J: (10.0) Any final questions? I don't have any um-

M: That was my final question.

J: Any final thoughts about what has been covered...

M: Anything you want to add that you may have left out?

J: (5.0) Life is what you make it. ((laughs)) Oh no she didn't! **I don't think there's anything else that I can think of.**

M: A family story I don't know, an event, some...one's name who I might not have added to the tree yet?

J: It can't be on momma's side of the family because so many of them have passed. Just you know seeing where um the other side the Richberg side of the family. You know I

actually- I have something to say. (1.0) It's still rolling? Oh um. You know I never was the type of person to really go looking for people who like I said didn't really have a part and stuff in my life when I was coming up. I think that, you know, when you're raising kids and doing a lot of hard work and so you give kudos to the ones and stuff who are there and involved. And as I'm getting older I'm changing some. Um you know I did have a conversation with my aunt and she was like "Jennifer, you know they did try to reach out to you guys and stuff". They did and you know once you get to a certain point in your life, you graduate from school, you get on living your own life. But I do feel like this is 2016 and I felt this way the latter part of 2015 too that I would actually reach out to them. And actually I look forward to you know, actually building a relationship with some of them. I saw that Leon, who actually used to live in New York and then where he lived and moved to Brewster I had considered actually living in Brewster at one time in Putnam County. So I see some similarities there. He's now in North Carolina, and I had considered and stuff at one point in time moving to North Carolina so and know the sister's in Georgia so, I do- I actually can say that you know, because I know they're not looking for anything from me and I'm not looking for anything from them, I think that it's, I think that the timing is good to actually form a relationship with them. And I can guarantee you that um I'm gonna learn more, and I actually think that they're gonna have some answers to things that I didn't even think I had questions to.

M: What changed in 2015? (0.4) For you to want to do that?

J: It's just the fact that once you have children and they start um (0.2) prying, prying isn't the word. When they start you know when I have children such as yourself and they

start wanting to know information you know about the other side of the family and things like that. Then that's when I think that brought it home to, you know maybe I should, you know, reach out and stuff and see what I can, with regards to them and speak. And like I said especially if you know they don't want nothing from you and you don't need nothing from them, I think that that's a good premise to build a relationship on knowing that.

M: Alright. Thanks.

### **Interview #2:**

In an interview done with my Uncle Ronald, we discussed some of his childhood experiences, growing up in the south, and his experiences with police and the justice system. My uncle was born in South Carolina to my grandmother Gracie and was raised in South Carolina by my maternal great-grandparents, Carrie and Arthur Eaddy. He grew up in a household with my mother, his aunts, and cousins. In the following transcript of this interview, my Uncle Ronald is referred to as R, I am shortened to C, and my Aunt Angela is referred to as A.

Orange-embarrassed Green-joy Purple- frustrated/confused Blue-Positive reminiscence (eyes usually going back and forth off to side) Pink- reluctant/ uncomfortable Aqua- calm, reflection or silent thinking Burgundy-dismissive Yellow-Audible internal monologue Lavender- Admiration/ Appreciation Red-shock Coral- non pleasant memory recall

C. Um can you tell me where you were born?

R: ((flipping through Bible)) oh I was born in South Carolina and it's a little town called Bamberg where is Bamberg hospital is that's where I was born. (0.5) Um 9/23/(0.2) 67.

C: And what were your parents' names?

R: Oh my parents, (10.2) ((closes eyes)) My mother, my, rather my father (0.5) name was Theodore Richberg. ((opens eyes, looks to his left)) And my mother ((looks at me)) (0.3) Gracie (0.2) Eaddy ((looks up)). We had, (0.3) I didn't know too much of my father because earlier he had a very bad accident in life and (0.2) you know ((hand motions)) because of the accident, I didn't get a chance to (0.3) know him ((looks at me)), learn of him that much. So (0.3) you know it was (0.4) my mother and my grandmother. (0.4) Mhmm. ((looks down into Bible))

C: Annnd, what were your grandparent's names?

R: My grandparents. (0.2) ((puts head back, closes eyes)) My grandmother's name (0.5) on my mother's side was Carrie Eaddy. And my grandfather's name was Arthur Eaddy. ((looks down to his right))

C: Do you know anything about your great grandparents?

R: Uhh ((looks up)) no. I never could, I never had any relations with my great grandparents but there is on the wall ((looks past me at wall)) in the house a picture, ((slight smile)) a very big portrait picture of my grandmother's mother and daddy on (0.2) the (0.2) wall. And it's like in a marble frame ((uses hand to demonstrate oval shape of frame)) and (0.2) it is whew (0.2) magnificent.

C: Do you know what their names were?

R: Uhh. My great grandmother, her name was (0.5) Ms. Viola Blow. And my grandfather, I didn't really know his first name but he was supposed to have been a Burgess. (2.0)  
((smiles))

C: Do you know what they did? Cus I think my mom was saying that, that they had a farm  
((Uncle Ronald looks up and to the side thinking)) and a store.

R: Well from (0.2) ((looks up)) my recollection, they lived and they worked the farm (0.5)  
annnd they had (0.3) if I'm not mistaken (0.3) about ((smirks)) (0.3) eighteen  
children. ((eyes widen))

C: ((shocked whisper)) Oh Jesus.

R: ((laughs)) Yes, so-

C: That's a lot.

R: (10.3) ((smiling)) They could roll. ((Laughs))

C: And uhh what was your childhood like?

A: ((Walks into room))

R: My childhood, well, I could say my childhood it was, it was, it was (0.2) fun ((smirks)). I  
could say it was, it was, it was fun. I really did enjoy my childhood a lot when I was  
coming up. I had a lot of persons that I affiliated with. ((looks at me, smiles)) (0.3)  
Young children (0.3) as well as older. (0.3) ((looks toward Aunt Angela)) And I  
remember I received a lot of toys.((laughs)) At the Christmas time and on birthdays  
my mother always (0.3) send boxes of toys and clothes. Me and my sister. and it seemed  
like we always, the Lord blessed, we always had. ((head back looks at me)) And (0.3) I  
was very thankful for that because a lot, I look and see, a lot of kids - even of today, you  
know when time comes around, (0.2) they don't get a lot of, of things.

A: Excuse me, are you finished with this? ((holds up plate))

R: ((shakes head and mouths no)) ((looks down))

C: What was it like growing up in the south?

R: Ohh first thing I could say was hot. ((laughs)) Hot, hot, very hot. But you know especially in the summertime, in the summertime ((looks up)) it stayed hot ((shakes head)).

((Looking up and to his right)) And being that it stayed hot, I stayed outside. A great amount of time outside and you know, the children or the other persons in the neighborhood they had children and we all like friends you know and we'd be walking up and down the streets and talking, playing, going from house to house. And it was fairly, it was fairly good down- we had a lot of training too by our neighbors you know it wasn't like today (0.4) um how (0.5) there's only 1 person or 2 persons in the home that could train a child, but your neighbor too back then, they could train you also. If you did something bad they had a right to chastise you. ((laughs)) Where today, they don't do that of today but back then if you did something wrong to your neighbor, your neighbor really (0.2) they could chastise you but the bad part about it, you (0.2) it's hopeful if you did not pray, not pray rather, did not hope that they told your parents by the time you got home. ((Laughs)) Because that was, it was another ((nods)) (1.0) another spanking. ((looks down and to the side))

C: Did that happen to you a lot? ((laughs))

R: Ohh, oh oh man. Did it happen to me? I had many many experiences when I was young coming up ((looks up)) and being chastised like that (0.3) ((inhales, smiling looking to his left)) I can remember a time when I was coming ((smiles)) through the window, (0.3) and I was halfway through the window ((gestures smiling)) and it was at nighttime

and I was trying to get back in the house. And we had a green chair. And my grandmother was sitting in the green chair and it was very dark in the house. And as I was coming in I was trying to make sure that was not her or if that was her. And as I was easing towards her, it was her and she snatched me and beat me coming through the window. ((laughs))

C: ((laughing)) Where were you coming from Uncle Ronald?

R: I was coming out, I was coming from outside because I just loved to, when I was young I loved to play and just basically you know have fun back then you know. There was nothing you know to you know so much as do (0.2) and so much as in going to the stores of like of today you know, we couldn't do that. And you know your mother always told you if you don't have the money when you go in these stores, you don't need to go in these stores.

C: Yea.

R: So, you know, it was very good, you know. And it was loving. It, it, it really was. ((Looks down))

C: Uhh can you tell me anything else that you might know about Theodore Richberg?

R: Uh, ((puts head back looks up)) well he was, being that he was my father. He was in the Army for a length of time. How long? I do not know exact. And you know as I said I was very young when the incident that he had been through happened. So you know, I cannot really recollect that I knew or have a lot of knowledge of him. But you know it was me, my sister, my grandmother, my granddaddy, my aunts, and cousins ((hands moving while speaking)). And you know we all grew up together and you know ((throws hands up, looks up)) (0.4) it was you know, like every I guess every other household you

know. We all had our differences but you know we got along and we loved each other.

((looks down to side))

C: Yea. Umm (0.5) Do you know anything about the Burgess Estate?

R: Do I? ((looks up)) No, no. I normally, you know it was my grandmothers, my grandmother's and (0.4) her brothers and sisters you know they (0.2) tended to that and I somewhat laid back without you know going you know in detail with it.

C: Have you ever witnessed or had any encounters with the police or the justice system?

R: ((eyes widen slightly)) The police? ((wide-eyed looks up)) Uhh I don't remember.

((Looking to his left)) Yea as a matter of fact I did have a few ((frowns)) encounters with the police. It was not a drastic encounter but it was an encounter dealing with my sickness. I have epilepsy and I was in the store and my grandmother also, she was in the store with me (0.4) and I fell and I had a seizure. (0.3) And I, as I fell ((hand motions)) when I fell on the floor and I was having the seizure, the older lady, she was more or less about 72 years old. (0.4) she , she said that I tried to touch her.

((disappointed/ upset expression)) Like, excuse the expression, like wow, ((laughs))

C: ((laughs)) What?

R: ((Laughs)) Like wow what could I get? ((Laughs)) Yes and when the encounter of that was over with you know all that was like washed out because you know like there was nothing about that. The other one was when I later on in life got married and I was at the (0.3) barbershop, and I (0.4) got sick in the field, and (0.2) you know something you know very drastic happened. You know, I had a very bad seizure outside and I was in the field and I was walking. And I don't remember what really happened but

when I, I (( hand motions)) somewhat came out of it, I just saw the policemen there and they were taking me to the county jail. And I had handcuffs↑ on me ((frowns and scrunches up face)) and that's something I have never, it seemed like I have never had play play handcuffs on me ((laughs)).

C: ((slight laugh))

R: And as that was happening, and I was being transferred from my house to the local jail, the policeman that was taking me, um (0.3) you know because I'd never been in no police car before. There was a little screen ((outlines screen with index and thumb)) in the back where the window was and ((slowly drops hands)) he was saying some very drastic things to me. Like telling me to be quiet and shut up and, and some very other drastic things I'd rather not say ((looks to the side)) to me. And I was asking him why? Why are you doing this? And what he did, he sprayed mace in my eyes. ((Starts messing with hands))

C: What?!

R: Yes. He sprayed mace in my eyes. And you know later on,(0.3) which was not that long, I got that incident, my family thank God, helped me and I got that incident all cleared up (0.5) and you know ((throws up hands)) times have been steady ((hand motions)), steady moving.(( looks up at me slight smile))

C: Um you told me once about like the incident with the woman who was driving while you were on your bike.

R: Oh yes. I can remember, I can remember that. I was on the opposite side of the road and it was at night and this lady, she was a worker also with my grandmother. And my grandmother even said herself she's blind in one eye and had four cataracts in the other

heh eye ((laughs)). And (0.5) she, came over the yellow line in the road and she hit me over there while she was going, and it knocked me about 45 feet up in the air. And-

A: ((shocked whisper)) -45?!

C: Jeez

R: when I came down I was like somewhat out of it but I was still conscious. And later on I went to court and we got all that settled up and every since I been, you know I been going, and I guess going and going and going.

C: And uh one of my last questions is what is your general attitude towards the way that police enforcement is working now?

R: Well,(0.3) you know my attitude about the police is they are, ((looking up and to his right)) I think they are going about things not the right exact way. You know I believe if they would let you know society itself help them you know things would be much more better because it often makes me think sometimes that I could've been out there on the streets on drugs or dealing you know with things like how a lot of people on the streets deal drugs and you know I could've been out there. And that's why you know I don't look down on people that's all the time, doing drugs but you know when I was in school I did a lot of praying. I prayed to have me, my (0.5) I can say, my wife. How I can say it, although she wanna rattle me sometimes. ((Laughs)) I love her to death. ((laughs)) And you know I prayed to the Lord, for her, I prayed to the Lord to send me, (0.2) her and that I may progress, and go on in life, and that I may get to know the Lord more, and he blessed me with her. And you now, with her we have three children. I have DeKoven Selph, I have (0.2) my boy which everybody always saying is my boy because I look, uh sh-he looks virtually just like me, and a little girl is just I don't know. She has an IQ of I

don't know what. And can talk. Put me in the mind of someone else I know. (0.3) I believe I, I sleep with them. ((laughs and looks at Aunt Angela)) I love her.

A: Leave that mouth cackle (xx) the question she asked you for. That ain't got nothing to do with the question she asked you.

R: But I love her. I love her and I thank God you know for being, (0.3) for being who I am because you know back to the question that you had asked me. I myself you know, I could've been out there on drugs and you know the police you know a lot of times they don't always do things that's right. ((Eyes widen)) They often, they do things that's wrong and then society itself lets it go by. But you know, I think that if we went about it in another manner and especially a Godly manner I believe things would be mucchh much much better. Because you know the more it is together, the less weight that you have. When everyone is together we're all strong. And I believe it would be a much better society if, you know the police and the people would you know put full force onto you know the system, you know and you know when I say put forth in the system. Put forth in helping, helping do these things. Everything would be soo much better. (0.2) Mhmm.

C: Thank you!

### **Interview #3:**

My last interview is with my great-grandmother Carrie Burgess Eaddy. We talked about some of her childhood memories, and reviewed names, dates, and relationships between deceased family members. As the oldest living family member on my mother's side, I asked her questions to help verify and double check information I found from archival documents. My great grandmother was born in South Carolina and raised my grandmother, my great aunts, my

mother, my uncle, and helped raise a number of cousins.. In the following transcript of this interview, Carrie, who I call Granny is referred to as G, and I am shortened to M.

Orange-embarrassed Green-joy Purple- frustrated/ confused Blue-Positive or neutral  
reminiscence (eyes usually going back and forth off to side) Pink- reluctant/ uncomfortable  
Aqua- calm, reflection or silent thinking Burgundy-dismissive Yellow-Audible internal

monologue

Lavender- Admiration/ Appreciation Red-shock Coral- non pleasant memory recall

M: The first question is where were you born Granny?

G: Hmm?

M:(raises voice) Where were you born?

G: Ok. (0.3) You ready?

M: Yep

G: ((shrugs & looks at me)) My name is Carrie Burgess Eaddy. I was born in Hemmingway,  
South Carolina December the 27th 1925.

M: And what were your parents' names?

G: And my parents name is Richard Burgess (0.2) And Viola Blow Burgess.

M: Do you know what your grandparents' names were?

G: My grandparent's name was- my mother father was Richard Burgess. (0.3) ((puts palm  
to face)) I'm sorry.((chuckles))

M: It's ok!

G: My mother's father was Nero Blow and her mother was Cora Blow. (10.5)

M: Umm (0.5) What was your childhood like?

G: ((rubbing eye)) Hmm?

M: ((speaks louder)) What was your childhood like?

G: Huh?

M: ((speaks louder)) What was your childhood like?

G: (0.3) My ch-((little sigh)) I ain't get my daddy father n mother's name.

M: Oh! Ok sorry.

G: ((laughs)) (0.5)

M: What's their name?

G: My father name was, my father (0.2) no, how do I say?

M: Grandfather?

G: Oh. My grandfather name was Sharper Burgess and Lucinda Burgess.

M: Inn....

G: (1.0) ((starts rubbing hands together, looks off to side)) Made too many mistakes.

M: No-

G: Ok. ((purses lips))

M: What was your childhood like?

G: My childhood was (0.5) ((still looking off to side but raises eyes some as if replaying memories)) very good. I had good parents and uh they didn't beat me up (0.2) like they beat my other sisters and brothers. ((laughs)) and ((looks back at me)) I was a nice child cus I didn't like to get no beatings.

M: How many brothers and sisters did you have Granny?

G: And I enjoyed my childhood. ((Looks to her left slightly)) **Playing with my little nieces and nephews cus I ain't had** ((looks back at me)) no younger sister to play with. All of them was older than I was. (2.0) ((looks down relaxes face))

M: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

G: I had four (0.5), **four** (0.5), four brothers and ten sisters.

M: ((laughs)) (0.3) What was it like growing up with a bunch of siblings?

G: Well I was younger than any of them and I didn't grow up in the house with the older one.

My older sisters and brothers I didn't grow up in the house with them **cus when I c-born they was or some of them was already grown and married and had they own family.**

((crosses arms and sits back))

M: Uh, my mom said that uh your parents had a farm and a store?

G: ((tilts ear towards me)) Hm?

M: My mom said that your parents had a farm and a store?

G: A store?

M: Mhm.

G: We had a little side store. With little **candies and cookies and cheese and crackers and uh taturah chips** and uh bologna, and drinks. (0.3) And uh me and my sister we were workin

in the store and I would just take things and **eat-**((laughs))

M: ((laughs))

G: - **and didn't pay for em.** ((laughs)) **That was, I loved it to go in that little store. Yea**

((smiles)). **My sister say "You can't be eatin all that now, you have to pay for it."** I said **"You don't you tell if you tell I'll tell you that wasn't so."** ((smiling looks down and back at me)) ((half shrugs and smiles))

M: What kind of a farm was it?

G: Well ((starts rocking side to side slightly)) we had a tobacco farm, cotton farm, corn, and everything that grows on the farm. ((stops rocking)) We had watermelon we had cantaloupe we had cucumba, we had peanut. We had peas and butter beans n collard greens and cabbage. White potata, sweet potata. We had all of that to grow on the farm. We didn't have to buy none of that so we give God thanks for that. ((looks to side))

M: (0.4) Uh what was it like growing up in the south as you got older?

G: Well, I enjoyed it while I was there. But after I got grown I was glad to get away from that farm. ((laughs and looks straight down))

M: ((laughs))

G: (2.0) ((brushes off pants))

M: You got yourr(0.3) you got your cosmetology license right?

G: Yea. I uhm after I finished school, I wanted to be a nurse and my mother and father didn't have the money to ((shrugs shoulder)) send me to uhm, to college to get a education from being a nurse. So, I went and I took up cosmetology. Doing hair. And I worked for a while and then after that I got married and I still worked for a while after that and then (0.5) I stopped. Because when my husband come from work a lot of times I be doing hair and didn't have dinner done so I had to stop ((smiles fidgeting with arm)) (0.2) doing hair and that was that. (( quickly looks off to the left side and smiles)) (4.0)

M: Umm (10.5) Do you have any (0.3) stories that you want to share?

G: Hm? ((tilts head down to hear better))

M: Do you have any stories that you want to share?

G: (3.0) Well uh when me and my sister Daisy and Edith, we was the three youngest ones at the house. And when momma, my mom, my mom and dad would go to a funeral or go off and we know they was gon stay off a long time, we'd catch a chicken off the yard and put him in a box and put a quilt over him and cover em up (00.5) and make em lay a egg.

M: ((laughs))

G: ((laughs loudly))

M: I didn't know that's how you made chickens lay eggs.

G: yea we'd smother em down in the box and they laid an egg. And when we think momma 'n them was coming back we'd take 'em out the box and shoo em under the house. And uh that was that. ((smiles))

M: Have you ever had any encounters with the justice system?

G: Hm?

M: Have you ever had any encounters with the justice system?

G: Any what?

M: Encounters (0.3) with the justice system.

G: With my sisters?

M: No, the justice system. Like legal.

G: ((Turns head to one side and raises hand to ear))

M: ((speaks louder)) Legal. Like the legal system (10.5) Like the police and like legal files.

G: (10.5) I don't understand you darlin'

M: Like have you ever had any encounters with the police or like legal fil-

G: Oh no no no, we never, we never. All us grow up together we never had no kinda with no police or no nothing. No drugs, no nothin. We went to church every Sunday and we just had a good time and enjoyed, had a good time (1.0) enjoyin church. We had to walk a mile to church and a mile back.

M: Wooh

G: Mhm. (3.0)

M: Can you tell me about the Burgess Estate?

G: Well the Burgess Estate. We had (0.3) 92 acres of land. We all grew up on and uh we was the first in that (0.3) little,(0.2) little town to have a car.

M: What kind of car was it?

G: It was a, uh ((frowns)) T model, a T model Ford. And we would all get in and go to church on Sunday and anybody we passed, as long as they could stay in the car, my dad would pick them up. And we was just like sardines in that car.

M: ((laughs))

G: Goin to church. We lived a mile from church but we got all everybody packed up in there. My daddy said “everybody that can get in get in” and we went to church every Sunday and we enjoyed service. I enjoyed Sunday school and I enjoyed church. ((looks past me lips pursed))

M: Which church did you go to?

G: I went to Bethlehem AME Church (10.5) in Hemmingway, South Carolina.

M: Was the, the Burgess Estate in Williamsburg? Or Hemmingway-

G: -Yea. In Williamsburg. No it wasn't in the city limit, wasn't in the city limit. Lived seven miles from, seven miles from the church-from the town, the little town.

M: Do you know how, how he got the Burgess Estate?

G: Well he, my daddy inherit the Burgess Estate by his daddy. Sharper Burgess.

M: Do you know how Sharper Burgess got it?

G: (5.0) Well, (1.0) part of it was left to my daddy after he died. After my granddaddy died.

Then um later on up in the years, my daddy brought some, 53 acres of land. And we had that. So, I considered that we were rich back then ahaha ((laughs)) ((earring falls onto lap))

M: ((laughs)) yep.

G: ((smiling)) We had a good time you know, ((playing with earring in hand)) in the tobacco, the corn, the cotton, the other thing. But most of the time, since I was the youngest I did all the cooking. Cooking the dinner and the supper and um ((pits earring back in ear)) one day I was in the field cus I didn't wanna be in the house I wanted to be in the field where all my momma and my sisters were ((re-crosses arms)) cus I wanted to hear what they had to say.

M: ((laughs))

G: And, I went in the field one day and I chopped up all the cotton. I chopped up to try and stay ahead with them and my daddy come in the field and said "Viola" that's my mom. Said "This girl here, is choppin up all my cotton. I can tell every row she been on." Said "She got to go from here. You got to do something with that." ((looks down)) So momma said well I'll tell ya "Carrie you go to the house and you be the house girl. You cook dinner and supper." And I went to the house and I sit down on the steps and I cried and I

cried. And After a while, I said now (1.0) if I don't get up here and start that dinner, I'll have something to cry about. If momma come out that field. Cus they always knock off at twelve o'clock and go back at one. So, I stopped crying ((looks at me)) and I went on in the house and I start dinner. *And uh ever since then, I cook dinner and supper everyday. And I kept the yard sweep clean cus we had chickens* and they would (0.3) be all in the yard doin, you know, manure in the yard. That was my job everyday. Cleaning up the house and cooking dinner and supper.

M: How old were you when you started doing that?

G: Huh? ((leans to one side))

M: How old did you say you were when you started?

G: When I started cookin?

M: Mhm.

G: Well when I, when I, I start cookin at the age of thirteen, but really when I started cooking for the whole family *I was about fifteen years old or sixteen.* (2.0) Mhm.

M: How old were you when you got married?

G: I was twenty-two years old when I got married to my husband. Arthur Eaddy. (3.0)

M: ((off to side)) One, two, three, four, (0.3) Can you tell me your uh, your brother and your sister's names?

G: My, *my sister name.* My sister's name one Pearline Burgess, (1.0) Bertha Burgess, (1.0) Ina Burgess, (1.0) Lucille Burgess, (1.0) Jo Nathan, (3.0) Mattie, (2.0) Irene, (2.0) Chavis, (1.0) Eva, Edith, (1.0) Lu- Eva, Edith, Chav, (1.0) Irvin, Daisy, and uh, Charlotte, and Carrie. ((looks back at me))

M: Charlotte?

G: Yea Charlotte. Charlotte Burgess.

M: Do you know what year she was born?

G: Hm?

M: Do you know what year she was born?

G: When she was born?

M: Mhm.

G: She was ahead of me. (2.0) She was older than I was. (2.0)

M: Charlotte. She's the only one I don't have.

G: Hm?

M: ((speaks louder)) She's the only one I don't have.

G: Huh?

M: That's the only one I don't have so far on um

G: Charlotte?

M: Mhm.

G: She died. She died when she was two years old.

M: And she was right before you?

G: Mhm yea born before me. Charlotte.

M: ((typing)) (4.0) Do you have any questions for me Granny?

G: Well I just (0.5), [thank God I'm still alive. I'm 90 years old and I thank God I'm still alive](#)

[here to be with y'all and see that you is gettin ready to graduate.](#) From college. You're

my oldest great grand, and I'm very proud of ya.-

M: -[Thank you.](#)-

G:- And I pray God **and wish you all the blessings!** And you keep up the good work and keep on lookin up till you reach the higher, the higher callin. Always whatever, whatever you do and wherever you go always keep God in front. Cus God is a good God. (1.0)  
And I hope one day, not soon now,

M: ((laughs))

G: you'll meet a nice young man and y'all get married and have your own children. Your own family. And then you'll realize what a blessing that'll be. (0.5) But I just thank God to be here with all of y'all. My children my grandchildren, great grands (0.3), cus **I'm the only one living out of all my sisters and brothers. And I give God thanks everyday and every night.** Pray for all my children and everything. So I just thank God. (0.4) And I, you keep up the good work. And if life lasts, we'll see you in May ↑, at your graduation ceremony.

M: Yup. Second weekend.

G: ((smiles and looks down to the right side))

M: Thanks Granny!

#### **Chapter 4: Critical Analysis**

Generational, behavioral, and regional differences were observed from each interview. I have had the chance to interact and observe my family both on and off camera and have noted the ways in which they react to certain topics. The interviews have provided detailed information about deceased family members, insight on what childhood was like, and an opportunity to pass

on important information both pleasant and unpleasant via oral storytelling. Color-coding the interviews serves as a way to look deeper into their responses by noting physical and tonal behavioral changes. Including behavioral actions and movements helped make stronger connections between verbal and nonverbal cues.

In the book *Gender Talk: The Struggle for Women's Equality in African American Communities*, Johnetta Cole and Beverley Guy-Sheftall discuss the ways in which patriarchy, sexism, and racism affect Black people. "Racially speaking, the public spectacle of lynching, especially images of Black male bodies hanging from trees, sometimes castrated, is perhaps our most familiar association with the horrific consequences of racism in the American landscape...It is probable our most vivid reminder of the power of white racism to terrorize, mutilate, torture, and wreak havoc on a 'minority' community" (pg. 359). One of the issues that they address is the history of exploitation and mutilation of the Black body and the way it impacts both Black males and females within our communities. In the introduction of this paper I mentioned the ways in which Black stereotypes have left damaging effects on members of the Black community. Of these damages include family and race secrets. "In addition to dealing with trauma..., they are also encouraged to remain silent since many in the community believe that exposing dirty linen will reinforce racist stereotypes about us" (Cole & Guy-Sheftall, 393).

My great-grandmother Carrie Burgess Eaddy was born and raised in South Carolina. Our interview was conducted at her home following a Sunday Church service. The interview was conducted in the sitting room of the house while other family members ate and watched TV in the adjacent living room. Born in 1925, my great-grandmother grew up in an environment and time where there was a clear separation between what is told to a child and what is spoken among adults. She also grew up in an environment that believed in keeping certain family and

domestic events as family and race secrets. Some family/ race secret examples include events of domestic or sexual abuse, children born out of wedlock, and events caused by racism. Outside of our interview, I've seen and heard her urgency to keep things a secret when I have asked for information about her late husband's family. She immediately dismissed it by saying, "What do you want to know about them for. That's not your family." I saw this again when one of her granddaughters was pregnant out of wedlock. She voiced her shock and shame at my cousin's desire to publicize her pregnancy and throw a baby shower. Having knowledge of her tone and behavior when adverse topics come up off camera served as extremely helpful when coding her responses and behavior in the interview. There are no coral colored texts in her interview to show that she discussed unpleasant memories. However, from the reluctant/ uncomfortable pink and dismissive burgundy words and pauses, it shows her nonverbal discomfort with the topic.

She released very little information about my late great-grandfather and her husband Arthur Eaddy but from talking with other family members, I have learned more about him. From conversations and the interview with my mother, I learned that he had abused and cheated on my great-grandmother. When I asked Carrie Burgess Eaddy about her Cosmetology license, her response switched between calm and positive reminiscence until she tells me why she stopped doing hair. She began to take more pauses, averted her gaze off and down to the side, fidgeted with her arm displaying discomfort, and her facial expressions changed. Reinforcing a generational behavioral characteristic, she smiled at the very end of her statement after quickly breaking eye contact and looking down to her left. Trying to put on a positive face despite the nonverbal cues, reinforces the concept of family and race secrets. I have also noticed that when she is being dismissive, it tends to have ties with non-pleasant memories, events she doesn't wish to discuss, or family secrets she's trying to keep.

Like my great-grandmother, my uncle Ronald Eaddy was also born and raised in South Carolina. Born in 1967 and raised by his grandparents, my Uncle is used to some of the generational customs of my great-grandmother's era. However, as I've discovered both on and off the camera, my uncle's approach to difficult and painful topics differs drastically from my great grandmother's. During conversations, I have observed that my uncle is more willing to talk about things that bother him even if it is related to something that my great-grandmother would treat as a family secret. He often freely gives information and stories about past events and experiences including the times he has gotten in trouble as a child. I have also realized that he tends to be more open to sharing stories when he is also doing something. Our interview took place at his house in the sitting room. He sat for the duration of the interview with his Bible in his lap. Flipping to certain pages from time to time. His kids can be heard in the background at times commenting on TV and at certain points in the interview his wife, my aunt Angela, comes in to watch and listen.

There are many parts of his interview that are coded as positive reminiscence **blue** and non-pleasant memory recall, **coral**. The areas coded in blue were most often found when talking about his childhood experiences and his family. **Calm, reflection, or silent thinking** and **joy** could also be found in these areas. Upon asking if he has ever had any encounters with the police or justice system, his responses became a mix of mostly **non-pleasant memories**, **shock**, and **reluctance/ discomfort**. His eyes widened and his voice got higher as he thought about it. His initial response was that he could not think of any encounters but he was willing to share the story he did remember. After sharing the story about having a seizure in the store while with my great grandmother, he remembered another encounter with the police. Unlike my great-grandmother, who displayed discomfort and reluctance through nonverbal cues such as fidgeting

and looking away quickly, my uncle's reluctance could mostly be seen and heard in his verbal responses. However, while Carrie Burgess Eaddy's reluctance and discomfort resulted in dropping the topic, my uncle's reluctance often took place at the start of a non-pleasant memory recall event. It is clear that retelling some of his encounters brought back unpleasant memories and feelings by the pained expressions on his face. His laughter no longer stemmed from the happiness related to a story but became a way to try to make his story more bearable. While retelling his experience with the officer who sprayed mace in his face, his facial expressions and hand gestures showed frustration and confusion as if trying to understand why this had happened to him.

My interview with my mother Jennifer Eaddy, took place at our house in the living room. She sat in a chair and during the interview pulled up another chair to put her feet up. Knowing that it was video and audio recorded she put a blazer on. The only other person in the house was my eight-year-old brother who switched between watching us from the couch and playing games in his room. My mother's interview ended up being much longer than the ones with my uncle and great-grandmother because she was willing to share information not only about herself but also about other family members. For this reason I added the color code beige. Her stories about events and family members were most often told in a matter-of-fact way rather than as a form of gossip. She also had many instances where she would start a story that would lead her to vocalize a question she wanted to ask other family members.

Jennifer was born in South Carolina and lived there throughout half of her high school years. Raised by her grandparents, my great-grandparents, she left South Carolina to live with her mother, my grandmother Gracie Eaddy and other family members in New York. My grandmother, Gracie Eaddy, had my uncle when she was 16 and had my mother when she was

17. However, when she discovered that she was pregnant with my mother, she moved to New York to keep the news from my great-grandparents and the family. Neither my uncle nor my mother has the Richberg last name and during our interview my mother pointed out that a father's information was left blank on her birth certificate. Due to the fact that my mother's existence is part of what some members of my family would consider a family secret, and the impact it has had on her, I have observed that she is more open to answering all questions. For her, being honest and open about family secrets and events is a learning experience that answers and leads to unexpected questions.

Regional differences come into play the most in the interview with my mother. In both the interview with my great-grandmother and my uncle, they were surrounded by family members in adjoining rooms or a few miles away. As one of the few people to in our family to leave South Carolina and live in the North, my mother's views on family and race secrets differ from both my great-grandmother and my uncle. My mother's display of **reluctance or discomfort** tended to show up at the end of a story. After casually telling a story, my mother would sometimes add her thoughts or personal emotions on the topic. Her use of the **dismissive** tone and hand gestures seems to be the opposite of my great-grandmother's. While my great-grandmother used dismissal as a way to keep things to herself, my mother used it as a way to end or wrap up a story she had just shared. By having dismissive text and actions at the end of a story, it suggests that her use of dismissal also had less to do with personally painful memories. Unlike my other interviews, my mother's non pleasant memories seemed to be more from childhood experiences than encounters with the police. While discussing some of the things she experienced with her biological father's side of the family, there were more instances of non pleasant memories, embarrassment, and, frustration. Her interview also shows that she has had

positive experiences with the police but also acknowledges that racism plays a life-or-death role in Black people's encounters with police and the justice system.

William Labov's observer's paradox has played a role in this research. Labov's paradox states that "the aim of linguistic research in the community must be to find out how people talk when they are not being systematically observed; yet we can only obtain these data by systematic observation. The problem is of course not insoluble: we must either find ways of supplementing the formal interviews with other data, or change the structure of the interview situation by one means or another." By having an audio and video recorder present, I was aware that my mother, uncle, and great-grandmother were concerned about their appearance. The observer's paradox explains why my mother put on a blazer, attempted to explain certain things to the camera, and started out trying to cover the gap in her teeth with her lips. It explains why my uncle positioned himself with his Bible in the sitting room. Lastly, it explains why my great-grandmother changed outfits and why she may have felt embarrassed and frustrated when she mixed up family member's names at the start of the interview. I started by asking each person about themselves, and their family members in an attempt to help them relax. As the interviews went on, each person began to open up more and drift away from the worries about their appearance. My mother later put her feet up, was less concerned about hiding her gap, and leaned to the side in her chair to get comfortable. My uncle stopped flipping through the pages of the Bible as the interview went on and my great-grandmother physically relaxed more as she began talking about childhood memories. While they were able to relax more as the interview went on, I noticed that once I cut the camera off, my mother, uncle, and great-grandmother asked me "So, how did I do?" I explained to them that there were no right or wrong answers and that it was a way for me

to continue building our family tree while looking at generational and behavioral differences surrounding specific topics.

To supplement the interviews, I had conversations off camera before and after our interviews. These conversations often took place while another primary activity was taking place such as driving, walking, cooking, outdoor activities, or lounging in the house. Observing my family members behaviors through conversation served as an additional means of being able to code and analyze their speech and behaviors during and after the interview. During some conversations I would sit and take notes. Some other conversations took place during photo shoots or were knowingly recorded while filming for personal documentation. It is from these conversations that I was able to ask certain direct questions during the interviews about specific experiences they have had.

Looking back at Cole and Guy-Sheftall's chapter on race secrets in relation to my interviews, I've noticed the development of a cycle between family/ race secrets and stigmas within Black communities. When the desire and need to keep events and experiences as family and race secrets is built on the fear of racism and stereotypes, it begets unhealthy behaviors and attitudes that in turn get passed on to future generations. One example of this is the stigma surrounding natural hair. Stemming back to slavery, Blacks were repeatedly told that as subhuman animals, everything about them was negative in comparison to whites. Our hair was deemed as nappy, unkempt, unprofessional, and inappropriate. Our bodies were also seen as too sexual and too big. Our skin too dark and dangerous and our presence as an unwanted threat. As a part of racial assimilation, these views played a part in colorism within the Black community through the use of hot combs, relaxers, skin lightening creams, and the drive to lighten the race by selective breeding. When these negatively driven actions are brought into a household and

pushed onto children, they grow up with the mentality that the way their hair naturally grows out of their head is unacceptable or they stay out of the sun because they've been warned that they could get too dark if they play outside too long.

The stigma surrounding natural hair first stood out to me when I was told in high school that I had “straight off the boat slave hair” and “needed to do something about it”. I was praised and complimented by Black friends and many family members alike when I finally got a relaxer. However, after five years of chemical burns on my scalp, hiding from rain and pools, and significantly weakened but long straight hair, I realized that planning my life around this constant fear of hiding my natural hair was costing me valuable life experiences. When I cut my hair and began going natural, I received many shocked, disappointed, and disapproving comments and looks.

In a conversation I had with my great grandmother regarding my graduation she asked me what I would do with my hair. I told her my plans of having it curly but styled and she responded by putting her hands in my hair and saying “take these out”. She often wears wigs but at home she wears her soft white hair in either plats or curls. My grandmother continues to straighten her hair with a hot comb and although as a child my mother was forced to use hot combs and relaxers, she now wears her hair in dreadlocks but puts a wig on when going to work. This stigma has played a heavy role in my family through generations but I have observed that regional differences have also impacted the cycle of this stigma. My mother's decision to stop getting relaxers when I was four was done primarily so that I wouldn't grow up thinking there was something wrong with the way my hair grew normally. While I remember watching her cut her hair off in the bathroom in 1998, I am also currently aware that at times she struggles with feeling like her natural hair is unprofessional and at times inappropriate to wear out of the house.

Her decision to cut her hair and to dissuade me from getting a relaxer in high school are actions that aim at dismantling the negative stigma and cycle within our own family. However, by breaking down these stigmas and cycles in our own family, it influences our interactions and the way we carry ourselves around the people we meet. While relaxers and protective hairstyles can be extremely helpful for managing and taking care of Black hair, when it is adopted or forced due to racist stereotypes it helps perpetuate an ongoing cycle of racism.

In Ta-Nehisi Coates book *Between the World and Me*, in a letter to his son, he recounts a beating he received from his father and explains the environment of fear. “I knew that my father’s father was dead and that my Uncle Oscar was dead and that my Uncle David was dead and that each of these instances was unnatural...I felt [the fear] in the sting of his black leather belt, which he applied with more anxiety than anger, my father who beat me as if someone might steal me away, because that is exactly what was happening all around us... I remember watching him in a kind of daze, awed at the distance between punishment and offense. Later, I would hear it in Dad’s voice—‘Either I can beat him, or the police.’” Coates story addresses one of the negative cycles that have also resulted from racism. By sharing his father’s fear that either he could beat him or the police is one that I have also observed in conversations and the interview with my mother. When talking about my younger brother she has repeatedly expressed a desire to have a camera installed in his car when he is older. Not for the purposes of being nosy, but as a security measurement should my brother, a Black boy have to encounter a potentially deadly encounter with members that uphold our racist justice system. Knowing that a camera may not save his life, it serves more as evidence to be used should he be killed or injured and his story retold to frame him as the stereotypical Black boy whose killing is justified by white fear. As mentioned in the interview with my mother, I asked her if she planned on having the talk with

Solomon. Her response was “Oh I’ve planned to have- oh yes indeed. The objective would be for you to remain alive. So you do what you need to do to remain alive. So when they come, you make sure and stuff your hands, I think it’s 12, 6 or something like that... it’s not about whether this is right or this is wrong. The objective is to stay alive. So to stay alive this is what you need to do.” She continued on to suggest that maybe “the Black people or the Latin people or the ones who have not (0.3) had any real altercations with cops what is it that they can share, with other minorities to (0.3) help better the situation” (Garvin interview #1 with Jennifer). Her last statement is not an uncommon way of thinking as I have heard it in conversations with older generations but it falls under the idea of respectability politics.

Respectability politics include the idea that by changing our lifestyle and appearances, Black people can appear nicer, less angry, put together, and closer to idealized whiteness and humanity. By doing these things we somehow seem less threatening and are therefore spared from racist encounters that could result in our death. This idea is very similar to the belief that if women don’t go out at night, don’t travel alone, and wear specific types of clothing, they can avoid being sexually assaulted. It is a form of victim blaming that unfortunately gives Black people the job of dodging bullets instead of addressing the real issue of racist institutions. Under this form of assault, respectability politics aim to place value on Black lives through their relationship to white assimilation rather than as a living, breathing human with their own successes, struggles, rights, desires, and experiences under institutions of systematic oppression. From the standpoint of another generation, outside of my own Black family, Ta-Nehisi Coates points out that “The law did not protect us. And now, in your time, the law has become an excuse for stopping and frisking you, which is to say, for furthering the assault on your body. But a society that protects some people through a safety net of schools, government-backed home

loans, and ancestral wealth but can protect you only with the club of criminal justice has either failed at enforcing its good intentions or succeeded at something much darker.”

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion**

From the generational, regional, and behavioral analysis of the interviews conducted, there are some benefits and set backs to having a Black family member doing this type of research. Some of the setbacks include my age and my relationship to each family member. When there are members of the family whose generational beliefs and practices include setting a clear distinction between information shared and the relationship between younger generations, it becomes harder to find out information that may not be flattering. Another setback could be worry about how I would view them if they shared certain stories and information. Similar to the observer’s paradox, it is an additional layer of concern and awareness of being watched.

Having been raised in New York has meant that I was not always around my family in the South and had to dig deeper to find out about events or family members. At the same time, not constantly being in the south has physically removed me from some of the stigmas and cycles that are prevalent in my own family. Having this separation has also helped me feel comfortable asking questions and challenging the information that was shared with me. Being a member of the family I interviewed has also played an important role in being given access to family documents, conversations on and off camera, and in doing archival research. As a Black interviewer, asking questions regarding race and encounters with the justice system meant that a certain amount of explanation was not necessary. I have noticed that when topics or race come

up with people from other races, there tends to be some time spent giving preface or historical context before getting to the heart of the subject. My mother's connection with my maternal side of the family has also played a big part of how willing and interested family members were in this research. Having grown up around them and maintained a close relationship to each of her aunts This research is not just my own, it is part of my family and it has created a platform for continuous research into building a family tree and learning how generational and behavioral differences can help further ancestral discovery.

As a result of this research, I have discovered that when looking for genealogical and generational ties, several methods must be used to find accurate information. Oral history is an important part of Black life especially since members of our family were denied access to education, reading, and writing. From the interviews conducted I have found that older generations are more reluctant to share information about themselves and family members that would paint them in an unflattering light. This reluctance is not necessarily out of selfishness but stems from numerous cycles and stigmas that are mutually at work in Black communities. These stigmas and cycles are forms of family and race secrets adopted in attempts to counteract the negative and stereotypical propaganda that has been published about Black people since the justification of chattel slavery. The differences in behavioral characteristics analyzed from the interviews shows that emotions and actions such as being dismissive and reluctant have had different meanings for each person. For my great-grandmother, it was often served as a source of pain. For my uncle, his reluctance usually took place right before he began a non-pleasant memory; and for my mother, being dismissive was a way for her to close out her stories after she had already shared what she knew. Archival documents such as census records, church documents, and birth and death certificates serve as a way to fact check memory and accounts

shared from oral history. They have also acted as a paper trail that has helped explain relationships, households, and locations. Some of the unexpected outcomes were the interest that this research sparked among other family members. All of the interviews followed a photo shoot where a number of portraits were created. During the interview with my mother, she made certain comments about wanting to have conversations with other family members about events in their life. My uncle was also enthusiastic about seeing how far back our family tree could go. Off camera, he expressed an interest in seeing visual representations of different generations through the photographs. My great-grandmother was aware of the fact that as the oldest living member of our family, she had answers to questions that other people didn't. She enjoyed storytelling more off camera and was eager to share information such as birthdays and death dates for people that she knew. While doing this research several cousins also became interested in learning more about their families and began to use ancestry.com or had conversations with family members.

The result from the observations, conversations, interviews, and archival research resulted in the creation of a tree made up of a total of 212 people from my maternal and paternal side. More than 112 people from my maternal side alone. I was able to go as far back as my great-great-great grandparents on my great-grandfather Arthur Eaddy's side. The oldest relative I have from his family was born in about 1870. On my great-grandmother Carrie Eaddy's side of the family, I was able to go as far back as her great-grandparents on both her maternal and paternal side with the oldest known birth date being 1861. Research and information on my biological grandfather Theodore Richberg III was difficult to come across since the members of my family most willing to speak about him knew little of him. During my mother's interview, she mentioned that he was in the Army. From there I was able to discover newspaper clippings

related to his police car chase death from 1974, a death index, and the fact that he had a half brother also named Theodore Richberg who also served in the military but died in 2009 in New York. I also found obituaries to also be very useful as they tended to list living relatives, and parents of the deceased. On Theodore Richberg III's side of the family, I was able to find over thirty relatives, the oldest being great-great-grandparents who were born in the 1870's. Research into my biological grandfather's family also resulted in meeting my great-uncle Leon and learning that the spelling Richburg that I had previously been given my family members was actually Richberg. Images of my family tree will be visible in the index based on their relation to me.

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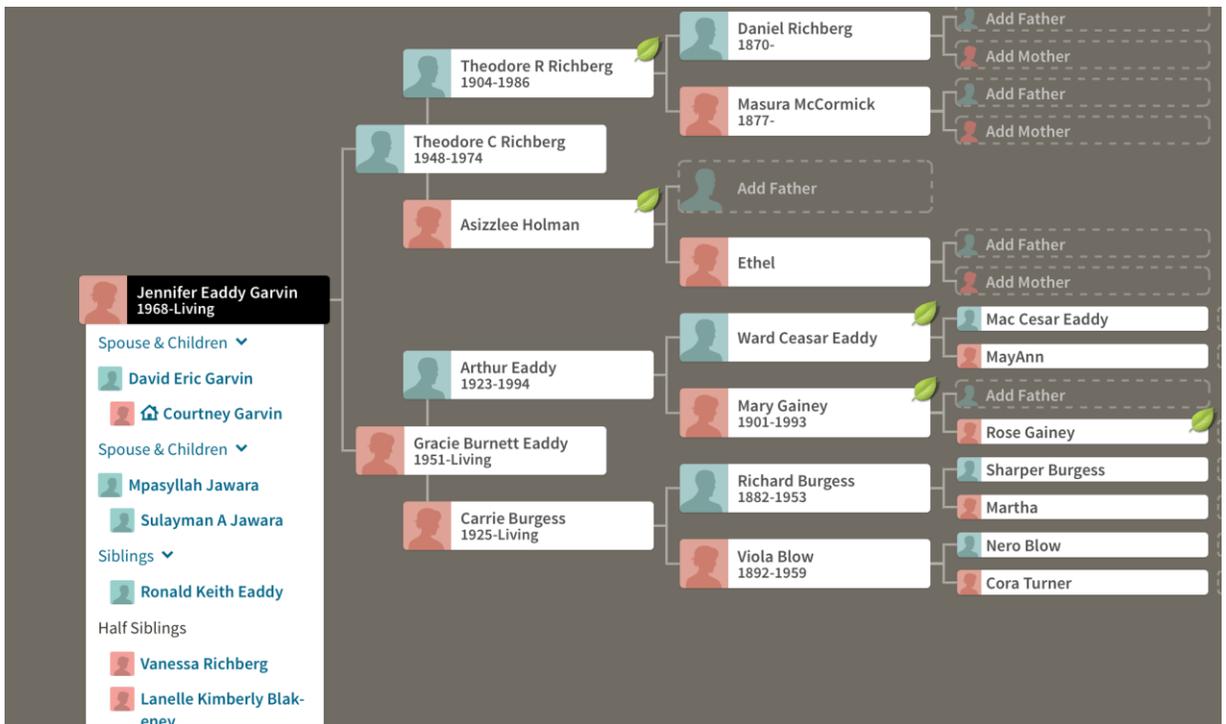
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**Appendix:**

**Part One: Family Tree**

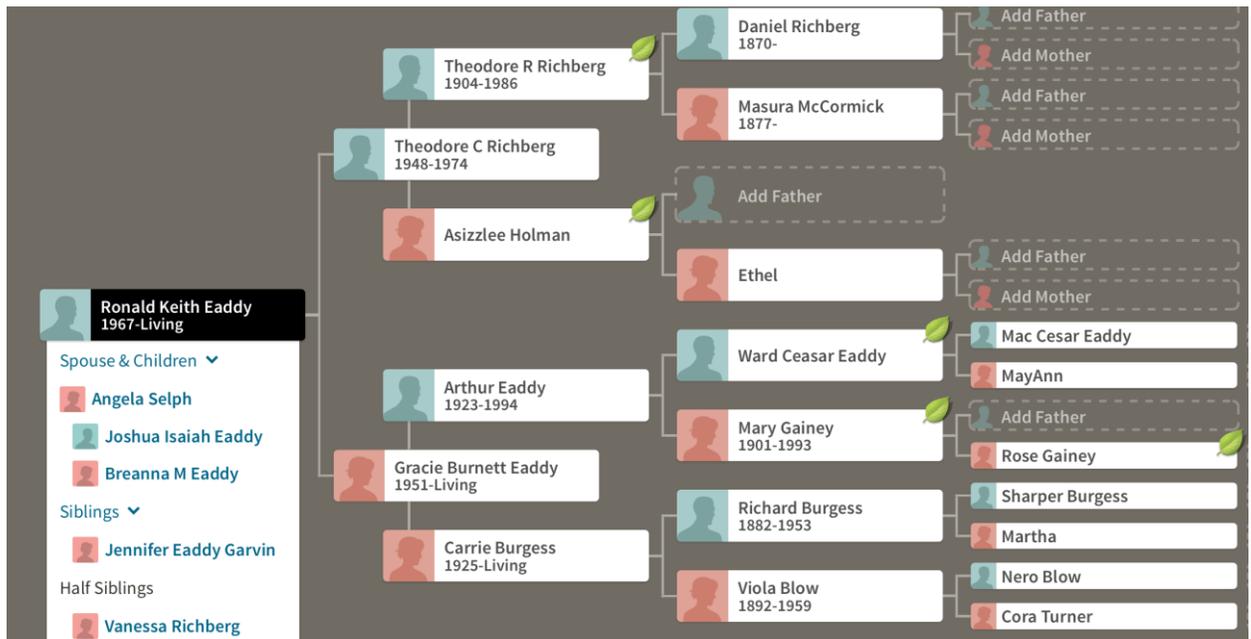


(a.) Tree Starting Point: Courtney Garvin  
 Relation to Self: Me  
 Tree Guide: Shows Immediate Family focusing on parents



(b.) Tree Starting Point: Jennifer Eddy- Garvin  
 Relation to Self: Mother

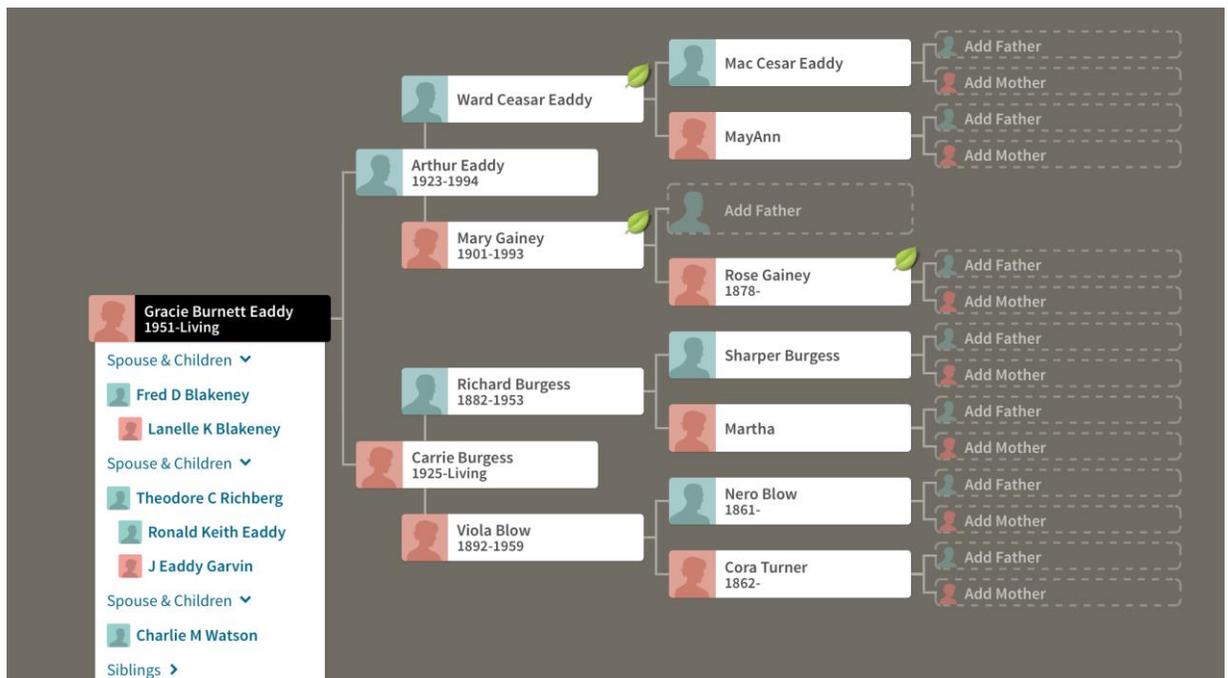
Tree Guide: Shows Children, Siblings, and Immediate Family focusing on parents



(c.) Tree Starting Point: Ronald Keith Eddy

Relation to Self: Uncle

Tree Guide: Shows Spouse, Children, Siblings and Immediate Family focusing on parents



(d.) Tree Starting Point: Gracie Burnett Eddy-Watson

Relation to Self: Grandmother

**Gracie Burnett Eddy**  
1951-Living

Spouse & Children ▾

- Fred D Blakeney**
- Lanelle K Blakeney**

Spouse & Children ▾

- Theodore C Richberg**
- Ronald Keith Eddy**
- J Eddy Garvin**

Spouse & Children ▾

- Charlie M Watson**

Siblings ▾

- Mable Brendell Eddy**
- Marilyn Eloise Eddy**
- Alfreda Jean Eddy**

Tree Guide: Shows Spouse, Children, & Immediate Family focusing on parents

(e.) Tree Starting Point: Gracie Burnett Eddy-Watson

Relation to Self: Grandmother

Tree Guide: Spouse, Children, and Siblings

**Theodore C Richberg**  
1948-1974

Spouse & Children ▾

- Gracie Burnett Eddy**
- Ronald Keith Eddy**
- J Eddy Garvin**

Spouse & Children ▾

- (Unknown parent)
- Vanessa Richberg**

Siblings >

**Daniel Richberg**  
1870-

**Theodore R Richberg**  
1904-1986

**Masura McCormick**  
1877-

**Asizzlee Holman**

**Ethel**

Add Father

Add Mother

Add Father

Add Mother

Add Father

Add Mother

Add Father

Add Mother

(f.) Tree Starting Point: Theodore C Richberg III

**Theodore C Richberg**  
1948-1974

Spouse & Children ▾

- Gracie Burnett Eddy
- Ronald Keith Eddy
- J Eddy Garvin

Spouse & Children ▾

- (Unknown parent)
- Vanessa Richberg

Siblings ▾

- Alexander Richberg
- Azzalee Richberg
- Leon O Richberg
- Thomas J Richberg

Half Siblings

- Elzora Richberg
- Lily Mae Richberg
- Orlando Richberg
- Theodore Richberg II
- Theosha Richberg

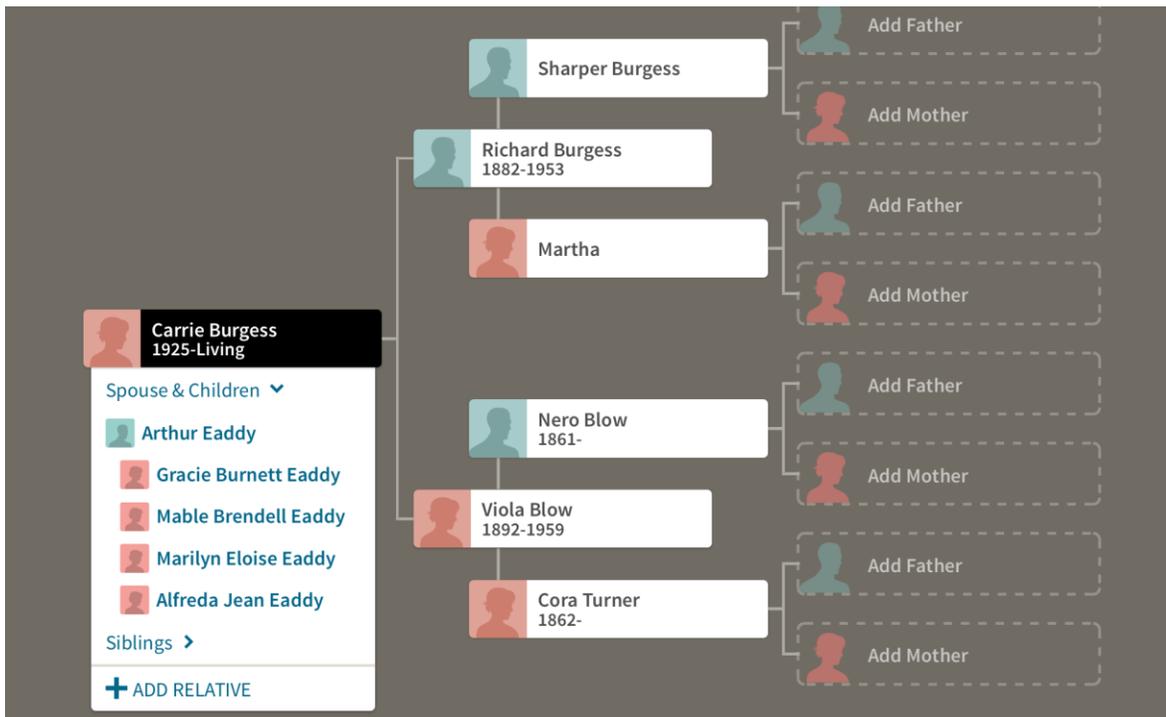
Relation to Self: Grandfather

Tree Guide: Lists Children and Immediate Family following parents

(g.) Tree Starting Point: Theodore C Richberg III

Relation to Self: Grandfather

Tree Guide: Lists Spouse, Children, and Siblings



**Carrie Burgess**  
1925-Living

Spouse & Children ▾

- Arthur Eddy**
- Gracie Burnett Eddy
- Mable Brendell Eddy
- Marilyn Eloise Eddy
- Alfreda Jean Eddy

Siblings ▾

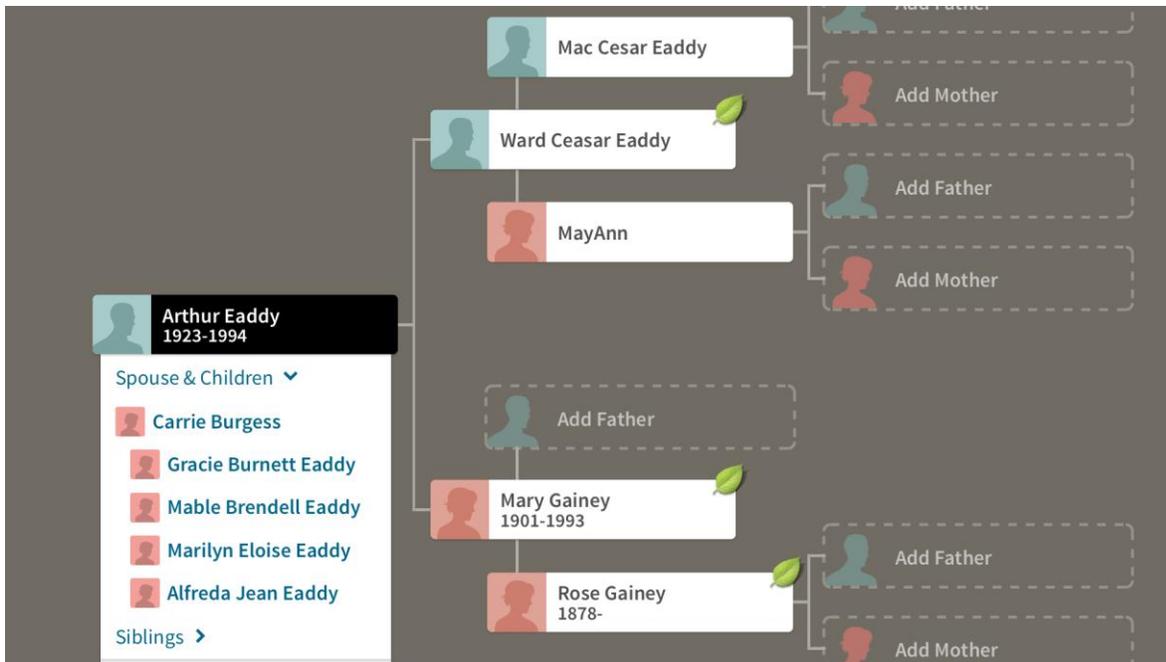
- Mattie Burgess
- Irene Wilma Burgess
- Lucile Burgess
- Chavis Burgess
- Eva Burgess
- Ervin Burgess
- Edith Burgess
- Daisy Burgess

Half Siblings

- Pearline Burgess
- Bertha Burgess
- Ina Burgess

(h.) Tree Starting Point: Carrie Burgess Eddy  
 Relation to Self: Great-Grandmother  
 Tree Guide: Shows Spouse, Children, and Immediate Family following parents

(i.) Tree Starting Point: Carrie Burgess Eddy  
 Relation to Self: Great-Grandmother  
 Tree Guide: Shows Spouse, Children, and Siblings



 **Arthur Eddy**  
1923-1994

Spouse & Children ▾

-  **Carrie Burgess**
-  **Gracie Burnett Eddy**
-  **Mable Brendell Eddy**
-  **Marilyn Eloise Eddy**
-  **Alfreda Jean Eddy**

Siblings ▾

-  **Marie Eddy**
-  **Nathaniel Eddy**
-  **Dorothy Eddy**
-  **Joseph Eddy**

Half Siblings

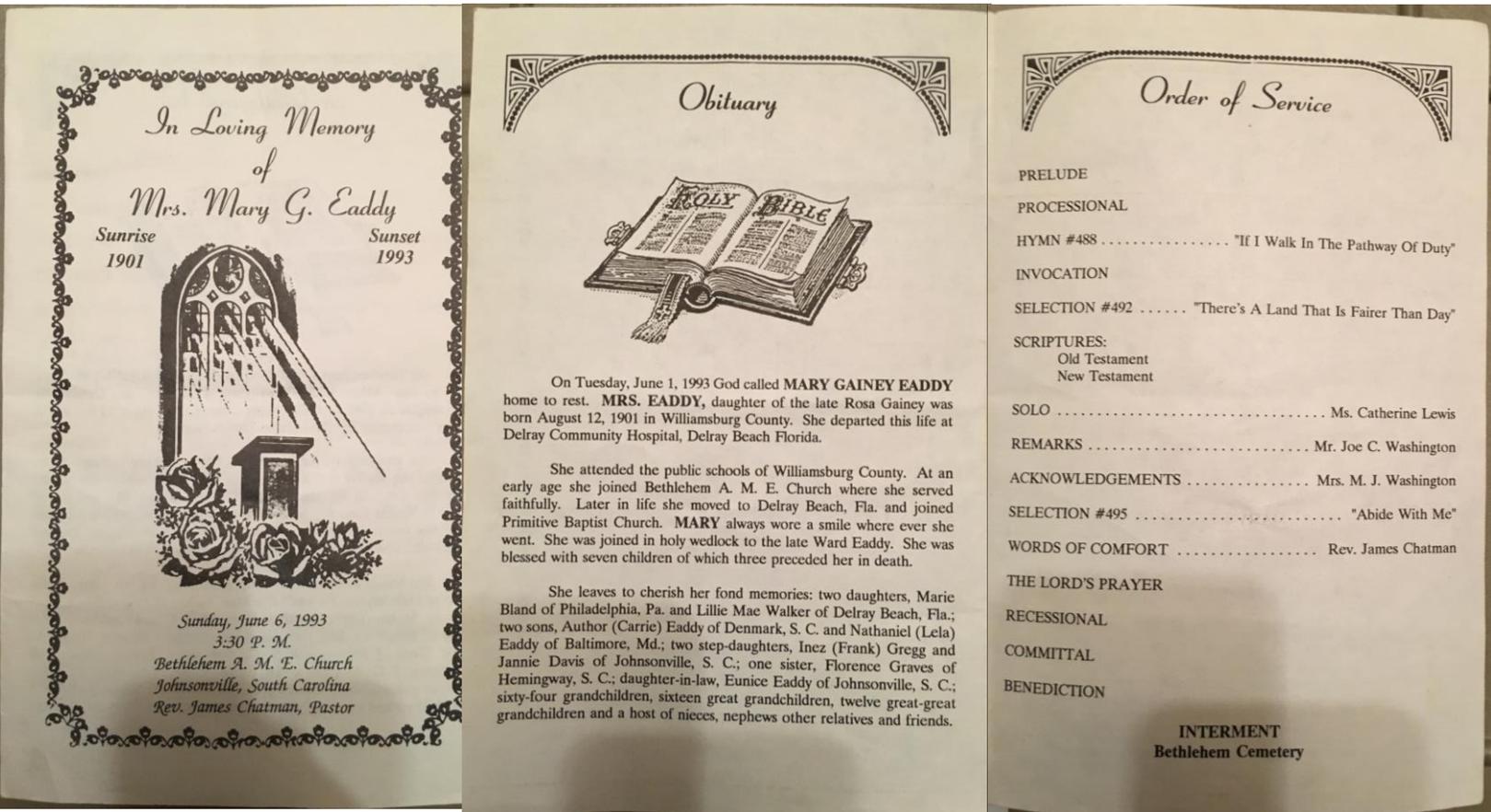
-  **Horace Eddy**
-  **Jannie Eddy**
-  **Lea Ila Eddy**
-  **Inez Eddy**

(j.) Tree Starting Point: Arthur Eddy  
 Relation to Self: Great-Grandfather  
 Tree Guide: Shows Spouse, Children, and Immediate Family following parents

(k.) Tree Starting Point: Arthur Eddy  
 Relation to Self: Great-Grandfather  
 Tree Guide: Shows Spouse, Children, and Siblings

Part Two: Family Obituaries

(2.a) The obituary for my great-great-grandmother Mary Gainey Eaddy. The mother of my great-grandfather Arthur Eaddy, her obituary provided me with the name of her mother, Rose Gainey, and sister, Florence Graves, which then led me to a 1910 U.S. Census Record that listed her step-father.



(2.b) The obituary of my great-grandfather Theodore R Richberg. Father to my grandfather, Theodore C Richberg III, this obituary gave me the names of his parents, his profession, information on his marriage, and a list of relative's names and areas of residence.

Homegoing Services  
for  
*Reverend Theodore  
Roosevelt Richberg*



Thursday, December 4, 1986  
3:00 P.M.  
Central Baptist Church  
Denmark, South Carolina  
Reverend Wade Scott, *Officiating*

*The Order of Service*  
*The Reverend Wade Scott, Master of Ceremonies*

PRELUDE  
PROCESSIONAL (Soft Music) ..... Pianist  
HYMN ..... Choir  
SCRIPTURE  
Old Testament ..... Rev. C. F. Mitchell  
New Testament ..... Rev. E. H. Jones  
PRAYER ..... Rev. Wade Scott  
SOLO — "I'll Fly Away" ..... Mt. Julius Washington  
EXPRESSIONS  
Ministerial and Lifetime Friend ..... Dea. Frank Roney  
Friend ..... Mr. Joseph Generett  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS  
SOLO — "Making Up My Dying Bed" ..... Mr. Julius Washington  
EULOGY ..... Rev. Willie Williams  
*Pastor, Lemon Swamp Baptist Church*  
HYMN ..... Choir  
VIEWING OF REMAINS (Soft Music) ..... Choir  
RECESSIONAL  
INTERMENT ..... Lemon Swamp Baptist Church Cemetery

*Acknowledgement*  
The Richberg family wishes to express their profound gratitude to the many friends who have been so kind to us during our sad hour.

*Obituary*  
*He closed his eyes to fall asleep  
To draw a labored breath,  
He found release from daily cares,  
In what we know as death.*

The Reverend Theodore Roosevelt Richberg, son of the late Rev. Daniel and Mrs. Masura McCormick Richberg, was born August 1, 1904 in Bamberg, South Carolina. With grace, The Reverend Theodore R. Richberg entered in the Fuller Life on Friday, November 28, 1986 at his home in Denmark, South Carolina. His primary education was obtained in the public schools of Bamberg County. He also studied an additional two years at South Carolina State College in Orangeburg, S.C.

At a very early age, Theodore accepted Christ as his personal Saviour, became converted and baptized, and joined the Lemon Swamp Baptist Church of Bamberg, S.C. Rev. Richberg received the call from the Master to preach the Gospel to every creature, and was ordained under the pastor of Lemon Swamp Baptist Church. There, he remained in membership until his latter days, when his health began to fail.

In 1928 he was united in Holy Wedlock to the former Evelyn Simmons of Bamberg, S.C. To this union, five children were born. She preceded him in death. In December 1939, he was united in Holy Wedlock to the former Asizlee Holman of Denmark, S.C. To this union five children were born.

Rev. Theodore R. Richberg was employed in the field of the Food Service Department for over 36 years with the Southern and Seaboard Railroad. Reverend Richberg retired in 1971 from the Railroad Company, but he remained active in the services of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The love that he had for his family, his church, and friends will continue to live in the hearts and minds of those that knew him. His desire to serve in any capacity that he could, and lending a helping hand to whomever he could will never be forgotten. He was a devoted husband, father, uncle, and grandfather, and will be greatly missed by all of his family and friends.

He leaves to cherish beautiful memories, a devoted and loving wife, Mrs. Asizlee H. Richberg of Denmark, S.C.; three daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth R. Davis of Brooklyn, N.Y., Mrs. Elzora R. Rice of Denmark, S.C., Ms. Azzalee Richberg Brown, U.S.A. Army, Ft. Stewart, Ga.; four sons, Mr. Theodore Richberg, Jr. of Brooklyn, N.Y., Mr. Alexander B. Richberg of Bronx, N.Y., Mr. Leon O. Richberg of White Plains, N.Y. and Mr. Thomas J. Richberg of Denmark, S.C.; four brothers, Mr. Bequert A. Richberg of Bamberg, S.C., Mr. Henry Richberg of East Orange, N.J., Mr. Abraham Richberg and Mr. Joshua Richberg of Brooklyn, N.Y.; one sister, Evangelist Gedler R. Pullman of Brooklyn, N.Y.; one step-sister, Mrs. Chatt Dawson of Brooklyn, N.Y.; twenty-five grandchildren, fifty nieces and nephews, three daughters-in-law, two sons-in-law, seven brothers-in-law, seven sisters-in-law, twenty-two great-grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends.

*Life's race well run  
Heavenly rest well earned  
"And now he rests".*

The Family

(2.c) The obituary of Florence Graves, my great-great-great aunt, was found in an online regional paper's online archive through the website genealogybuff.com. Her obituary confirmed the identity of people I found in the 1910 U.S. Census and listed the names of numerous relatives.

FLORENCE GRAVES -- Funeral services for Mrs. Florence Rumell Graves, conducted by the Rev. Harriett Massengill and the Rev. Franklin Scott, were held Saturday, June 7, 2003, at the Nazareth A.M.E. church in Johnsonville. Burial, directed by Dimery and Rogers Funeral Home, followed at Bethlehem A.M.E. Church. Mrs. Graves, 103, [died](#) Tuesday, June 2, 2003, at her residence. She was [born](#) January 7, 1900, a daughter of the late Calfax Self and the late Rose Gainey Self. She attended the public schools of Williamsburg County and was formerly employed as a housekeeper. Mrs. Graves was a member of Bethlehem A.M.E. Church, where she served as Mother of the Church and Church Missionary. Survivors include: four sons, Clarence Graves, Benjamin Graves and Ernest Graves all of Newark, New Jersey; and William Henry Graves of Hemingway; four daughters, Mrs. Alma Woodbury of Norfolk, New York; Mrs. Margarette Wallace of Hemingway; Mrs. Dorothy Graves of Newark, New Jersey; and Mrs. Lorine Barr of Lake City; five grandchildren whom she reared, Robin Barker of Hemingway; Clinton Graves of Alabama; William Graves, Jr., of Tennessee; and Linda Graves and Ricky Graves, both of North Carolina; 20 other grandchildren; 41 great-grandchildren; 8 great-great-grandchildren; and two great-great-great-grandchildren.

Part Three: Reports and U.S. Documents

(3.a) A Newspaper clipping from the Florence County Library System reporting the 1974 accident and death of five people, including my grandfather Theodore C Richberg.

**Five Killed  
In Bamberg  
County Wreck**

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Five persons died early Sunday when the car in which they were riding left State Road 12 in Bamberg County and struck a tree, the South Carolina Highway Patrol reported.

The patrol reported at least 17 persons killed on the state's highways over the weekend. At least 49 persons have been killed in South Carolina traffic accidents this year.

Killed when their car struck a tree were Theodore Clay Richberg, 25, of Denmark, Simon Reardon, 27, of Lynchburg, Abbie Charlotte Barnette, 26, of Charlotte, N.C., Ellorine Freeman, 24, of Middleton, Conn., and Isaac Homes, 21, of Mount Pleasant.

An accident early Saturday took the lives of three persons. Killed when the car in which they were riding left State Road 90 north of Myrtle Beach were Douglas Keel Jr., 17, of Longs, James Alton Jones, 19, of North Myrtle Beach, and Marvin Boyd Livingston, 20, of Longs.

Ricky Dale Cox, 15, of Loris, was killed in a car-motorcycle accident in Horry County. Four persons in the car were injured in the accident.

nes L. Joyner and Mrs. Betty Morrison both of Charlotte, N.C., Mrs. Ellen Sherrill of Marietta, Ga., and Mrs. Doris Brasington of Darlington; and three grandchildren.

**D.J. Kinder**

KINGSTREE — Douglas James Kinder, 69, died Saturday night in Williamsburg County Memorial Hospital.

Funeral services will be conducted at graveside in Williamsburg Cemetery at 3 p.m. Monday, directed by Williamsburg Funeral Home.

Born in Williamsburg County, Mr. Kinder was a son of the late James C. and Margaret Flagler Kinder. He was educated in Williamsburg County Public Schools and was a member of the Kingstree United Methodist Church.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Mary Epps Kinder of Kingstree; a son, Harvey J. Kinder of Kingstree; a daughter, Mrs. David Varn of Burlington, N.C.; a brother, Dr. E.C. Kinder of Columbia; three sisters, Mrs. P.J. Burgess and Mrs. Lewis Haigler Sr., both of Kingstree, and Mrs. Felix Goude Locke of Columbia.

**Mrs. Margaret Ross**

DARLINGTON — Funeral services for Mrs. Margaret Ross will be conducted Tuesday at 4 p.m. in the chapel of the Ideal Funeral Parlor. Burial

(3.b) A copy of the 1920 U.S. Census Record from Williamsburg, South Carolina obtained through Ancestry.com. Census Place: Johnson, Williamsburg, South Carolina; Roll: T625\_1712; Page: 22B; Enumeration District: 152; Image: 501. Document includes listing of Burgess Family including Viola Burgess, 26, wife and children Perline (age 14), Bertha (age 11), Ina (age 8), Lucile (age 7), Mattie (age 5), Wilma (also known as Irene age 2), and Ivery (age approximately 4 months).

STATE South Carolina COUNTY Williamsburg TOWNSHIP OR OTHER DIVISION OF COUNTY Johnson

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE—BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
FOURTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1920—POPULATION

INCORPORATED PLACE Johnson ENUMERATED BY ME ON THE 9 DAY OF February, 1920. SUPERVISOR'S DISTRICT NO. 6 SHEET NO. 4174  
ENUMERATION DISTRICT NO. 152 WARD OF CITY Johnson

PLACE OF BIRTH	NAME	RELATION	SEX	RACE	AGE	MARRIAGE	CITIZENSHIP	EDUCATION	SEXUITY AND MARRIAGE STATUS			OCCUPATION
									Place of birth	Married	Single	
South Carolina	Viola Burgess	Wife	F	W	26	1904	South Carolina	High School	Married	Single	Housewife	
South Carolina	Perline Burgess	Daughter	F	W	14	1906	South Carolina	High School	Single	Single	Housewife	
South Carolina	Bertha Burgess	Daughter	F	W	11	1909	South Carolina	High School	Single	Single	Housewife	
South Carolina	Ina Burgess	Daughter	F	W	8	1912	South Carolina	High School	Single	Single	Housewife	
South Carolina	Lucile Burgess	Daughter	F	W	7	1913	South Carolina	High School	Single	Single	Housewife	
South Carolina	Mattie Burgess	Daughter	F	W	5	1915	South Carolina	High School	Single	Single	Housewife	
South Carolina	Wilma Burgess	Daughter	F	W	2	1918	South Carolina	High School	Single	Single	Housewife	
South Carolina	Ivery Burgess	Child	M	W	4	1916	South Carolina	High School	Single	Single	Housewife	

Part Four: Photo Essay:

The photos below are from a series titled *In These Clasped Hands* that I took as part of this project and a photo thesis. The series consists of a total of 28 images. The ones shown below are some of the ones that relate directly to this capstone.

(4.a) The memorial for the nine who lost their lives in front of Mother Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston, SC.



(4.b) Garvin Rd. near Bowman, South Carolina where my sister and I were chased on the way to visit our grandparent's graves.



(4.c) My great-grandmother Carrie Burgess Eaddy at her church in South Carolina.



(4.d) A family portrait of my little brother, my mother Jennifer, and myself.



(4.e) My Uncle Ronald and Aunt Angela before our conducted interview.



(4.f) A portrait of my little brother.



(4.g) Portrait of my cousins Bre and Josh taken in response to the Mother Emanuel shooting.



(4.h) Portrait of my great-grandmother Carrie with two of her daughters Mable (left) and Marilyn (right)



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<sup>1</sup> Video of Oscar Grant III's shooting at Fruitvale Station in Oakland, CA  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eo0d6Q4RVno>

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<sup>2</sup> I purposely chose not to name the shooter. If you would like to read more about him here <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3135477/Cops-treated-Dylann-Roof-free-Burger-King-meal-Charleston-church-shooter-complained-feeling-hungry-reveals-police-chief.html>

<sup>3</sup> Footage recorded during the McKinney Texas pool party incident <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6tTfoifB7Q>