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Arkansas Memories

Interview with:
Joycelyn Elders
Little Rock, Arkansas
14 February 2008

Interviewer: Scott Lunsford

Scott Lunsford: Today the David and Barbara Pryor for Arkansas Oral and Visual History—we are at the Elders residence in Little Rock, Arkansas. Today's date is February the fourteenth, 2008. It is Valentine's Day. We'll be talking with Joycelyn—Dr. Joycelyn Elders. My name is Scott Lunsford. And, Dr. Elders, I need to ask you if it's all right that the Pryor Center is videotaping this interview.

Joycelyn Elders: Yes, it's wonderful.

SL: Okay. Great. This tape—this interview will reside in the Special Collections Department at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville in the Mullins Library. I now need to ask you to say your full name and to spell it for us.

JE: Okay. My name is Minnie Joycelyn Elders. I never use the Minnie part, so it's usually M-period—Joycelyn—J-O-Y-C-E-L-Y-N—Elders—E-L-D-E-R-S.

[Note: Joycelyn is pronounced JOY-slin]

SL: Well, I've been mispronouncing your name all this time and you've never corrected me. That's so gracious of you. [Laughs]

JE: Oh. Well, Bill Clinton always called me [pronounced as] JAW-slin, and I would

tell people it was [pronounced as] JOY-slin, but then I tell everybody. [They'd say], "But Bill Clinton called you—" I said, "I know. He didn't think I knew my name."

SL: I probably just misspelled your name on the form, too, I bet. That's terrible.

JE: Right. But I've spelled it correct.

SL: Well, now, about your name—you've changed your name.

JE: Yes.

SL: What was your name originally?

JE: It—my name originally was Minnie Lee. It was an—I was named after my Grandmother Minnie.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And, of course, they always called my grandmother Big Minnie and I was Little Minnie.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: And when I was in high school I had—there was a company; it was called the Joycelyn Company and they made big peppermint sticks. You know, you never see big peppermint sticks . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . much anymore. And—and we—I would—we would always buy these peppermint sticks. I—I think they only cost a nickel or . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . or a dime at the most, but they were—and so I thought that was really so nice, and so—because—and I was always called Mint. And so when I saw this, Joycelyn and they made this mint candy, I just thought that that was such a pretty

name and . . .

SL: It is.

JE: . . . so I changed my name from Minnie Lee to Minnie Joycelyn, and I had everybody—and I dropped the Minnie part, and I was—had everyone call me Joycelyn. My family still calls me Mint.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: And my—in fact, I think there's only one person in my family that calls me Joycelyn. The—the rest call me Mint.

[00:03:01] SL: Well, let's talk about your—your family early on, now. Tell me about your mom and your dad.

JE: Okay. My mom and my dad is—my mother was Haller—H-A-L-L-E-R—Haller and Jones. And my dad's name is Curtis Jones. And we were—I guess I was probably nineteen when my parents—when I was born.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: My mother was nineteen . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . when I was born. We lived, you know, down—you know, on—on a farm—really in a shack, I would say, but, you know, I didn't know anything about the shack. But I lived—we lived there for a long time because it was part of my—a grandfather's house on their farm. You know, it was kind of like the farm shacks.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: So I understand from my parents that I was a very sickly baby.

SL: Hmm.

JE: That I was—you know, that I had a lot of trouble with eczema, so I had a lot of

skin problems. And I had troubles with always vomiting and diarrhea, so I had a difficult babyhood, if you will.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But after I finally got well. You know, after I'd had everything it was possible to have.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: Finally grew up. I really never had any more significant illnesses. In fact, I can't remember but one illness that I had after I was—after I—after I can remember things.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And this was—I was probably five, six.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: It was somewhere between five and ten.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: I had a rather—I think it was probably a kind of encephalitis . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . because I don't remember anything for several days, and my parents were just—you know, I—they didn't think that I was going to wake up or . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But, you know, after however many days I did wake up, and I remember the first thing that I wanted when I woke up is I wanted, what we called at that time some clabbered milk. You know, in the country we milked the cows and let the milk sit until it thickened and—in order to get the cream off the milk to make butter, and we made buttermilk. So—but I just wanted some of the clabbered milk. And,

you know, my parents—they didn't—you know, you didn't really give away your clabbered milk because you were saving it to churn to make butter. But because when I woke up and said that—you know, whatever they had I could get that. And I remembered having that and, of course, I guess I just woke up and I was fine and—but I feel that it was probably—I had high fevers and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . I feel that it was probably some type of encephalitis that—maybe a viral encephalitis and I got over it and was fine.

[00:06:17] SL: What was your mother's maiden name?

JE: Reed.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Haller Reed.

SL: Now, did you know her family—her mom and dad or . . .?

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: What—tell me about her mom and dad.

JE: Oh, my—my mother—there were seventeen children.

SL: She was one of seventeen.

JE: She was one of seventeen children. Now, I don't—she wasn't number one, but . . .

SL: She was early.

JE: . . . she was—she was in the early crew.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And several of her siblings died. You know, they had illnesses.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: I remember one who had severe—had meningitis.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And there—I—this was one that I remember, and, you know, some others had died before . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . I—I was along. And she had—I forget how many aunts and uncles I had, but many. But every Sunday I remember we used to—my dad would hook—hook up the wagon and we would get in the wagon and it was probably five or six miles from where my grandparents lived and where my parents in their farm shack was living, and we would drive up the country roads and through the woods and past the church and up to that—my grandparents' home. And we just thought that, you know, they were really living. It would be super country shack by our style today, but they were really—we thought, that where they lived was so much better than where we lived. You know, they had I think—probably five or six rooms and they had a—a hallway. You know, all houses at that time had a hall—you know, a large hall in—you know, where people—the big front porch and then you had the hall that went the length of the house so—to keep it cool.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so my grandmother always had a huge Sunday dinner, and it was just—and all of my aunts and uncles were always there and out—you know, to me it was just a wonderful outing on Sunday, and this is where we always went on Sunday.

[00:08:39] SL: You know, I haven't asked you yet, where and when you were born.

JE: Yeah. I was born August the thirteenth, 1933, in a very tiny community called Schaal—S-C-H-A-A-L, Arkansas, down in Howard County. And ninety-nine people were there. I always tell people, "And ninety-eight when I'm up here."

SL: [Laughs]

JE: So it's a—it was a very small town. We had a post office and a grocery store and
a . . .

SL: What—what town was it closest to?

JE: It's closest to Mineral Springs—that's still in existence now—or Nashville
[Arkansas]. It's about forty miles from Texarkana.

SL: So back to this outing on the Sundays to your—and—and this is your
mother's . . .

JE: Mother's family.

SL: . . . folks.

JE: Yes.

SL: And your mom was one of seventeen children.

JE: Yes.

SL: So on these Sundays how many folks would be there?

JE: I don't—I'm not sure I really remember, but it seemed like a lot, you know?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: I would say, fifteen or twenty, you know? It would just be—you know, it would
be us, you know . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . and—and my other aunts and uncles and their husbands—you know, their
spouses and so it was just—everybody came for Sunday dinner at Grandma
[Elnora's?], you know? That's just what you did. Nobody ever thought of doing
anything else.

SL: Well, was it—was it—did it follow church in the morning or . . .?

JE: Usually it was after church.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Usually we went to church, and then after church we would go to Grandma's house.

SL: Uh-huh. And hitched up the wagon. We're talking about a horse-drawn . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . or a mule-drawn wagon.

JE: That's absolutely correct. We—you know, we had a—a old—I remember their names—Ol' Horse and Jen. That was the name that—we had a mule and horse or kind of a—and, you know, they were just wonderful. And then we had another—I guess Ol' Horse's sibling and they called it Ol' Colt. You know, everything was Ol' something.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: And, you know, Ol' Colt—we could just go out in the middle of the pasture after he grew up, and—and just get on him, you know? He didn't need a bridle—didn't need a rope—didn't need anything. He'd just let you come up and climb up on him and . . .

SL: Go.

JE: . . . go.

SL: Hold onto the mane.

JE: Hold on. That's right.

[00:11:30] SL: So I—I'm getting the image there that these—the house that you grew up in was probably like a sharecropper . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . shack or . . .

JE: Yes. Absolutely.

SL: And—but your grandmother’s house, probably just from the sheer size of her family, was a bigger—bigger house and . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . maybe had bigger rooms in it and . . .

JE: Right.

SL: And I’m assuming that they probably also had a pretty big garden plot.

JE: Oh, yes. We’re—but both of us, you know—my parents and my grandparents had large gardens, and my grandfather’s mother or my grandfather’s family—you know, they had—they owned—you know, not a lot of black people owned much . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . property then. But they owned quite a lot of property. And each of the siblings—there was four or five of them—each of them ended up with, you know, like, 100-plus acres of land. But, you know, that was all there was. You know, people didn’t worry. Land was everywhere. Land was plentiful.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: So they—so they, you know, worked—they—they really worked their own farm and my grandfather had a truck, you know?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But, you know, very few people had—it was a red and white truck. But very few people had trucks, you know? They—you know, it was really just a—you know, just a wagon.

[00:13:05] SL: And what about chickens and hogs and . . . ?

JE: Oh, we had all of those. In fact, my mother's parents—they did milk lots of cows and sold—you know, and separated the milk from the cream and sold that for a— or as a cash flow thing. But we had loads of—lots of chickens, lots of hogs, lots of cows—even a few goats—lots of chickens and Guineas—lots of turkeys. The one thing that we plenty of was food. It may not have been what you wanted . . .

SL: Right.

JE: . . . but you had plenty of food.

[00:13:52] SL: What about electricity?

JE: We didn't have electricity for a long number of years. I can't really remember. We had kerosene lamps . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . and that was really how we did everything. You know, we had a fireplace, wood . . .

SL: Stove.

JE: . . . cook—wood kitchen stoves. We had a smokehouse. And, you know, kerosene lamps for use for lighting the house and for studying. In fact, for most of the time until I was probably in sixth or seven grade or maybe later than that—in order to study or read—I loved to read. We didn't have much to read, but I would get under the quilts, you know? Under—get a quilt and put over—and put the lamp up under the quilt. I think of how dangerous that is now, but, you know, so we would have—so I would have enough light to read by and—and, you know, keep warm or, you know . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . if it was at—at night. The only place we had a—really, a heater—a place—was in the—the fireplace. So my mom and dad was in—in this one big room where they had the fireplace—big—the fireplace, and the rest of us were—well, as I grew older—well, my sister and I lived in—was in this one little room. You know, there was obviously no insulation. Sometimes windows were broken. You had cardboard over the windows. And my brothers—as we, you know, grew older they lived in the room on the other side, and we—so we were just—that was the way we lived. In fact, this was the second house that I’m really talking about. The very first house—it was just—we all—for the—we had kind of this one big room with a fireplace. Then we had a kitchen, and—and then we had one other little, you know, shack appendage attached onto that room. And that was—that was our home.

[00:16:06] SL: Give me a typical day when you were growing up. Let’s say—can you remember much before you started to school?



JE: What I remember most about before I started to school—my mother wanted to make sure that I did well when I went to school. I mean, she—this was—she only finished eighth grade.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But it was important to her that we got what she called “an education.” To her an education was to finish high school, since nobody had finished high school. You know, what was just not a thing that you thought about. So before I started school, my—what I remember most was my mom was always trying to—probably before I really should’ve been trying—making sure that I was learning my alphabets and my numbers and learning to read. And, I mean, she would just

drill, and I would—you know, I would pretend I had to go out to the—we—you know, it wasn't a bathroom. It was an outside privy, and I would pretend I had to go to the bathroom, you know, when I would—couldn't remember something. And so she really—she really worked very hard to give me what I call a “good start.” And I started school when I was five.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: My birthday is in August. So, now, you know, I'm barely five. I started to school when I was five. But when I started school I could read, I knew my alphabets, I could write all of my ABCs, I could add. And so, you know, I really did well.



But they had—we had a one-room schoolhouse and Miss [Eulistine?] Brown was our teacher. And—and she had from first through the eighth grade—from me through the eighth grade, because that was as far as we went. And—and we were all inside. It's amazing. I remember how—somehow we were all kept busy doing something. And often I was, you know, having to write stories or do something or help somebody else read. And I'm a little kid, but I would be helping a bigger kid read, you know? I might be . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . reading to them or telling them what—but—but, you know, everybody was working to the maximum of their ability, and we were all always doing something or getting ready for the Christmas play or—or Easter play. You know, it—you know, Christmas and Easter and Valentine's—all holidays were big days—Thanksgiving—were big days then because that's—that's all you had. And we walked to school, which was about four or five miles through the woods, you know? But there were several other kids, you know, that was doing the same

thing so, you know, they would always come by and we would—I would join on with them for the walk to school.

[00:19:14] SL: So in that one-room school how—how many kids were in there?

JE: I would say—you know, I'm—you have it all—but I would say at least twenty or more.

SL: Uh-huh. And spread out from your—from five years old to eighth grade.

JE: Oh, yeah, probably to eighteen.

SL: Yeah.

JE: So, you know, even—so it was a . . . you know, we were all in this—and we were all in one room.

SL: Yeah.

JE: You know, it wasn't like there was some over here.

[00:19:45] SL: And the—what—what about books? What kind of books were there?

SL: Well, you know, we kind of all—we always had—you know, when you first started, you know, they had what they called the pre-primer and the primer and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And then you, you know, got to the first grade books. But very, very few books. But the school gave us, you know, those books and they assigned them to us and then we had to turn them back in at the end of the year, so—and reuse them. And then many of the books that, you know, the black kids had—the white kids—you know—you know, they were kind of hand—handed down.

SL: Handed down. Uh-huh.

JE: And—but, you know, we were very glad to get them and they were very—they

didn't have—there was no such thing as a library. The only books—you know, there were—the teacher may have had some books over there—I remember over on a shelf or something. But, you know, it was a kind of homemade shelf that maybe the parents, you know, had built for her to keep a few of the different books and things on.

[00:20:46.] SL: Were there seasons where school didn't happen?

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: Where harvest or . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . or whatever was going on in the agricultural community that . . .

JE: Oh.

SL: . . . kids were let out to help with the crops and . . .

JE: Oh, yes. Usually when it was time to put in the crops in the early spring.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: That would—you know, you'd have to be out of school. And even—and this continued, really, all the way up through high school, and if you didn't—even after we moved over to—you know, they—after a while the consolidated the one-room school and we went over to, what they called Howard County Training School, which was school for black kids for much of Howard County, and they—we were all bussed into this one school.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And they were kind of—we were divided by grades for the most part then. But even then—see, if we were needed in the fields or something, we—we just couldn't—we had to miss school. And in the fall, you know, you were



gathering—gathering the crops. So you had to be out of school to gather the crops. We were always, you know, ashamed to tell people that, you know, that—what we were doing and what we had to do. But many kids were doing the same thing.

[00:22:14] SL: And it probably didn't hold true for the—the white kids in their school.

JE: No.

SL: Or did they get out, too?

JE: Well, I don't—I don't . . .

SL: You don't know?

JE: . . . really know.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You know, I don't really remember.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You know, because, see, they had a different school, a different bus—everything was different, so . . .

[00:22:31] SL: Okay. Let's—I—I want to go backwards now. We kind of got into the school and I want to go back to school in a little bit.

JE: Uh-huh. Okay.

SL: But we haven't talked about—we've talked a little bit about your mom and that she got an eighth grade education. What about your dad?

JE: My dad got an eighth grade—they were both at the—went to the eighth grade.

SL: And he was entirely supportive of learning the reading and the writing and . . .

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: . . . and the arithmetic . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . at home, getting everything prepped.

JE: Yes.

[00:22:58] SL: And you had one sister and a couple of brothers or . . . ?

JE: Well, see—well, see—ended up—I ended up with four—four brothers and three sisters, so there were eight of us, and I was number one.

SL: Were you kind of expected to help with the kids . . .

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: . . . since you were the oldest?

JE: Oh, yes. You know, when—if—if my mother, you know, went to the fields to help work, she could really keep the workers working better than I could, you know?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so I did—I was the babysitter. In fact, I was kind of the mother for the rest—for my sisters and brothers. And I would stay home and babysit and . . .

SL: Excuse me.

JE: . . . take care of the garden and cook dinner so supper would ready.

SL: And I—I'm just assuming that your dad was working sunup to sundown.

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: All the time.

JE: Sunup to sundown in the spring and fall—you know, during work season. And then he was a hunter. He did a lot of hunting for raccoons and 'possums [opossums] and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . mink or whatever he could find to sell the hides.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And he did—he sold those to buy some land—you know, his own little farm, and at first, I guess, about forty acres or something, which he was very proud of.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And then he—you know, then he started buying—you know, again, from hunting and buying a cow here a calf there and . . .

SL: That's interesting that it was only—it was a—a second income, really—the hunting.

JE: Yes.

[00:24:40] SL: The—I'm—do I assume that the crop was mostly cotton or . . . ?

JE: Mostly cotton and—and—and—cotton, corn, peanuts, sorghum—you know, but those were—the cash—cash crop was cotton, and lots of corn and hay. But that was primarily to feed the cattle.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And the sorghum—you know, we made molasses. And, of course, some of the corn we used to make meal.

SL: Right.

JE: You know, we had to take it to the mill to get it ground to make meal . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . to make cornbread.

[00:25:16] SL: So the whole family—were they involved when the—when the crop came in?

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: So you were out there picking cotton.



JE: Absolutely. Oh, absolutely. I picked—I was very proud when I was able to pick 200 pounds a day. And so—no, we worked very hard. You know, we always really wanted to get it picked and get everything done so we could go to school.

SL: Yeah.

JE: Because, see, as long as there was cotton and stuff to be gathered, you—you had to . . .

SL: You weren't in school.

JE: You weren't in school. That's right.

SL: And everyone liked school better.

JE: Absolutely.

[00:25:54] SL: Of course. What about your dad's parents? What's the story on them?

JE: Well, my dad's parents were very similar in many respects to my—my mother's parents. When we were younger, we were living on my mother's dad's farm, kind of. So we were a little bit closer to them and my mother's—my dad's parents lived further away from us. And—and—and—but we would still go see them every so often, but not as often.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And—but, you know, when I say not as often, we're talking about—we're talking about once a—at least once a month or probably more often . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . than that.

SL: Were they in the same county or . . . ?

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: Okay.

JE: No, they were—they—and went to the same church.

SL: Ahh.

JE: So—so—so we—so in that sense, we saw them. As we grew older and after my dad—it was kind of during the war [World War II] in [19]40—in the early [19]40s—well, my dad went—went into—went into the Navy, and when he came out we—you know, we really didn't have anyplace to stay, and so for a while we—we lived with my grandmother and—and grandfather.

SL: On your dad's side.

JE: On my dad's side.

[00:27:14] SL: And how big was your dad's family?

JE: My—my dad's family was about the same size. I think he had thirteen sisters—you know, a very large family.

SL: And was their house similar to your mom's parents' house?



JE: Probably, a little, very similar. Probably a little less—a little less well-built.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Let me say that. But probably about the same size. In fact, I guess there were about six, as I think about it—six rooms in my dad's house. And we always loved to go there, too, because both of them were a lot better than what we had.

[00:28:02] SL: Yeah. And did—what about on those Sundays after church? Did—did your dad's folks join with y'all or . . .

JE: Not . . .

SL: . . . did they have their own set of kids that they . . .

JE: They . . .

SL: . . . they got together with?

JE: They had their own set of kids and—and we didn't—we didn't go to their house very much early to—for festive kind of events.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: In fact, you know, there seemed to be some dissension or something between my mom and my dad's parents, and they didn't get along quite so well so . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: So we—we didn't really—they didn't join—you know, we would go to see one or we'd go see the other, but very seldom were we seeing both.

[00:28:56] SL: Uh-huh. Let's see, what was I gonna—? I was gonna ask about—oh, excuse me. Oh, okay. I guess I need to know both sets of the grandparents' names.

JE: All right. My—had two Grandpa Charlies.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: I had a Grandpa Charlie Reed and a Grandpa Charlie Jones. And my mother—my grandmother—my Grandpa Charlie Jones was—her name was Minnie. Minnie Lee. Minnie Jones. And my—to my Grandpa Charlie Reed was [Elnora?].

[00:29:35] SL: And did—did you ever have any—do you remember any conversations you had with any of your grandparents that kind of, you know, struck a chord with you or influenced you in any way?

JE: Oh, you know, my Grandma Minnie . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . lived to be ninety-nine.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: So I—you know, we knew—I knew both my grandparents well.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: In fact, they were both alive almost until I left to go to college.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: So—so—so, you see, I really knew them, so I had—there were lots—we had lots of family. I had lots of aunts and uncles. I had two sets of grandparents and I had parents and, you know, all these aunts and uncles on both sides, so I didn't have to worry even about having friends. I had enough [laughs] family.

[00:30:33] SL: Really. I—I guess when I—do you—did they every tell you any—any stories about their lives that you—that you can remember—the things that they went through or even their parents?

JE: Yes.

SL: Did you know your great-grandparents at all?

JE: Yes.

SL: Well, let's talk about you great . . .

JE: So, see, I'm—I'm really rich. The one thing I'm really rich in is family.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: My—I—Grandma Minerva was my Grandpa Charlie Jones's mother.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so she—in fact, she used to come over and stay with them for two or—you know, took—she lived at [Ben Lowman?] or something like that. And she'd just take a while, you know, for her to come over and really visit. And, you know, she really—we really enjoyed her sitting around telling stories, but right now I really can't remember many of her stories. I remember the one story that I really

remember, but my Grandpa Charlie Jones told this story—how he was shipped—
how—he—he—I—got in some trouble in Georgia, and he was a young man
and—and the way that she got him out of Georgia—the way—and she put him in
a trunk and shipped him to Arkansas . . .

SL: Wow.

JE: . . . in a trunk.

[00:31:55] SL: Wow. Do you have any idea what the trouble was—what he was . . . ?

JE: No, I really—I—I—I really don't. You know, there are people who've said,
“Well, he had gotten in trouble and he killed a man,” and—you know?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But I—I don't really know that I know a—a lot about that.

SL: That's a big trip—Georgia to Arkansas.

Trey Marley: Do you know how long it took?

JE: I—I don't know. You know, it was—so many—so few of the details. But, you
know, he claimed he was shipped in this trunk. And, you know, I—and then my
dad had an old leather trunk that was my granddaddy's trunk, and I have it . . .

SL: Wow.

JW: . . . in my house today.

SL: Well, we may have to get a picture of that a little later. That's—that's—that's a
great story. So any other, tale or story . . .

JE: [Laughs]

SL: . . . from the great-grandparents or in the family, that kind of . . .

JE: It . . .

SL: . . . paints a picture of America in their time?

JE: Well, you know, I—I—you know, I know my dad, you know, always, you know, you know, talked about how hard they really had to work. And my granddad—you know, how *hard*, you know, they really had to work and, you know, they used to, you know, cut timber and [] wood to finally buy his first farm.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And, you know, kind of a side thing.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But—and I—and I—[00:33:29] I remember the hog killings, but I remember those. And those were things that we did, so . . .

SL: In the winter?

JE: Yes—had to do it in the winter. We didn't have a refrigerator.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: So you had to really—kill the hogs, salt down the meat . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . hang it in a smokehouse and smoke it and, you know, and cure it. And—and that's what you had to eat on, you know, for the winter and throughout the rest of the year.

SL: They used every part of those hogs, too.

JE: Oh, absolutely. I don't remember a thing—you know, we loved, you know, the chittlins, you know?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: That was a really very important part, and we always, you know, cleaned them and really enjoyed them. In fact, I still—I had chittlins New Year's. [Laughter] But every year—every New Year's I always fix chittlins. I might have them some

other time, but I—that’s just kind of a tradition that—that—that we had at that time. But, you know, we used the brain and, you know, the feet and the pig tails. In fact, you know, for—for New Year’s now, I got and I hunt until I find some pig feet and some pig tails. I can’t stand brain, but . . .

SL: [Laughs] So you—you kind of take a trip down “Memory Lane” every New Year’s, just ‘cause . . .

JE: Oh, yes. And—and—and—and we may have some—I hunt, but I can’t find them very much anywhere, for raccoons.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And, you know, because these—or ‘possums—these were things we always had, and my mom until she died made sure they were there in an addition to the black-eyed peas every year.

[00:35:24] SL: Are those farms still in the family?

JE: We still own all of them.

SL: That’s so good.

JE: No. In fact, technically—but—with my sisters and brothers—but technically I—they’re all in my name down in Howard County right now. In fact, we just bought another eighty acres, and we did that—there was the Reed family and the Jones family—and there was this eighty acres in between that belonged to somebody else. Five years ago I bought it.

[00:35:56] SL: That’s good. What’s the nearest—what river was closest to y’all?

JE: Probably Saline . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . and then we had Mine Creek that was . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . and—that kind of ran through the back of our property. And now—but we had to sell my—the first farm that my dad bought. We had to sell part of it, but they still let us use the back parts of it. But it's right on Millwood Dam.

SL: Okay.

JE: And it runs up to—you know, it goes right up to the dam, but . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . then we had to sell, you know, you know, a part of that. In fact, a part of it's in the dam.

SL: Yeah.

JE: Not in the dam but in the—under the, lake, I guess—[Millwood].

[00:36:40] SL: When—when you were growing up, did y'all ever have any trouble with the white community at all—any harassment?

JE: Yeah.

SL: Any . . . ?

JE: You know, it's amazing. I—we lived just up—after we—this was our second move, I guess, for me.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And we lived in all kind of—a white farmer's old house, you know, after he—their family had all moved away.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And it was up the street from—street—up the road—lane . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . from where his daughter lived.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And they were really always very, very good to us. In fact, Miss May Dossy—they were the Dossys and the Joneses and—she would—you know, when my mom would have a baby, I remember she would come up and wash—you know, that was back in the days when they thought you had to stay in the house for thirty days and stuff like that.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Well, she would come up and do my mom's washing and help her cook and help to take care of us. And, well, you know, of course, my mom—you know, it was normal that she would go and work and help her, but—but I remember she would just always come and, you know, and help us during the times. And the most amazing thing—after I was here—not in this house, but after I became health director, she—I remember she was talking to somebody down in Nashville, and she was talking about, me, and she said, “Oh, yes, I'm so proud of her. That's just one of my little nigger girls.”

SL: Oh! [Laughs]

JE: But, you know, I didn't take it offensively.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: She was really meaning it very lovingly.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: She was very pleased that I had really done well and—and gone ahead and moved—and moved forward. And I know my dad—you know, he'd worked with a lot of the white farmers, you know? They had kind of the farmers' association or something—and they all couldn't buy, you know, like the hay cutters and the

hay balers. But they each would buy—get a piece. And they would all work together to cut and bale the hay and to try and get it in before, you know, the rain or whatever was going. And I really don't ever remember our having any problem at all with the white community. Now, there was incident that I remember that—not related to me—it was related to one of my uncles. And my uncle would, you know, sell bootleg and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And—and I remember the sheriff came over, you know, to—investigator to pick him up, and my Grandmother [Elnora?] was very upset, and she really—you know, she was jumping on the sheriff. And I remember the sheriff hit her and she was bleeding and—but that was the only incident that I remember that—and I'm not sure . . .

SL: Pitted them . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And, you know, my—and my brothers were very good friends to the white guys that was there. In fact, many of them are still—right now—good, you know, good friends to one another. In fact, that was who we bought the eighty acres from. They was—it was in between. So I don't remember—but I don't remember any of the other people in the black community or white community. Now, we—you know, we knew we were black. They knew they were white. We knew our place and, you know—and we didn't try to go and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . get into their place . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . or their space. But as far as—we accepted it. Maybe we didn't have enough sense or mmph or whatever it takes to know better, but we accepted it. But we never—you—you—we—you know, it never was a pitting one against the other, and—and I—you know, the white person owned the grocery store always let my mom and dad have groceries and they always paid, I—I guess. You know, I don't know. So I don't remember us feeling—you know, we knew we were the black people and they were the white people—I'm not saying that. But I'm just saying that I don't remember it being any antagonism in—in this tiny community. And, you know, and I've talked—you know, my sisters and brothers, we've all talked about it.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And we all agree, and even the woman who said, “Well, that's my little nigger girl,” well, her two daughters were teachers and they—when I was health director they'd come up to see me. You know, what I'm saying is, we still—they really liked and respected each other, and if my mother had to have two dollars to send me to stay in college, she'd go over and they'd let her have two dollars. But—and by the same token, if something happened and they needed my dad to come pull them out of the mud or do whatever, that just happened.

[00:42:47] SL: Uh-huh. Sounds like a—a very—a supportive community that relied on everyone helping everyone in order to get by.

JE: You know, I think that that's how we all felt, and we all felt that . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . everybody in the community would help one another as best they could. You

know, my mom would have this great big garden and everybody would come by.

“Haller, I need a mess of greens,” you know?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Or whoever had something, and when one—one would kill hogs, they would try and spread them out a little bit so they would have fresh meat longer . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . you know? “You give me part of—” You know, they would each, you know—“Well, we’re gonna kill hogs on Thursday.” Well, you know, they would go so they could make sure that they got some fresh meat. You know, other than that, see, we had nothing but salt meat.

SL: What about—you didn’t have electricity for a long time.

JE: No.

SL: So I know you didn’t have radios going on.

JE: No.

[00:43:32] SL: What did y’all do for—I’m—was there music around?

JE: You know, I’m—you know we had—for a while, you know, we had battery radios. But when I—when I’m starting to remember, we probably didn’t have a radio and we got the “Grit” paper once a week.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: So that was our contact with the outside world.

SL: But later on in high school we got electricity.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You know, when I was in eighth or ninth grade, I would say, we got electricity.

And then we had—you know, everybody got these—got, you know, radios and

a—record players and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You know, that was what you—you had to really save up for it to have something like that. And it was much later before we got TV.

[00:44:25] SL: Well, when that electricity hit, that probably changed everything quite a bit.

JE: Well, it—it allowed us to commun[communicate]—you know, we were—knew more about what was—we could hear music, I think. We didn't really, I don't think, appreciated news as much.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: I don't remember us really talking much about . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . news or what was going on. But, yeah, now we did—and, see, the—but down in that part of the country the radio station that we got the most was WLAC in Nashville, Tennessee. So, you know, that wasn't relating to us . . .

SL: Right.

JE: . . . except for the music.

[00:45:06] SL: Right. So I was gonna—when—how was I gonna say this? The—you said something that made you want to ask—oh—was the only musical instrument in the community—was it at the church?

JE: The only musical instrument in the community as I remember was at the church. And most churches had some type of old piano.

SL: Yeah.

JE: And the school—but at our—at my—our first school I don't remember us having

a piano at that school. But, you know, when we was bussed they had a piano at school.

SL: What about guitars or harmonicas or . . . ?

JE: Well, now—now, *everybody* had a harmonica.

SL: Yeah?

JE: Oh, yeah.

SL: Okay.

JE: Yeah. You know, the ones you . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Yeah. Everybody had a harmonica.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: In fact, that's—often you'd get those for Christmas presents. You know, they were very inexpensive at the time.

SL: So did you play a harmonica?

JE: No, I didn't.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: I didn't. No, I just—I didn't know how to play. I'd probably just blow through it, but . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . my brothers always had one.

[00:46:27] SL: What about—I'm trying to think of—what did y'all do when you weren't working—when you—? I mean . . .

JE: Well, when we weren't working—I'm trying—I'm trying to imagine when—because it seems as though we were always . . .

SL: Working.

JE: If we weren't working in the fields, we were working—you know, and in the spring and all, we were working in the gardens.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And we were canning and-and then you were at school. And we went to—now, every Saturday—Saturday afternoon we—we went to—we had soft—baseball games.

SL: Okay.

JE: And—and a picnic, you know? My dad would often barbecue a hog and he would be selling his barbecue at the picnic, and my mother would make ice cream and be selling ice cream at the picnic. So that would be on Saturdays. And we—yeah, we worked all the time, but we all—my dad played baseball, so we always—we were always—had Saturday afternoon to go to the baseball game.

SL: So it—it was . . .

JE: The whole community went. Everybody.

SL: So it was—the men all played the baseball game.

JE: Yes.

SL: And maybe a couple of them . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: Couple of games.

JE: Yeah. Yeah. It—it was—it—it was enough to occupy, as I remember, most of the afternoon. But maybe part of it was spent cooking.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You know, the men from the other communities—from other communities . . .

SL: Had their teams, too.

JE: . . . they had their teams, too, and they would come over and play.

SL: [Laughs] Great rivalry, I bet.

JE: Oh, yes, yes.

SL: Was—was your dad a good player?

JE: Yes. No, he was really quite a good player. He—he feels that had he come along at a different time he probably would've been a major . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . league baseball player. But, you know, that's hard to judge.

SL: Yeah.

JE: And he—you know, even up when he was in his eighties he still coached a girls' softball team. You know, he'd get in his truck and go get his girls, and they would go and—oh, that was—that was probably the thing that kept him going the latter part of his life.

[00:48:50] SL: So I'm trying to think—was there anything—it seemed like to me that because your mom had spent so much time with you with getting ready for school . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . that you kind of had a—you contributed to everyone's—you helped teach folks how to read and write . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . when you—early on.

JE: Yes.

SL: And did that continue all the way until you actually went to the high school?

JE: Kind of. Yes.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And—and I—well, I always did well in school.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But, you know, probably not that I was necessarily that much smarter, it was that I had gotten a good start. And so I was always working a little ahead of the people . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . at my age level or grade level.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so—so—so I always enjoyed that. And even when we transferred from this little one, Bright Star, over to Howard County Training School, I still did well at school . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . because I was—you know—and when I—when my dad—when we went to California for my parents to work in the shipyards, I—I—you know, they tested, you know, students from the South. You know, they would—many of them would come in and say, “I’m in the tenth grade,” and, you know, they couldn’t read. Didn’t even recognize their name. I’m—I’m probably exaggerating, but many of them of the kids from the South just weren’t in the grades they said they were in.

SL: Yeah.

JE: Well, they may have been in the grades they said they were in, but they weren’t functioning . . .

SL: At that level.

JE: . . . at that level. And so what they would do is kind of give you a—some kind of little test, you know? And then you were placed where they thought you ought to be.

SL: Right.

JE: Within reason, you know, kind of—and so I was placed two grades ahead of where I—they thought that that I ought to—should have been. But that was probably not because I was two grades ahead—smarter than the kids in California, but—but because I was from Arkansas and the South and—I was . . . the kids that tested at my level from the South—well, they said, “Well, I know they said they are in the twelfth grade, but they’re really in the eighth grade.” You know, it was like that. Well, I was saying I was in the sixth grade and I was really in the eighth grade.

[00:51:31] SL: Did you have a—a favorite subject early on?

JE: Oh, I think reading and math was by far my favorites.

[00:51:38] SL: Uh-huh. Do you remember the first book you read?

JE: No, we didn’t have many books and the things that, you know, my—that we bought—our folks bought us that we could—was Grimm’s Fairy Tales.

SL: Oh.

JE: And, of course, we all read that probably more—you know, the—got to have—we had the big book with all the—and so we probably read every one ten times . . .

SL: [Laughs]

JE: . . . at least. And—but that was, as I remember, one of the very first books that I—that I really read from . . .

SL: Front to back.

JE: . . . front to back and back to front and . . .

[00:52:24] SL: [Laughs] What about the—what about the Bible?

JE: Well, we always read the Bible. I wasn't considering—you know, that is a book, but, you know, that was just kind of a part of what was done, all the time. And I taught Sunday school for five or six years.

SL: When did you start that?

JE: When I was—I was the secretary of the Sunday school when I was probably—when I was in the fourth or fifth grade.

[00:52:53] SL: Wow. So, at home when you—when you came to the—the table for breakfast or lunch or dinner, was there always a grace said?

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: There was—and, you know, you came to the—you know—you know, it's breakfast, and you came and you sat—my mom always fixed breakfast. We—everybody came. We said grace and everybody ate. You know, we didn't have this—"I want a egg and I want mine scrambled and . . ."

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: It was done. You sat down and you was glad to get a plate. We always had enough, but it was not—you know, it was what she fixed, and that was what you ate. And you didn't—you didn't complain.

[00:53:40] JE: Did y'all take turns saying grace or was it always the father or . . .?

JE: My dad said grace most of the time.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And, in fact, I would say almost all the time.

[00:53:54] SL: Uh-huh. And . . . What—what about—who—did y'all help do the dishes or was that always . . . ?

JE: No, we—we—we—my sister and I, who was next to me—we were older and we did the dishes most of the time.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: When I was home. You know, she would do them one time and I would do them the other. Now, when we were going to school—you know, when—when—we had to catch the bus, I guess my mom did the dishes. I'm sure she did.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And when we got—well, you know, and after dinner at night—you know, after school, well, you know, my sister would do them one day and I would do them the next day.

[00:54:40] SL: Now, when you talk about the bus—that didn't happen until later, right?

JE: No, that was after—I was probably in the fifth or sixth. You know, when I left Bright Star . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . you know, this little one-room school—we—we had to catch the bus then to go to Tollette, which is about thirteen or fourteen miles away.

SL: And when you went to school at—at Bright Star, did you always take your lunch with you and . . . ?

JE: Yes. Oh, yes.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: In fact, for a while even at Tollette, we would take our lunch with us, and then they started serving hot lunch.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And we—oh, that was just wonderful. We'd never had anything as great as hot—and I think, what, it would cost a nickel or . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . twenty-five cents a week at the most.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And, you know, that was—and even—it may have even—for some of us it may have even been free. But I remember we had to pay a little bit.

[00:55:38] SL: Yeah. Well, what was the most—what was the most fun for you, you know, in your early years? What—what was it you liked to do the most?

JE: I think the thing that I liked to do the most is probably read.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You know, I . . . I—I—any time that I wasn't working or doing—I would try and find a book and go someplace and sit down and read. But, yeah, I had to do a lot of babysitting in my early years. And even when, on Sundays—you know, if we wanted to go visit our girlfriends to just play—you know, just—well, I would always have to take my little—younger sisters or brothers with me because, you know, I guess my mother wanted to rest, and this was the way, you know, we—if we wanted to go we had to take them with us.

[00:56:44] SL: You know, you talked about surviving—that you were kind of sickly as an infant and—and let's talk about medical care in those early, early days and—and what that looked like.



JE: Medical care in those early, early days I would say was probably nonexistent. We used, you know, the home remedies . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . whatever they were.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You know, the turpentine and the quinine and the asafoetida and, you know, whatever was—castor oil and kerosene on sugar cubes—you know, whatever—obviously. I remember—again, very early, my brother got very ill and, you know, usually when we got ill, you know, with diarrhea or something or stomach ache—well, we *all* got ill. But just my brother this time was ill. And I remember his abdomen, you know, became very distended and he was very sick. And I—I remember my mom telling my dad—said, “Curtis, you’re gonna have to take my baby to the doctor.” And he—my dad had made some time of a little rig, saddled it up, and—and—and put it on the horse—probably Ol’ Dick, I guess, and—to take my brother to the doctor. Well, when he got there, well, the doctor, you know, put in a—a drainage tube, you know, to drain out the pus and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . and sent him back home. But that was all—you know, they didn’t have anyplace to hospitalize black children. So, you know—so, you know, when you got sick, you know, you went to the doctor’s office and you waited all day until all the white patients were seen, and then he would see the black patients. And so when he got to my brother he said the only thing he could do is open it—put—and I remember now, it was a big, red tube hanging out of my brother’s abdomen when he came back home. But can you imagine going thirteen miles on the back

of a mule—how awful that must've—and then back home. My brother lived and became a veterinarian. I say he was treated like a pig, so he [laughs] learned to take care . . .

[00:59:20] SL: Did—did you ever know what was wrong with him?

JE: I—I'm sure. No. I'm sure he had appendicitis—that it ruptured and he had a—a—peritonitis.

SL: How did he survive that? I mean . . .

JE: Tough.

SL: . . . that's . . .

JE: That's right.

SL: That's fatal stuff.

JE: Well, but the best thing you could do is what the doctor did—drain it. If you didn't drain it there was no way he was going to survive. But if you opened it and drained it and let it all, yep, the body will heal.

SL: What a stroke.

JE: That's right. That's what they do to animals.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: No, they do, and . . .

SL: [Laughs] So your brother had an affinity for . . .

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: . . . for taking care of animals.

JE: That's right.

SL: [Laughs] Wow.

TM: Scott, we need to change tapes.

SL: Okay. We've gone an hour.

JE: Well . . .

SL: How are you doing?

[Tape Stopped]

[01:00:15] SL: Okay. Now, Joy, what was it that you wanted to know? You wanted to know about the age differences and the . . .

Joy Endicott: Uh-huh—of her brother, []—from her to the youngest.

SL: Okay.

JE: From my—well, the age difference from the oldest to the youngest—there were—you know, there were four of us—there was the older four and then there was the younger four. And I would say that I was—I'm—it was probably about twenty years . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . from—from the oldest to the youngest.

[01:02:09.01] SL: My mom and dad would've called that the fall and the spring crops.

JE: [Laughter] Yeah, well that's about it.

SL: There's ten years' difference between myself—I'm part of that fall crop. There's ten years' difference between me and my next-oldest sibling.

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: So I'm kind of familiar with that.

JE: Yes.

SL: The younger ones seem to have it better than the old . . .

JE: No question about it.

[01:01:21] SL: [Laughs] So, let's see now—you did mention at one point in time

about your dad joining the Navy.

JE: Yes. Well, he—he didn't necessarily—well, he was in the Navy, but he was, you know, called.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You know, back then, you know, they had a call, and he was in the Navy. And he was up at Great Lakes [Illinois] and he was there—oh, I don't—but he wasn't in the Navy for very long. He was discharged on a physical disability, and I think it was related to his knee or something. They felt that—you know, he probably would've done fine in the Army, but he wasn't physically capable of what they were doing in the Navy, so he was discharged.

SL: And . . .

JE: He had a—an [honorable] . . .

SL: . . . so how old were you when that happened?

JE: I was in high school—probably in—well, no, I couldn't have been in high school. I was in—this was before we went to California. Am I right?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Because after my dad came back, that was when—after my dad came back from the Navy and all, but that was when we went to California. My dad went there first and got a job, and then my mom and my youngest brother—my brother Chester, who was a baby at the time—we went. And I and my other sisters—my sister and two brothers stayed with my Grandma [Elnora?], but I went. They took me to take care of Chester while they worked.

[01:03:00] SL: So—and how old do you think you were then?

JE: I was probably . . . twelve—eleven or twelve at the most.

SL: And so was it just economics that they . . . ?

JE: Yes, it was primarily economics. My dad thought—you know, he was—[the only way?] they could go out there and—my—he and my mother both work at the shipyards and they would earn some money. And then they were always were planning on coming back. Then they could come back home and, you know, buy them up—tractor and work the land and how they could—you know, they thought that they could really, you know, make a lot of money.

SL: How long were y'all out there?

JE: We were—we were in California probably about two years, I would—you know, not a long time. But I would say about two years.

SL: And where—were you in Long Beach or . . . ?

JE: We were in Richmond.

SL: Richmond. Oh.

JE: Richmond. We worked at the Kaiser Shipyards—my parents, worked at Kaiser Shipyards in Richmond, California.

SL: Is that Northern or Southern California?

JE: That's Northern California.

SL: Hmm.

JE: It's across the bay from San Francisco.

SL: Oh, I see. Okay, so it's like on the Oakland side of the bay?

JE: Yes, on Oakland side of the bay.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And it would be north of Oakland, I think.

SL: So—big difference.

JE: Yes.

SL: [Laughs] What . . . ?

JE: Yes.

[01:04:25] SL: What was your—? Well, first of all, did y'all go out there by train?

JE: We—my mom, myself and my brother—we went on the train.

SL: Uh-huh. And your dad—how did he get out there?

JE: Probably on the train, too. But I'm not . . .

SL: But ahead of you.

JE: But he went out ahead of us. I—I—probably on the train—I would say probably on the train. However, at the time—I can't really remember. My uncle was taking a lot of farm hands from down in that part of the country out to Arizona and California, you know, to work in the fields.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And it seems as though my dad may have gotten there and stayed.

SL: I see. So it—the—it was kind of migrant work . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . doing fruit harvest, probably.

JE: Yes, yes.

SL: And your dad maybe joined in with that, but he got out to California and decided . . .

JE: Got a job and . . .

SL: . . . opportunity . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . in the shipyards.

JE: Yes.

[01:05:27] SL: I see. Oh. So, okay—well, tell me, do you remember much about that train trip?

JE: I remember it was very long and that we didn't—my mom had packed—you know, cooked a lot of food to take for us to eat, but we were talking about three or—three days or more. I—you know . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . we were talking about day and night. And I—and I—and there were—at that time we didn't—you know, you didn't have assigned seats and we didn't always have a seat because there were—they were—you know, a lot of the soldiers and things was traveling on the train, too. And, you know, and obviously we had to, you know, sit up in our, chair—in our—in our chairs if we had a seat. So you may not have—see, you'd just pile on the train and you may not have—you know, you didn't have a place definite to sit down.

SL: Uh-huh. Was that . . .?

Joy Endicott: Scott. Scott, let me pull the pearls back on top.

JE: Oh, thank you.

SL: Was that because you were black or because . . .?

JE: No. No, no, no.

SL: No?

JE: The reason why we—it was because there were—the train was full.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: As I said, there were a lot of—in fact, I remember for part of the way I was sitting, really, next to a young white soldier, you know? And so—so it wasn't—so I

didn't think it was because, you know, it was a race thing. I think . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . it was just that they didn't have . . .

SL: Enough seats.

JE: . . . seating capacity.

[01:07:00] SL: Uh-huh. Well, so you—this was the first time that you had ventured maybe out of Howard County?

JE: That's . . . that's correct. That was the first time I'd ever been out of Howard County.

SL: You got to see the "Great West."

JE: Got . . .

SL: I guess you went—you probably went the southern route. Is that . . . ?

JE: We—well, we—I—let's—I—we went—I don't know whether we went the southern route or not. I don't—really don't know. I remember we—let's see, what did we do? We went to Texarkana. I remember that.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And got on the—maybe we went up through St. Louis, through Chicago . . . through—I remember we went through Salt Lake [City, Utah]. We crossed the Great Salt Lake.

SL: Oh, so you went the northern route.

JE: Okay. [Laughs] And—and over into—I think we ended up at the Embarcadero or something over to Oakland, and then we had to get on a boat or something to go over to—to get across—I might be getting things mixed up right now.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But I—but I remember, you know, hoards of us and, you know, we got—got on a boat and that, you know, we were just standing up. You know, it wasn't seats.

You know, it wasn't . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . that we got a ship and sat down and had a luxury thing.

[01:08:15] SL: Right. How did you get to Texarkana?

JE: My uncle took us in—in—see, my grandfather—my mother's father—always had, you know, a vehicle and always had a truck.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so, we went, and he took us over to Texarkana.

SL: Piled up in the back of the . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . pickup truck and . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . took off.

JE: Yes.

SL: What a great adventure.

JE: Yeah. And, you know, it wasn't really a pickup. You know, they had—I don't know—it was a truck with a wooden bed on it. It was a little bigger than a pickup, you know?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: It was a . . .

SL: It wasn't a—was it a flatbed truck?

JE: It may have been a flatbed truck with the big . . .

SL: With the walls on it.

JE: . . . wooden walls on it.

[01:09:00] SL: Yeah. Uh-huh. Hmm. And, so, was there—do you remember anything about that—what—what was the most memorable thing other than it being crowded and it being a long trip. It was very—I mean, you had to cross the Rockies [Rocky Mountains] at some point.

JE: You had to cross the Rockies, and that was absolutely beautiful. Had to cross the Great Salt Lake at . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And—and—and that was—you know, I never seen that kind of water and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . things. And I think that that was—but I remember I had always hoped that when I ever could go on a train again that I would want to go in a sleeper car and I would want to go to the dining room to eat. You know, we didn't really have much money, and my mom had cooked as much as she could. But near the end, you know, we didn't have much money and, you know, you had to buy—it—we could—the best you could do is hope to buy a sandwich or something. But, you know, we—you know, the idea of going to the dining room and sitting down and eating and looking out the window was just . . . unthinkable.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But that was something that I always wanted to do. You know, it was just . . .

SL: Uh-huh.



JE: To be able to get on the train and—and—and go to sleep. But most of all, what I wanted to do was get on the train, and eat in the dining car while it moved. And,

you know, when I got to be—the first time I was able to really do that is when I got to be surgeon general, and I would go from Washington [DC] up to Philadelphia [Pennsylvania].

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And I would insist that I was gonna go in the club car. Well, they were saying, “Well—” You know, and it was cheaper to go on the train. They said, “Oh, no, the federal government will only *fly* you. You can’t—you have to go—” I said, “No.” I said, “If I have to pay my own way, I’m going on the train.” So I would always get on the train—get the paper and they would come through—and, you know, you have the table—and serve you breakfast, and it was wonderful.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: And then—and I would—but when I got through eating and all, I would be in Philadelphia. And when I came back I would get on the train and they would serve you dinner and—and when I got off I would be back in Washington, DC. And so this was something all my life I’d wanted to do, and there was *no* way I was gonna let a bureaucrat tell me . . .

SL: [Laughs]

JE: . . . I couldn’t do that.

[01:11:20] SL: That’s great. That’s great. Okay, so you get to Oakland.

JE: [Laughs]

SL: You get to Oakland, and that’s a pretty big bay.

JE: Yes.

SL: San Francisco. I—I guess—is—that’s pre-[Golden Gate] Bridge, isn’t it?

JE: Yes. Well, we—I don’t remember going across. I don’t remember us going into

San Francisco.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: We—we came—we was—went into Richmond, and Richmond was very rural at that time.

SL: Oh.

JE: You know, it was really not—you know, it was town for us, but most of the—you know, it was really not fancy. It was—where we were, anyway, was very rural.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And we lived in a kind of a rooming house, and the—the family, you know, just rented rooms—well, but this was happening all over to accommodate the shipyard workers.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And we lived in—we—my mom and dad and myself and my brother had a room. My uncle and aunt, who also had gone—and they had—and they had a room. And some other people there had a room, and then the family that owned the house lived on the other end of the house. It was kind of a long house. And everybody kind of—we had this one kitchen and one bathroom for all. But, you know, we never worried about it because we'd never had a bathroom before.

[01:12:49] SL: Well, that's what I was just wondering. You had—this was now indoor plumbing.

JE: That's right.

SL: And electricity. Probably [natural] gas.

JE: Gas, yes.

SL: Uh huh. Radio was . . .

JE: Radio.

SL: Had a whole different set of radio stations.

JE: Whole different set of radio stations.

SL: Do you remember anything about listening to the radio while you were there?

JE: Not really.

[01:13:11] SL: Uh-huh. And what about school? What happened to school?

JE: Oh, well see, that was when I went and got tested and was assigned to the school.

School was only half a day because they had so many kids they couldn't go all day.

SL: They did it in shifts.

JE: They did it in shifts. And that worked out well for my mom and dad. I remember I went in the—kind of in the afternoon shift, and I had to make sure that I came—see, I was home, I was there to be there with my brother when my mother and—when they were getting up—or my dad was going. My mom worked midnight shift, as I remember. And my dad worked—must've worked from 7:00 [a.m.] to 3:00 [p.m.] or something.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But anyway, I—you know, it—it was such that I was able to be there to take care of my brother . . .

SL: Until your mom got up and you went to school.

JE: Until—that's right. And so I—and I really—I really enjoyed school and I studied hard. I was put up two grades, and so I had to really study hard. But I—I didn't have any trouble. I didn't have any trouble with school, but I worked really hard at . . .

Joy Endicott: Was it mixed.

JE: Yes, it was mixed. All—the—in fact, I don't remember the—I don't remember another black person being in the class. I was in the university—they had a trade level. They had four different levels, you know, like I was in—you may be in the eighth grade, but you were—could be in the eighth grade on a trade—eighth grade . . . maybe community college. Eighth grade college—four-year college. Eighth grade—university. So you were put in one of those—you were put in different—different levels.

[01:15:08] SL: So—but you tested to the eighth grade.

JE: Yes.

SL: Were you really old enough to be in the eighth grade? Was that accurate?

JE: Well, no, I was really not old enough [laughs] to be in the eighth grade. In fact, I was, what, twelve or thirteen, twelve, maybe.

SL: Uh-huh. What about the school itself? Was it a big school or . . . ?

JE: It was a great—it was a—oh, but, see, you know, compared to where I'd been, anything was big. But it was probably 800 or 900 students or more in the morning and in the [afternoon]—different—-and in the afternoon. It was a—I remember—let's—there was at least—always at least 30-plus students in every class I had, except my gym class, where there may have been fifty or more.

[01:16:00] SL: Books? The books were better books?

JE: Well, you know, I don't . . . we—I remember we had very definite books, but we had to buy our books, as I remember. We—that may not be true, but I think we did.

SL: Uh-huh. And hot lunch? Did they . . .

JE: No.

SL: . . . feed lunch . . .

JE: No.

SL: . . . or anything like that?

JE: No.

[01:16:25] SL: Were there any extracurricular activities around the school or was it just pretty much all business?

JE: Well, no. Well, you know, they—I did not participate in any extracurricular activities, you know, because I had to make sure I got home to take care of my little brother.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And I couldn't go early, you know, for the same reasons. But I think, as I remember, they had—you know—you know, basketball teams and I remember they had a choir because I was assigned—you know, I—I signed up for the choir, but they told me I had a monotone and they kicked me out. They—but, you know, they suggested that I might want to transfer to take music or something. But—but, you know, it was a really large . . . must've been a junior high school.

[01:17:22] SL: Uh-huh. And so you did eighth and ninth grade there.

JE: Right. And then I went back to Tollette.

[01:17:31] SL: Did the plans work out, that your dad had in mind? I mean, did—were they able to save enough money to come back and buy a tractor or . . . ?

JE: They were able to save enough money and come back and buy a tractor. And—but things—you know, they're never quite as they seem. You know, my dad didn't know much about tractors. You know, it wasn't a new tractor. It was a

used tractor, but it was—but he was running over *stumps*, you know, and—and—and punching holes in tractor tires. And, you know, things like this was happening. And then he was trying to use the tractor. You know, he would raise cotton and he was trying to use the tractor sometimes to haul the cotton and then, you know, was—the—I remember one time we was on—he was on his way to town to take the cotton to be ginned, and the sparks from the tractor got back in the cotton and set the cotton on fire. You know, rather than having a truck or [something], he was trying to haul it for miles, you know, with the tractor.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so—I mean, he was trying to make the tractor do, one, something it couldn't do; two, he was really trying to go out and cut the sprouts and clear off a field and then go out there, you know, with a field that's really not well enough prepared. You know, it's fine with a plow. You can go around the stumps. But, you know, if you're talking about a tractor you're talking about running over it. So—so things—I remember things were very tough.

[01:19:03] SL: A lot of maintenance he didn't even . . .

JE: Didn't even . . .

SL: . . . know anything about . . .

JE: . . . know anything about. Didn't know how to do it.

SL: . . . or anticipate.

JE: Didn't—you know. So—so things were really rough, but somehow he made it. He—I—I—you know, I'm just shocked now when I look back and think of how they took care of us eight kids . . . survived. He ended up with a house, you know. It wasn't a great house, but a house with electricity. And for Christmas

one year I remember—this was after, obviously—to let you know how long it went on—I had running water and plumbing—indoor plumbing—put in their house for Christmas, as a—as a Christmas present. So—so—this was after I—probably after I finished medical school.

SL: That was a big deal for them.

JE: Oh, yes.

[01:20:20] SL: Well, let's talk about high school now.

JE: [Laughs] You gonna have me get to high school?

SL: We're about to get to high school, and now you're—it's in Tulette?

JE: Tulette.

SL: Tulette. And it's a—it's one building . . .

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: . . . but there's lots of classrooms.

JE: Yeah. In fact, there were maybe two or three buildings, you know?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: It was a major building. There was—built with the WP—old WPA [Works Progress Administration].

SL: PA. Uh-huh.

JE: And it was—I forget the name. There was a name that they'd call . . . I can't remember. But it's someone who gave a significant donation to allow these black schools to be developed and built, but I—I can't remember the name of them. But it was one of those schools.

[01:21:12] SL: So how many kids were in the high school?

JE: Mmm, probably 300 or 400.

SL: That's a pretty good-size school.

JE: Yes, it was a—and, you know, we're talking about first through the twelfth grade.

[01:21:25] SL: Oh, I see. Okay. So, were you—you were still loving reading and science?

JE: Yes.

SL: Making great grades?

JE: Making good grades.

[01:21:42] SL: Well, how was your social life?

JE: Well, I really don't remember very much about my social life. The only social life you obviously had was at school.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And we would occasionally—could catch the bus to go back to a basketball game or . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And I was in a school play and so . . .

[01:22:05] SL: Did you do any of that? Were you in drama at all or . . .?

JE: Well, you know, drama was when we had the school play. You know, you . . .

SL: Oh, it wasn't a year-round course.

JE: Oh, no. Oh, no.

SL: It was . . .

JE: It was a—it was—you know, if you—if you were chosen. See, when—well, to give you an idea of the size of the school, there was only ten people in my graduating class.

SL: Okay.

JE: So it was a very—but, you know, the school—the classes decreased every year. You know, it started out—it may have started out with thirty in the first grade, but there was ten . . . in—who finished.

[01:22:45] JE: I—I guess there wasn't a—I—was eighth grade the maximum or the minimum that a child would attend school—they'd need—they had to go to the eighth grade and then . . .

JE: They would.

SL: . . . after that it was optional?

JE: Everybody would try to go to the eighth grade. I don't remember necessarily as it being—but it must've been optional because many, *many* of the boys and a lot of the girls—you know, they just dropped out.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But there would be a few dropping out, it seems, all the time. But, you know, they—you know, they didn't have anything else to do until they got to be thirteen or fourteen years old.

[01:23:27] SL: Well, talk to me a little bit about the town of Tollette.

JE: The town of Tollette was pretty much an all-black town, and, it's—and it still is. And, it's a rural community, much like Schaal; it's just a little bigger. Maybe Tollette has 350 people rather than ninety-nine.

SL: [Laughs] Post office? Did it have a post office?

JE: I think so.

SL: And I would guess a grocery store and gas station and . . .?

JE: Yes, grocery store, gas stations. It was—it was bigger than Schaal.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But . . . not—not much.

SL: So there was still a . . .

Joy Endicott: Can you—can you spell the town for me?

JE: T-O-L-L-E-T-T-E. And Tollette's still on—it's still more on the map and more—kind of goes on—Tollette than Schaal. Schaal is no longer—every—occasionally you can find a map with Schaal on it.

SL: Uh-huh. So it was really still kind of an isolated . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . environment.

JE: Yes.

[01:24:45] SL: There wasn't—you've mentioned about getting a paper once a week where you grew up, but in . . .

JE: In Tollette . . .

SL: . . . Tollette it was still the same.

JE: It was still the same. Well, what you got was the "Grit," and it was out of Kansas City [Missouri].

SL: Oh.

JE: So you just got—as a farmer, you kind of got it in the mail.

[01:25:06] SL: So you weren't as much—you weren't really very aware of what was going on with the rest of the state or the country or the world. You . . .

JE: No, not—no.

[01:25:18] Joy Endicott: I have one more. They let you continue with that advanced placement?

JE: Yes, they did. When I came back they—you know, what—I just came and

enrolled in the, I guess, tenth grade. They didn't say anything, so . . .

SL: Hmm.

JE: And then I did better than most of the kids in there, so . . .

[01:25:39] SL: Did you graduate at the top of your class?

JE: Graduated at the top of my class.

SL: Well, when—? I mean, did you have any idea what you were gonna do after you got out of high school while you were in high school?



JE: No. What I hoped that I would be able to do when I got out of high school—you know, when—when we were in high school I was hoping that I could get a job working as a clerk in Mr. Dillard's—he had a store there in Nashville. One of his first stores was in Nashville and—or Mineral Springs. So I was hoping that I would get a job working in his store. Well, then when I finally got—got out and went—the night of graduation, the—there was someone there from Philander Smith College . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . who was offering a scholarship to Philander for the top student in the class—a full four-year scholarship. And, so, I had no idea how I was gonna get there. I had no idea what it *meant*. In fact, the United Methodist Women was giving this scholarship, and so the community that summer worked really hard to try and make me some homemade clothes—you know, dresses and things—and I picked peaches to buy shoes, and I—I was buying socks, but I—when I got to Philander you had to wear stockings. And I remember my sisters and brothers working very hard picking cotton, you know, very early, you know. We were trying to go around and scrap up enough cotton to get enough money to buy my bus ticket up

to Little Rock, and it was \$3.43.

SL: Well, obviously that happened.

JE: Yes. And I remember my young brother, who—who's here and is a minister now—we—you know, we'd really been working very hard all day trying our best—and I remember he looked up at me and he wasn't—you know, wasn't complaining, but he wanted to know—he says, "Do we have enough yet?"

SL: [Laughs]

JE: You know, and—never forgot that. And I said to myself, "If I ever get away and do okay, I'm gonna make sure that every one of my sisters and brothers that want to go to college get a chance to go," and I did.

[01:28:28] SL: Well, so when you say the whole community was working to help you get the money together to go to college, most of that community was family you think or . . . ?

JE: A—a lot of it was family. But, you know, then—you know, a seamstress—you know, we'd buy the material and the thread and everything and she would make the dresses.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And somebody else would, you know, buy me some socks. So some—you know, they didn't have any more than we did.

[01:28:54] SL: Do you remember the name of the person from Philander Smith that came?

JE: You know, I don't. I . . . I remember it sometime. I just don't remember it right now.

SL: Uh-huh. Well, was it a man that came?

JE: It was a man that came. It was a white man.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so we all was wondering who was this white man that was at our graduation . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . that was—and he—when he—when he—you know, at the end of the graduation he got up to say—at that time, see, Philander was really offering—trying to offer the top two students in high schools—black high schools all over Arkansas . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . the opportunity to come to college. Well, then that meant that they got the cream of the black crop. You know, the very best students there were in Arkansas.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: They were offering them scholarships to Philander. So we went and we did well and we didn't—nobody dropped out. Nobody went home. Nobody flunked out.

[01:29:57] SL: Is Fitz Hill the president?

JE: He's the president . . .

SL: Now?

JE: . . . at [Arkansas] Baptist [College].

SL: Oh, at Baptist.

JE: Baptist College.

SL: Oh, okay.

JE: No, he's doing a good job over there.

SL: Yeah.

JE: He's really—he's really having to work hard.

SL: Umm . . .

JE: He's got a lot of young black males going—you know, primarily because of the athletic program . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . going—going to college, and that's something you don't see. Most—in fact, now it's gotten to be—women to men it's, like, seven to one.

[01:30:26] SL: Wow. He's trying to reverse that.

JE: He's trying to reverse that.

SL: Uh-huh. Or make it even . . .

JE: Very few—very few—in fact, I think there are only one or two other colleges in—you know, Morehouse is an all-male school.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But there was—Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio, has a predominance of males.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: They used to have two or three to one male, but now I think it's about fifty-one percent to forty-nine percent. You know, it's—but, that's a problem.

[01:32:05] SL: Can you remember the day that you got on the bus and went to Philander Smith?

JE: I don't remember the date, but I sure remember the day.

SL: I mean, the day. Yeah.

JE: Yes, I do.

SL: Do you want—? Let's talk about it. Let's talk about—well, let's talk about the night before. Do you remember . . . ?

JE: I don't remember much about the night before, you know? I remember—from my grandmother, we'd kind of borrowed an old suitcase that was falling apart to put everything that I had to take to school with me. But, you know, I—I didn't really think much about it. And then when we got here, you know—you know how you don't no anybody, you don't know anything . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . and you're there. You don't really have any money. And I hadn't even applied. You know, I hadn't done anything. I didn't know you had to apply. And I—I—and I—and I—when I went into the office they told me—said, “We don't have anything for you.” I said, “But they told me all I had to do was come.” Now, you know, I'm telling you how hard we had to work to get the money for me to get there, and they said, “Well, we don't have any—any records. Anything.” So I—I went out on the steps—front steps of Philander Smith College. There was—and I just sat down and I just started crying. I didn't know anything else to do. And I remember the president came up in a very heavy, gruff voice and he—he wanted—he said, “Young lady, what's wrong?” And I start telling—and, you know, when I started telling him I started bawling. He said, “Well, you just go on down there to Adeline Smith,” or whatever the name of the dormitory is, “and you go down there and you tell them to find someplace for you to stay and—and they'll give you a—a ticket to go down to the cafeteria to eat.” And he said—and then he said, “And then when you get that done, come back up here and finish registering and we'll take care of it.” And he did.

[01:33:25] SL: So you went down to the—was it a dorm that he . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . he sent you to?

JE: Yes.

SL: And did they—? Of course, they didn't have any record of you . . .

JE: No, but . . .

SL: . . . down there either. [Laughs]

JE: But, you know, they—if I said, “President Harris sent me down . . .”

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . they just—that was all you needed to say.

[01:33:46] SL: So what was the dorm like?

JE: Well, you know, compared to where I'd lived all my life it was, almost, like a fancy hotel.

SL: Yeah.

JE: No, it was—I thought it was very nice, and I had a—was living in the—my roommate was—still a very good friend of mine and she—she played basketball, so she was—you know, she was on a basketball scholarship, and so we became very good friends. And she's my husband's first cousin.

SL: [Laughs] Small world.

JE: But—but—but we didn't—I didn't meet him for years after . . .

SL: Uh-huh. So—and the cafeteria—was the food good?

JE: I thought it was wonderful.

SL: Yeah.

JE: You know, we—you know, we—you got three meals a day, and so to me it was

good.

Joy Endicott: Need to break here for a second.

SL: Yeah, we need to break. We've got someone coming in the door. Lunch?

Female: It's here.

SL: You ready to take the lunch break?

JE: All right.

SL: Let's—let's take a lunch break.

JE: Okay.

[Tape Stopped]

SL: Okay, everything good? Okay, so now—we had just gotten you to . . .

Joy Endicott: Pull your pearls up. [Laughs]

SL: Oh, yeah, pearls.

Joy Endicott: On top. Thank you.

[01:35:14] SL: There we go. We'd just gotten you to Philander Smith.

JE: Yes.

SL: You got there. You weren't registered. Didn't—hadn't applied.

JE: [Laughs]

SL: President Harris had come out and caught you bawling on the front steps and sent you do the dorm . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . and got you fed. Everything worked out.

JE: Everything worked out.

[01:35:32] SL: And then the dorm was—from where you had been it was like . . .

JE: A hotel.

SL: . . . living in a luxury hotel.

JE: That's right.

SL: How many kids were at Philander Smith then?

JE: About 700 or 800. It was a much bigger school than it is now.

SL: Big. Yeah. And, let's see, what year would that have been?

JE: That was in nineteen . . . see, [19]49 to [19]53.

SL: So that was before Brown vs. Board of Education.

JE: Yes. Oh, yes.

SL: I guess Silas Hunt and George Haley and C. C. [reference to Christopher Columbus Mercer] and some of the other guys had—had been pioneers up . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . at the University of Arkansas [Fayetteville's Law School].

JE: Yes.

[01:36:23] SL: So that—the desegregation stuff was in the air.

JE: It was in the air, but it was not a big—it was not a big thing, because when—well, in fact, it was not really even really in the air very much. But, now, when I went to medical school in 1956, you know, it was—starting in 1956 it was really obviously big and really . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . going then. But . . .

SL: But you didn't—you didn't sense much stuff going on.

[01:36:56] JE: No. But—but I guess it was—you know, the medical school was integrating, but as I say, not, the big thing for Central [Little Rock's Central High School], because, Dr. Edith Irby Jones, who came to speak with us, was the very

first black student to attend the medical school. And she came to speak at our chapel program on Wednesday, and that was when suddenly I no longer—no longer wanted to be a lab technician, or work in Dillard’s store. I wanted to be just like Dr. Jones.

[01:37:30] SL: Okay. You got to Philander Smith and you were thinking you might be a lab tech.

JE: Yes.

SL: And you had—did you—did you work at all at Dillard’s store?

JE: No.

SL: But you thought that maybe that’s—you could do that.

JE: I—you know, yes. You know, that just seemed—well, it was out of the cotton patch.

SL: Yeah.

JE: It was out of the sun—you know, hot—and so I—I—you know, this to me looked like a *great* job . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . compared to chopping cotton all day or picking cotton all day.

[01:38:00] SL: So your freshman year—was that when Edith Irby came or was that later? That was probably a little later—a couple years later.

JE: Edith Irby came my freshman year at Philander.

SL: And you said she came and spoke at a Wednesday night chapel?

JE: A—a Wednesday morning chapel.

SL: So y’all had chapel at Philander Smith.

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: Every day?

JE: Not every day, but every—well, we—we had major chapel once a week.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And that meant that *everybody*—we didn't have seat assignments, but, you knew you needed to be—you needed to be there.

SL: And was it in a chapel or was it in a gym or where did y'all . . . ?

JE: Most of the time it was—it was in Wesley Chapel.

SL: Okay.

JE: United Methodist Church. But Edith Irby spoke at—in—in the auditorium of—at Philander Smith.

[01:39:10] SL: In some ways your all's story parallels, quite a bit. I know that you could probably strongly identify with her. You know, you and I were talking at—at lunch and you said you never really got in trouble and . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . all that, but I got—I do get the feeling that both you and her were pretty confident and—and . . . gonna go for it . . .

JE: Oh, well . . .

SL: . . . early on. I . . .

JE: . . . now, I didn't say I didn't—that doesn't mean I didn't get—that doesn't mean I got in trouble, but that meant that I was . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: I—well, I felt that if there was something that you wanted, if you don't try you know you aren't gonna get it. And so I was always out there reaching for the stars.

SL: That was really pretty much her message, too.

JE: Yeah.

[01:40:05] SL: Did she—do you remember much about her—her talk?

JE: The thing I remember is she recited a poem at the end, you know? But the talk was about the high roads and the low, and to the fact that it says—“Some folk seeks the high roads. Others seek the low. In between on the misty paths, the rest walk to and fro.” I don’t remember the rest of the poem, but so—someone sent it to me not too long ago. In fact, it was the minister at Second Baptist Church downtown. He heard me talking about that or saying that.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And he said—wanted to—he sent me the poem.

[01:40:58] SL: Well, she was a—she was kind of an activist. I know that she went out in the evenings during medical school—went out to the communities and . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . and was telling people they didn’t have to accept the status quo.

JE: Right, right.

SL: That there was . . .

JE: Well, see, she was much more of an activist than I was.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: I was really never very much of a . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . activist.

[01:41:24] SL: Uh-huh. So, gosh, freshman year and you get to see—hear her talk.

JE: Yes.

SL: All right. So you changed your heart and your mind at that point.

JE: Well, it gave me something to really look forward to.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Before, you know, I wasn't . . . I wasn't looking high enough.

SL: Uh-huh. So after that talk—I'm assuming your grades were always good anyway, but . . .

JE: But they got better.

SL: . . . you had more of a purpose now.

JE: Yes. Now, I—after—after that talk I—you know, I—I just really start thinking about getting out of college and how—and how could I find a way, to get—to get in medical school, one, and to get medical school *paid* for, number two.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And then I really found out that—you know, at the time—at the time they was offering the G.I. Bill . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . and that I could join—join the Army . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . become a first lieutenant, be a physical therapist and the Army was out seeking physical therapists, and, and then use the G.I. Bill to go to medical school.

[01:42:43] SL: They were needing physical therapists because of all the injuries in World War II.

JE: That's exactly right.

SL: And, so did you have to work at all while you were in school . . .

JE: While I was in college?

SL: . . . at Philander Smith?

JE: Oh, I worked the full time I was in Philander Smith. The first year I was there, I worked in the dormitory—I—you know, I worked in the dormitories, you know, cleaning the halls and the bathrooms and—and whatever. And so, that was the first year. The second year I was there I—there was a woman who—you know, her children had just left to go to school in South Carolina—a white woman who lived out on Armistead Road, and she was a good Methodist, and she wanted to know if—and she came over to Philander looking for somebody to come and help her and do minor work and go to school.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so I did. The dean told her about me and so I was able to do that.

SL: Do you remember her name?

JE: Not . . .

SL: Not important. Not important.

JE: Oh, no, no, I—I'll—I'll think of that . . .

SL: Okay.

JE: . . . to tell. You know, it was a—she was wonderful. It was really a really delightful, good experience.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And she—you know, there was never a doubt that if you are going to—you know, “You take your classes and you go to school and then what you do for me around the house—cleaning the house and all can fit in between them.”

SL: Uh-huh. So she really encouraged your . . .

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: . . . studies.

JE: Oh, yes.

[01:44:29] SL: Well, let's talk about Philander Smith and the professors and the classes there. What—what were those like compared—especially compared to where you came from?

JE: Well, I didn't have much trouble with classes at Philander. I had to study hard again.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But I always did that anyway. You know . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . I didn't know anything else to do.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so I always worked very hard. You know, school was not necessarily, easy for me. You know, some people can go and they don't have to study, but I—I always had to study, and I really enjoyed the science classes and—and a Mr. Scott was a—very . . . critical in shaping what I decided to do. In fact, he—I told him that, you know, I was gonna go to medical school and I was so determined about that. He says, “Well, you know, in case you don't get in you better take some education.” Well, you know, I think that that was what we were *all* told.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Because, see, when I was—before I graduated from high school our home economics teacher—and all black students had to take at *least* four hours of home economics every day, for four years. And—and the home economics teacher—I remember the supervisor came by and told the teacher to “Make sure you teach

your girls to be good maids.” But—but that was what, it was . . .

SL: It was . . .

JE: . . . thought that we would do.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so . . .

[01:48:14] SL: [Laughs] But this—his name was Mr. Scott?

JE: Yes.

SL: Professor Scott.

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: He kind of . . .

JE: He was—was kind of, saying, you know, “Don’t end up not preparing yourself or taking any education because if you get out there and you don’t go to medical school—you don’t get medical school, you’ve got to be able to do something.”

SL: Uh-huh. So you took some education courses . . .

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: . . . as well.

JE: Yes.

[01:46:42] SL: Did—did your—what about your literature and your English and . . .?

JE: Oh, well, you *had* to take—you know, at Philander you had to—that was just an absolute requirement. You know, you had to have I think it was something like eighty hours of, you know, in basics. You know, just—you needed to have a certain amount of religion.

SL: Religion too?

JE: Oh, yes. Oh, yes, religion and social studies in addition. So, you know, I think

you had to have 130 hours—I can't remember—to graduate.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Semester hours. So . . .

[01:47:18] SL: So your reading list greatly expanded.

JE: Yes. [Laughs] Oh, yes.

SL: Did you—did you have a favorite author there in school or . . .?

JE: No, I don't—I—I think I was probably reading, but I probably wasn't reading many stories and novels. I—I—I did, but I don't remember. You know, they were not just really anything in particular, I don't think.

SL: What about history? Did you dive into history pretty good or . . .?

JE: Well, I—I did read some history, but not . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: I wasn't a history buff by any means.

[01:47:58] SL: Uh-huh. So it was mostly science that you were . . .

JE: Well, that—that was what I really spent much of my time reading.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And I—and I—and I enjoyed novels, but I would just—too—whatever came along.

[01:48:18] SL: Uh-huh. What about life in Little Rock at that time? What—did you ever venture off campus much or . . .?

JE: Well, I moved—when I moved out . . . I—I keep trying to remember this lady's name. Parts of it keep coming to me, but then it . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . runs away. You know, I—you know, I lived off campus then.

SL: Oh, I see. You moved in with her.

JE: Yeah, I move—moved in with her.

[01:48:47] SL: Uh-huh. And—but did that put you—I mean, how did you get back
and forth?

JE: On the bus.

SL: On the bus.

JE: The bus was about a block and a half away.

SL: Uh-huh.

Joy Endicott: Pause for a second.

SL: We've got some folks coming in the front door.

JE: Hello?

Female: Hello.

Male: It's an emergency.

JE: Yes.

Male: [Joba?] won't get out of her car.

JE: [Laughs]

SL: You gotta go take care of something?

JE: Yes.

SL: Okay.

JE: I'll be back in just a second.

SL: All right.

JE: Joe was in . . .

Joy Endicott: He got in the car. [Laughs]

JE: . . . Barbara's car.

Male: And won't get out.

SL: [Laughter] It's an emergency.

Joy Endicott: Dog's in the . . .

[Tape Stopped]

[01:50:46.17] SL: Kind of sounds like we ought to be interviewing your husband too.

JE: [Laughs]

SL: Okay.

TM: Firestore good?

Joy Endicott: Yes.

SL: So we're at Philander Smith and—oh, is the dog okay?

JE: Dog's okay.

SL: Okay. Good. Got him out of the car?

JE: Got him out of the car.

SL: Didn't bite anybody?

JE: Didn't bite anybody.

SL: He wouldn't bite anybody.

JE: Oh, well, he's got—I always tell people "He's got a mouth." [Laughter] But, no,

he's never bitten anybody. So he's—he's fine.

SL: He came up to me when I was in my car.

JE: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

SL: I think he would've gotten in my car if I'd let him.

JE: Oh, yes. Oh, no, he loves to go. He loves to go. When I was having to take him to the vet all the time, I'd just go out to the car and open the door and he'd pop in.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: And my other dog—I'd have to hunt her down to get her to—to get her and then she would usually—very often, we'd have to put her up the night before so we could get her the next morning.

[01:50:26] SL: [Laughs] They're great animals. So do you want to talk any more about Edith Irby Jones and that first impression? I mean, did you have any—had you ever heard of her before . . .

JE: No.

SL: . . . she came?

JE: No.

[01:50:38] SL: And, I mean, was she introduced as, you know, the first black medical student?

JE: Yes. Maybe I had heard of her. I'm saying no, but maybe I had heard of her on—you know, in that she was, you know, this lady who—from Hot Springs who was going to the medical school. But, you know, it was kind of a—in a very abstract form, never thinking that we would—I would really meet her. And then, you know, when she came and gave the address, it—it was my sorority that had had her—you know, had invited her, and she's a member of the same sorority that I am. So it was a—it was—it was really a wonderful, wonderful experience of having the opportunity of meeting her. I'm not sure she remembered who I was. You know, I'm—and, you know, I was just another student in the crowd.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But, you know, she was really, you know, something special to me.

SL: Well, really, all women.

JE: Yes.

SL: It's quite a remarkable story.

JE: Yes.

[01:51:50] SL: Yeah. So you—you—she inspired you.

JE: Yes.

SL: Changed your path.

JE: Yes.

SL: That one talk.

JE: One talk.

[01:52:02] SL: So you really, really paid close attention to sciences from there on out.

JE: That's right.

SL: You saw that . . .

JE: I paid close attention to science and to medicine. And as I said, my whole ideas—
I just wanted to be just like her.

[01:52:19] SL: Hmm. And—all right. So what else about Philander Smith? I mean,
it's not as big as it used to be, but back then it was—was it the only black
university? I guess there was Pine Bluff . . .

JE: Yeah, the . . .

SL: . . . Normal.

JE: There was Pine Bluff and there was [Arkansas] Baptist [College] and there was
Shorter [College], but Philander Smith was, if you will, kind of the Hendrix
[College] or the—you know, of the South. In fact, it was really considered a—
just an excellent school for blacks. In fact, someone was saying the other day—
we was talking at the board meeting that for teachers, you know, if you said you
graduated from Philander Smith, you were just hired. You didn't even have to be

interviewed.

SL: Hmm. Boy, that says something.

JE: Yeah. But—but they, you know, they really did a—I think a very—I look back now and really realize that they really did a very good job. And the president, Dr. Harris, really, really led that school through some very difficult times, and obviously had a lot of support from the Methodist Church.

[01:53:42] SL: Uh-huh. Well, what about—what about Little Rock at that time when you were in school? How much did you engage—? I mean, what about—did you ever cross paths with Daisy Bates or—or . . . ?

JE: Oh. Well, we knew—you know, they was publishing the “State Press” . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . at that time. And we all [had read?] the “State Press” very avidly, and I—in fact, I lived right down the street for a while from—from where Mrs. Daisy Bates—you know, one of the “Little Rock Nine.” And—and so I—we knew who Mrs. Bates was. And I knew very well, you know, the kinds of things that they were doing and that her husband [L.C. Bates] was doing. And so we were, you know, very supportive. But I tell people all the time—you know, someone asked me if I was a part of the sit-ins and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . all that was going on in Little Rock. And so my response was that I was “sitting in” in medical school when all of that was going—I supported all the things that—that was going on, but it really took most of my energy and effort to get through medical school.

[01:55:01] SL: So when did you graduate from Philander Smith?

JE: In 1953.

SL: And you were all of how old then?

JE: I was all of eighteen.

SL: [Laughs] So you were actually getting out of college when some kids were just getting in.

JE: Yes.

[01:55:20] SL: And you had learned about the G.I. Bill and you saw an opportunity to . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . to—again, economics . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . is driving . . .

JE: Right.

SL: . . . a driving force here. And so how—how did you get—did you just sign up for the Army or . . .?

JE: You know, I was walking down the street. The recruiters were out and, you know, they were just recruiting people for the Army, you know, during—and—and then when—I told them—you know, they knew that I was—you know, I went in and—and I was just gonna join the Army. I was really just looking for a way to pay for medical school.

SL: Hmm.

JE: I was not looking for—you know, to—for anything else. And they said, “Oh, well, if you’ve got a college degree we think we have another program for you.” And then they told me about the Women’s Medical Specialist Corps, which was

physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, and . . . well, at least those three . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . as a part of the Army. And so they talked to me about that and I thought that that was just—then they said, “Well, you can go in and we’ll train you for—to be a physical therapist, and for every year you, you know, do schooling—training is one year. And so that means you have to stay in the service for one year—year. So you have to sign up for two years.”

SL: And you thought that was a great deal.

JE: I thought that was a great deal, and . . .

SL: And I guess it was.

JE: It really was a great deal because I signed up and I stayed in an extra year, and that meant that I got four years—you know, nine months of a year for medical school. So I had four years of medical school.

[01:57:03] SL: What did they do? I mean, okay, so you sign up. Then what happens?

JE: You—well, you sign up and they send you down to Brooke Army Medical Center and—to teach you the very basics of—of—not really basic training, but at least how to march and how to salute and how to say hello.

SL: And where—where was that?

JE: San Antonio, Texas.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And—and—and I—we stayed there for—we was there for six months for the basic part of physical therapy. Then I was transferred—there was eighteen of us—eighteen young women. Then I was transferred to Letterman. Part of us

stayed at Brooke, part of us went to Letterman, and part of us went—went to Denver [Colorado].

[01:57:45] SL: And where was Letterman?

JE: San Francisco. I went to San Francisco.

SL: So you were back in the bay area.

JE: Back in the bay area.

SL: Had it changed much since you were there?

JE: Well, I—I—it changed tremendously, but I was over in San Francisco most of the time, and I think I only went to Richmond once or twice.

[01:58:03] SL: Uh-huh. So what year is this that you're in the Army? What—when did you . . . ?

JE: I was in the Army from [19]53 to [19]56.

SL: So . . .

JE: And I started medical school in September [19]56.

SL: So you're out at Letterman getting more training—is that . . . ?

JE: Yes.

[01:58:26] SL: And then—and when you're done with your training, where do they send you?

JE: To Denver—to—to . . . oh, I'll—I'll think of the name in a minute. But—Fitzsimons. Fitzsimons [Army Medical Hospital] in Denver.

SL: Fitzsimons. And—and that's a—a Veterans Administration hospital or . . . ?

JE: Well, that's Army hospital.

SL: Army hospital.

JE: Uh-huh.

[01:58:50] SL: And you did physical therapy there.

JE: I did physical therapy there.

SL: How did you like that?

JE: Oh, I loved it. I really enjoyed physical therapy.

SL: Of course, Denver's at the—at the foot of the Rocky Mountains.

JE: Rocky Mountains. That's right.

SL: Did you . . . ?

JE: I didn't learn to ski . . .

SL: [Laughs]

JE: . . . but I—but I really enjoyed the mountains and I really enjoyed Denver.

[01:59:13] SL: What's going on with your family back in Howard County during all this? Did you keep up with them?

JE: Oh, yes. Yes, yes. Well, they're—they're all fine and I went home, you know, every once in a while—see, every—probably, month—yeah, nine months to a year, you know?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And they were always glad to see me, but I was never home for more than, you know, a few—a week or a few days.

[01:59:43] SL: Well, you know, you're—you've been really in a lot of places now—a lot of different places. And when you're coming back to visit the family in Howard County, that must've looked different to you now. I mean, it—it was—you—you were coming from a different place now.

JE: That's true. But I guess when I went back there I was really just primarily going back to see my—my folks and all of my family and my sisters and brothers and . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . I was just thrilled to be back and be with them.

[02:00:17] SL: Well, but you had to be an inspiration . . .

JE: Well . . .

SL: . . . to the family or . . .

JE: . . . that's probably true. But I remember when I came home once, I thought I could just leave air-conditioning—whatever I'd been doing—sitting in class and go out and chop cotton in 100-plus degree weather. I found out it was very difficult and I couldn't. In fact, I didn't want them to feel that I was pretending I was soft. And, you know, I really—you know, I'd been accustomed to just walking out and, you know, and would gradually acclimate to the weather. You—you don't leave air-conditioning and go out to a field of 105 degrees and think you can chop cotton all day.

[02:01:07] SL: You couldn't do it anymore.

JE: I found it very, very difficult. I couldn't keep up anymore. They thought—you know, before I always led the pack and would help them. I couldn't do that anymore.

SL: Hmm.

JE: Got blisters on my hands and—but, you know, I—I still wanted to be out there with them. It never occurred to me to just—"I'm gonna stay at home today."

SL: So how old was your . . .

TM: Scott, we need to change tapes.

SL: Oh, okay. Good.

[Tape Stopped]

[02:01:47] SL: . . . going back home during the breaks . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . and visiting family and . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: I—I—I know that you looked forward to that . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . and all that. But you also found that you had—your lifestyle had changed and
it had softened . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . you from that . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . hard, hard, work that you'd . . .

JE: That's right.

SL: . . . done all your life.

JE: That's right.

[02:02:10] SL: How old was your little brother that had the—or the appendicitis . . .

JE: He was . . .

SL: . . . when you got back?

JE: He was, probably . . . in fact, that's—I'm trying to remember if he was still . . .
yeah, he was still there. He—he—if I was eighteen, when I finished . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . well, that meant that he—he was five years younger than me—four years
younger than me.

SL: So he was still there but . . .

JE: Yeah.

SL: Had he . . .?

JE: Then he left not too long after that and went to Detroit [Michigan] and start working—was working for the [Englanders?], and he want—he ended up going to veterinary school and, you know, he—the first year he wanted to stay there and not go back to Tennessee State [University in Nashville] and not go back. And they told him, “Well, if you stay—you can stay, but you can’t work for us.”

SL: Yeah. Well . . .

JE: So he had to bundle up and get on back to school.

[02:03:21] SL: Were all the—all the younger kids—you know, the kids . . .

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: . . . the children that you helped raise—were they all—did they all look up to you . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . and . . .?



[02:03:34] JE: Yes. You know, even now. You know, the—let me tell you about something that happened that—it doesn’t mean much to anybody else, but to me—the first year I was at Philander and I went home . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . at Christmastime . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . and I—my mom sent me bus fare and I went home on the bus. And, you know, I had just enough money to get the ticket and—well, when I got to Hot

Springs where we had to change buses, I had thirty-nine cent or thirty-six cent. Anyway, whatever it was—I must've needed thirty-nine cent—there was a little box of Baby Ruth candy that I—and it was thirty-five cent or something like that. But anyway, whatever it was I needed two more pennies to be able to buy it and I wanted to get it to take it to my sisters and brothers . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . at home for Christmas. And I'll never forget—never—I don't remember a name. I don't remember anything. But there was this—I don't even remember what she looked like. I remember she was, white, and I—and I guess I looked so sad, you know, that I really wanted this candy and couldn't get it. And so she says, "Let me see. I think I have two pennies." And she gave it to me, and I was so pleased to be able to take them this little box of Baby Ruth candy, home.

SL: That's big.

JE: No, it was really big.

SL: It was big. It was big.

JE: Well, it was big for me.

SL: Yeah. Well, and it meant something to them, I'm sure.

JE: Oh, yes.

[02:05:12] SL: Yeah. So was that a—at the end of your first year?

JE: That—that was at—that was about Christmas of my first year.

SL: Christmas.

JE: So it was really soon after I'd left home.

[02:05:23] SL: Uh-huh. So what happened in the summers?

JE: In the summers—the first summer I was at Philander—no, I went to Kansas City

to live with my aunt and uncle in Kansas City, and I worked—I—I worked in a private home as a maid . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . during the summers.

SL: Uh-huh. And did—was that the routine every summer? You'd go to Kansas City or . . .?

JE: Oh, that was the first summer. The second summer I stayed—I was living with this woman out in—out in the Heights [reference to Pulaski Heights, a residential area of Little Rock] . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . and I went to school. See, I went to school in the summers. So I went to school that summer, and then I went the regular year, and then I went the next summer and I graduated.

[02:06:07] SL: Wow. And then you joined the Army.

JE: Then I joined the Army.

SL: And you were in the Army for four . . .

JE: Three.

SL: . . . three years?

JE: Three years.

[02:06:17] SL: Three years. And then, so you applied for medical school.

JE: I applied for medical school when I got out of the Army.

SL: And that was UA . . .

JE: Well, I—I—I applied for medical school, you know, while I was in the Army . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . and I got out of the Army to go to medical school.

[02:06:38] SL: And that was University of Arkansas Little Rock . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . Medical—Medical School.

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: And that was [19]56.

JE: That was [19]56.

SL: Things were kind of heating up . . .

JE: Yes, yes, yes.

SL: . . . about 1956 then and . . .

JE: That's right.

SL: . . . and particularly in Little Rock.

JE: Particularly in Little Rock.

[02:06:58] SL: So by now you're probably starting to see some activity going . . .

JE: Yes, yes.

SL: . . . on that was accentuating the desegregation and . . .

JE: Yes. Oh, yes.

SL: . . . that whole issue was . . .

JE: Right.

SL: . . . was happening now. Do you remember much about that? Do you . . .?

JE: Oh, I remember all the—you know, the—you know, the troops and the TV and all.

But, again, I was in medical school. I wasn't the smartest student anymore.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: I was having to really work hard.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And, so I was on the periphery.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: I knew what was going on.

SL: Yeah.

JE: And, you know—and then, you know, that, you know, I watched TV in the evenings.

[02:07:48] SL: Uh-huh. Had you—had you kept up with Dr. Jones—Edith Irby Jones at all and what she was doing or . . . ?

JE: Well, see, while I was in medical school she—you know, she did a internship I think . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . there and then she left.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But not really. You know, I wasn't . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You know, I knew she'd very much impressed me. I'm not sure if she—I knew she'd impressed me as much . . .

SL: Right.

JE: . . . at that time as I feel now.

[02:08:19] SL: And were there any other African-American women medical students?

JE: No.

SL: Just you?

JE: Just me.

SL: And . . .

JE: In fact, I was the only—I was the only woman to graduate in my medical school class.

SL: Hmm. You worked hard, but I guess you made good grades.

JE: I passed.

SL: You passed. [Laughter] Those are good grades.

JE: Those are good grades.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: They were good enough to pass.

[02:08:45] SL: Yeah, yeah. And did you have a particular professor that you—teacher—through medical school that you strongly identified with or helped you . . .?

JE: Oh, I think—who's—Dr. Rosalyn Abernathy . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . very early on, you know, helped me a great deal. And, of course, you know, when I first started, you know, there was a Dr. Ted [Pannis?], who was the chairman of the pediatric department. And—and there were several *women*—Dr. Dodge—and, you know, there were women—you know, we would have—we had women—a women's medical group.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so they were all—they were really very helpful. We'd often have lunch together.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And I remember there was a particular nurse, Jo Herring—you know, the black

students couldn't eat in the white dining room. We had to eat in the dining room with the—you know, with the blacks that worked—which was primarily the janitors and cooks and all the—there was nothing wrong with that, but the med students—all the white med students ate in the other side. Black med students couldn't eat over there, but then the dean changed it, I think, probably our sophomore year. But very often, you know, some of the nurses and other people in the—in the medical school would bring their lunch and eat with us.

SL: So it was breaking down.

JE: Yes, yes.

SL: And the dean just went ahead and broke it.

JE: Yes. Well, he broke it down—you know, he felt that all the medical students should be able to eat in the main cafeteria.

[02:10:30] SL: Did all the medical students feel that way?

JE: You know, I—I'm not—I don't think we thought about it one way or the other. We were all so glad to be at—be in medical school . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And the black medical students—I think, probably most of our friends was in the black dining room.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You know, the—our friends in medical school—in our med school classes, you know, were obviously white. But, you know, our—the people we knew in the community was in the black dining room.

SL: They had already gotten on the train.

JE: Yes.

[02:11:15] SL: Yeah. Well, and you have kept up with those relationships over the years?

JE: Oh, yes. I know—yeah, I know the two young men that was in—you know, but in medical school you keep up.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: The two young men who was in my medical school class—in fact, I—all—and all of the black medical students that was in medical school at that time—I probably know where they are now.

[02:11:41] SL: So pediatrics.

JE: Yes.

SL: You had—you had a professor there—a doctor there that you felt like you got a lot from. And you—is that when your interest towards pediatrics began, is under his tutelage?

JE: Well, I think the—you know, the people that was talking to me and recommending—Dr. Abernathy felt that the best pediatric internship in the country was at the University of Minnesota.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And—and that was true, you know? And so she knew people at Minnesota. She and her husband both had—you know, been to Minnesota, and so they knew people to pull, and so they recommended me. And so, they said, “Well, come up and see us.” And so they accepted me.

[02:12:41] SL: So you moved to Minnesota.

JE: I moved to Minnesota. I never—I really worked very hard. I may not have known more than any of the other interns, but I worked harder.

SL: Yeah. Well, let's talk about Minnesota.

JE: All right. [Laughs]

SL: How—what was that like up there?

JE: Oh, I—again, you know, you're so busy being a intern until you—you don't do anything else. For two months, I did not go outside. My car was piled up with snow and it had not been out of the parking lot. And it was there for two months.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: And so [laughter]—so—and so that was what it—what it was like. And—and I—and by this time, of course, I had met Coach—met Coach [Oliver] Elders. See, I met Coach Elders in November or some—or December, and he drove me up to Minnesota to interview for that internship. And, see, I was surprised that he would do that because he had told his girlfriend he didn't have time to come to—take—to take her to Memphis [Tennessee] to an important ball. But he told me that he would drive me to Minnesota. I decided right then, I didn't have to worry too much about that girlfriend. [Laughter]

[02:14:00] SL: Okay, now, wait a minute. There is—but you—you had married before . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . you met Coach Elders.

JE: Yes.

SL: And was he a—a medical student or . . .?

JE: No, he was a—he was a mathematician.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And he—I met him at Philander.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And he was from—from down at Helena, and then—then after I went in—into the Army, well, I think we each went our separate ways and I went to medical school and . . .

SL: Right. So it—it was—you all weren't mad at each other.

JE: Oh, no.

SL: You just kind of went different ways.

JE: No, no, and—and we still aren't mad at each other.

SL: Okay, that's good.

JE: You know, I think—no. No, no, I think that, you know, he has the utmost respect for me and I know I have the utmost respect for him. And—and we still aren't mad.

SL: And is that—was his name Reynolds?

JE: Reynolds. Cornelius Reynolds.

SL: Cornelius Reynolds. Uh-huh. And so that was amicable, then?

JE: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

[02:15:02] SL: Good. That's good. All right. Well, so let's just talk about how you met Coach Elders. I want to know this story.

JE: [Laughs] Well, I met Coach Elders in—you know, the university had been sending medical students over to help examine—and they still do—the—the football team and the basketball team. And so I was sent over to examine the basketball team.

SL: And which team was that?

JE: This was at Horace Mann [High School].

SL: Horace Mann. Okay.

JE: And so I went over and—well, when I went over, you know—you know, I had my little bag and I was all ready to examine the team. And then, I don't know all the things that went on in the back room, but Coach Elders said they were determined—he—he had all the guys stripped down to their waists and all ready for—to be examined by the doctor, and—and—and they went back—“Coach Elders, there's a woman out there. They—” and so he said, “Well, just go tell her she can't come in.” And they said, “But, Coach, she said that she's the doctor.” So—[laughter] so he came out to see about the doctor. Well, then he said—he said, “Well, guys, y'all just get ready. This is the doctor. *I'll* be first.”

SL: [Laughs]

JE: So I've been examining the coach ever since! [Laughter]

[02:16:17] SL: That wasn't the routine, though, was it?

JE: No.

SL: They coach didn't really get a medical—an exam. He was—you were there for the team.

JE: Well, a little bit.

SL: A little bit. Well . . .

JE: Probably not as much as the guys got, but . . . [laughs]

SL: Well, had you ever heard of him before? Did you . . .?

JE: No.

SL: You didn't know him from Adam.

JE: I didn't know him from Adam.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: And then—you know, I didn't—didn't—and after I'd finished and all, he told

me—said, “Well, we’ll send you a pass to the basketball games.” And I said, “Okay.” Well, I was expecting to get a pass. I didn’t think nothing about it because I didn’t go to—I didn’t know much about the game anyway.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Well, when the pass came, he told them that—not mail mine—he would bring it to me. And so . . .

SL: [Laughs]

JE: . . . he—when the first game came up, he called—said, “I got your pass. I’ll come pick you up and take you to the game.”

SL: And you said, “Okay.”

JE: And I said, “Okay.”

[02:17:11] SL: Okay. So there must’ve been some sparks or something in that first meeting, then. I . . .

JE: Well, I—I’m not—I—oh, I *liked* him. I thought he was a very handsome, charming man, but . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . you know, I didn’t—I—I don’t think I ever thought he would call me. I . . . after he bought—after he bought me my—see, he had—after he bought me this—wanted to bring me my pass, then I thought, “Well, that’s okay.”

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Well, when I *knew* he was interested—see, then all he was talking to me about was his girlfriend. And so . . .

SL: [Laughs]

JE: . . . after I had to go to Minnesota, which was during the Christmas holidays, and

he told his girlfriend he didn't have time to come over to Memphis, to take her to a dance, which was one night to Memphis, and yet he had time to drive *me* to Minnesota. I realized I didn't have to worry about that girlfriend.

SL: Looks like he knew the real deal when he saw it. [Laughter]

JE: That's right. We were married in two months.

SL: Sixty days.

JE: Sixty days.

SL: And have been married ever since . . .

JE: For forty-seven . . .

SL: . . . to this *very* day.

JE: That's right.

SL: You are spending all your time with me today on Valentine's Day and on your wedding anniversary day.

JE: That's right. The coach is out in the streets going—taking care of his rental business and . . .

SL: [Laughs]

JE: . . . and he better get that—his—that Martin house put together, and I don't think—I think it's still sitting in there in the bedroom.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: That—that's my Valentine present.

[02:18:44] SL: I see. Well, I may have to talk to him when he gets here. [Laughter]

Well, what a—so, he drives you to Minnesota. You interview for that internship.

When do you find out that you get in? Or did it happen while you were up there?

JE: They—they kind of told me that I would . . .

SL: You'd be—you'd be all right.

JE: . . . that if I would match them first, they would put me first.

SL: Okay. And you . . .

JE: I did.

SL: You did.

JE: Well, but then—see—see, but I didn't know that I'd be married to Coach Elders then. See, I—you know, then—we—he was still talking to me about his girlfriend then.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: All the way to Minnesota he was just telling me about this girlfriend.

[02:19:23] SL: So this is in December/early January and . . .

JE: Yeah.

SL: . . . by—by end of February you guys were married.

JE: That's right.

SL: February fourteenth you were married.

JE: February fourteenth we were married.

SL: How romantic. [Laughs] Well, so what—so, did he—he had to coach down here.

JE: He—yeah, well, I went to Minnesota—spent a year up there and I came back.

SL: So y'all didn't even live together for . . .

JE: No.

SL: . . . for a year.

JE: That's—that's right.

SL: [Laughs] Well . . .

JE: And we—and we made it.

SL: Yeah. That's a—that's no small feat.

JE: That's right.

[02:20:04] SL: That long-distance stuff. So you got in up there and you didn't leave that—that hospital for a couple months. You just basically lived in it.

JE: That—that's right. I lived in—we lived in the nurses' dorm.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And from the nurses' dorm, you know, there was a tunnel . . .

SL: To the hospital.

JE: . . . over to the hospital.

SL: You didn't need to get out.

JE: And we had all our meals there, so why did I need to leave for?

[02:20:28] SL: And so what kind of car did you have then?

JE: I had a—this was—I had a 1956 Pontiac.

SL: Wow. That's a nice car.

JE: So I had a good—I had a nice car.

SL: How'd that come about?

JE: Well, it came about by—I was—you know, by—I'd been working in the summers and working . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And—and I worked at—see, I lived out at Alexander, and—and Dr. Brown gave the medical students a job out there, so we worked out there all during the year—I worked out there all during the year, so I had my meals and he gave me a stipend and . . .

SL: You saved your money and you bought yourself a car.

JE: I saved—that's right. Well, you—now, you kind of had to have a car . . .

SL: Yeah.

JE: . . . in medical school.

SL: Well, that's a great story in itself. I mean, that's a—that's a point in time for you that . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . you owned your first car.

[Telephone Rings]

SL: Ha! First time the phone's rang.

JE: We were really fortunate, weren't we?

SL: Uh-huh.

[Telephone Rings]

Joy Endicott: Want to get it? Do you want to get up and get it?

JE: Okay.

[Telephone Rings]

JE: It will have stopped ringing by the time I get there.

SL & Joy: [Laughter]

JE: I think it stops after three rings.

[Short Telephone Ring]

TM: There it goes.

[Outgoing message of answering machine can be heard in background]

JE: Sorry.

Joy Endicott: That's okay.

JE: But we were fortunate. And I was thinking the phone's been awfully good today.

SL: It has. And normally we unplug them, but . . .

JE: Yeah. Well, I—if it rings gain we will have to do that.

Joy Endicott: We're rolling.

[02:22:04] SL: So—well, I'm just so impressed that you saved up enough money to
get a . . .

JE: Yeah.

SL: . . . that was essentially a—a new car, wasn't it?

JE: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

JE: Yeah.

SL: What color was it?

JE: It was lavender and white.

SL: [Laughs] I bet you wish you still had it.

JE: You do—I do. It's really a nice . . .

SL: Well, it sounds like a nice car.

JE: It was really a nice car.

[02:22:25] SL: Yeah. So [laughs] it gets buried in snow for the first couple of months
you're there.

JE: Yes.

SL: Is that right?

JE: That's right.

SL: It was colder in Minnesota.

JE: Oh, much, much colder.

SL: You didn't really care about staying up there, but you—what—what did . . .?

JE: I went up there primarily because I thought I wanted to be a pediatric surgeon, and I did.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But after I got married, I—you know, I—they didn't have pediatric surgery in Arkansas here at that time, but I knew I was coming home.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And, see, at that time they required you to do pediatrics first and then do . . .

SL: General.

JE: . . . general surgery and pediatric surgery, so . . .

[02:23:06] SL: Uh-huh. So you get back to—you're up there for a year.

JE: A year.

SL: A year. Was there anything up there that—? Well, first of all, it had to be a great experience for you.

JE: It really was.

SL: If it was the best in the country . . .

JE: It was the best in the country. It was a wonderful experience, and I really—I really enjoyed it. And—but, you know, I—you know, my husband was here.

SL: Yeah.

JE: So I was coming back.

[02:23:39] SL: But—I mean, I know you still have an interest in pediatrics . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . so it—that—there was something that probably got engrained or—or at least verified for you . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . or confirmed.

JE: Oh, no. Oh, no. I had an interest in pediatrics. It was just that I was gonna do pediatric surgery.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But I ended up doing pediatric endocrinology.

[02:23:57] SL: Right. All right. So at the end of the year you get in that car and you drive. Does he come up and ride back with you or you just go by yourself? You just drove down . . .

JE: I—I—I—well, what I did is . . . no, I think I drove by myself.

SL: Big adventure.

JE: He was—well, he was in Indiana working on his master's degree, so I went to Indiana, and from Indiana to Little Rock.

SL: So, he took a—did he just take a sabbatical from coaching or he had to . . .

JE: No, he . . .

SL: . . . quit his job and . . .?

JE: No, he kept coaching.

SL: He kept coaching?

JE: He did—see, in the summers . . .

SL: I see. Okay.

JE: See, he would have to go from—he would have to get out of school, like, on Friday or, you know, or even—and, you know, have to be at Indiana on Monday for class. See, he went for the whole summer, not just a part.

[02:24:56] SL: I see. Okay. So you get back to Little Rock, and what happens when you get back to Little Rock?

JE: Well, when I got back to Little Rock after being there, well, he was in Indiana. You know, I stopped by to visit, and I start working at—go—went over to the hospital, and I don't think I'd left that hospital for three days.

SL: Hmm.

JE: We didn't have—we were—had a shortage of interns, and you were supposed to work every—we was supposed to work every third night. But you were on second call, then, the second night. And the intern that I was—that I was on second call for, was a young Hispanic man. He was very bright, but he didn't know much English.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so he really needed me to be on second call with him when he was on—I needed to really be there, and so—until, you know, we had to finally get that resolved that, you know, I wasn't—I couldn't work two nights and off one.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Because when you were on call for pediatrics, you were really on call. You weren't just on call; you had to work.

SL: Yeah. Well, did he—I mean, you were covering for him just 'cause he couldn't communicate or . . . ?

JE: He had difficulty with communication.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And we didn't have really enough staff. And then sometimes the interns would call. But he would usually call me.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You know, it wasn't that I was going in interfering. I didn't—I did—I didn't want

to—like to interfere that much.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And—but, yeah, it took about two or three months before he was really comfortable . . .

SL: And stand on his own.

JE: . . . and stand on his own.

[02:26:41] SL: So, did Coach Elders have his own house or . . . ?

JE: No, he was living with a man and his wife who kind of adopted—had adopted him when he first came to Little Rock.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so she provided room and meals—everything—took care of him totally, you know? In fact, just—you know, washed and ironed his shirts and everything, you know? So . . .

SL: Is that where you lived when you got back?

JE: And when—and then when I got back I went and I stayed with her. And she took care of me just the same. And then she—you know, she thought we were her children. And then—well, when—while he was—Oliver was at school that summer, I found a little house over in Glenview. It was a—you know, a very nice—you know, black subdivision. It was a three bedroom, one and a half baths, and we didn't have enough money to really—to really buy it, but we—let's see, what—we got a second . . .

SL: Mortgage.

JE: . . . mortgage on it. And so we paid the two mortgages for five years. But one was \$98 and the other was \$27 or something like that.

SL: Those were the days.

JE: Those were the days.

SL: Man. [02:28:00] So how long were you—when did you finish at Little Rock?

JE: At the med school?

SL: Yeah.

JE: I—I finished my residency in nineteen, let's see, sixty . . . oh, I was chief resident from [19]63-[19]64.

SL: Wow. Tell me what a chief resident does.

JE: A chief resident works seven days a week, 365 days out of the year—is on—on call, but you—if—when you're chief resident, you're—you know, it's considered a *real* honor. And you're—you're over all of the other residents. And, well, you know, here I was in the middle of Little Rock during that time as a black woman with nine black, doctors, under me—all white.

SL: All white.

JE: Yeah.

SL: Well . . .

JE: And it—I had a wonderful, wonderful year, and I think they felt that they had a good year. And many of them still—if they see me right now, they still call me chief.

SL: So this is 196—4?

JE: Four.

[02:29:31] SL: Nationally, I guess, had [President John Fitzgerald] Kennedy been shot? I guess he—when did Kennedy—when did Kennedy—when was the assassination? [JFK was assassinated on November 22, 1963.]

TM: November [].

SL: November of sixty—he was elected in 1960. Is that right?

JE: Yeah.

SL: So—and he had a thousand days, so he—had been shot.

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: I guess Martin Luther [King, Jr.]—had he been [assassinated]?

JE: He was—he was April of—see, he was in [19]68. Martin Luther King was shot in [19]68.

SL: [19]68.

JE: April 4, [19]68.

SL: Okay. I'm—I'm jumping ahead, then. So what was—you didn't probably see much of Little Rock . . .

JE: No.

SL: . . . that year.

JE: No.

SL: You probably were just living in the hospital.

JE: That's right.

SL: Again.

JE: That's—well, see—the year I was chief resident—see, I was married and I—we were living in North Little Rock.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But I was—you know, I would go home—usually I would be at work at 7:00 [a.m.] or before and I wouldn't get home until 8:00 or 9:00 [p.m.] seven days a week.

[02:30:40] SL: I guess Coach's teams were winning and . . . ?

JE: Coach's teams were winning, and I always went to his—I always went to Coach's games. And whatever it was going—you—you—it's all right to get sick, but you just manage it until the game's over. [Laughter]

SL: Well, that's good.

JE: Well, when you're chief resident—you know, they're—the residents—they're really taking care of things and, you know, and you're—you're—you're available, and so they—they can usually manage.

[02:31:10] SL: So what'd you do when you finished your residency?

JE: When I finished my residency I did a fellowship. I did a five-year—well, I did a three-year research fellowship in endocrinology with a Dr. Ed Hughes. I learned to be an endocrinologist.

SL: And was that here in . . . ?

JE: That was here.

SL: And . . .

JE: And after—after my fellowship of three years, I got a National Institutes of Health Career Development Award to learn to be a real, teacher—a real medical school teacher.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And then—by then I was an assistant professor, and then so I just, did research and worked up the academic ladder to full professor.

[02:32:03] SL: Who was head of the medical school then?

JE: When I first started—it was a person named [Larson?]. I'm trying to think of his first name. And—and then after that we had a doctor . . .

SL: Doesn't matter.

JE: Okay.

SL: Bad question. [Laughs]

JE: I can't—no, I was trying—really trying to . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: Dr. Dennis.

SL: Okay.

JE: Jim Dennis.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And then after Dr. Dennis I think we had . . . getting more . . . I can't remember.

Oh, he—he's—he's here now. He's down at the Clinton School [of Public Service]. Doctor . . .

SL: Bruce.

JE: Bruce. Tom Bruce.

SL: Tom Bruce.

JE: Uh-huh.

[02:33:10] SL: Well, so you went through a number of administrators.

JE: Yes, yes.

SL: You're—you're tenured by now.

JE: That's right. That's right. Oh, no, I was tenured by then.

[02:33:19] SL: What's happened with the politics in the state of Arkansas about that time? What's going on?

JE: Well, I didn't—you know, I wasn't a politician. I was busy doing research and doctoring and having a good time.

SL: Yeah.

JE: You know, and I was—you know, I was president of the Society for Pediatric Research and, you know, I was *big* into academic pediatrics.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And I didn't know much about what was going on in politics. And in—you know, we did a little grant on, diabetes care for rural teens, and—and that kind of involved the human services group and I got involved in health. And then, of course, I was asked to serve on some boards and commissions and—and I met—I met the Clintons [Bill and Hillary]. So that was kind of, some of the things that was going on . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . about that time.

[02:34:31] SL: This is probably in the [19]70s, then, or [19]80s?

JE: Yes. Early—probably late [19]70s, early [19]80s.

SL: And what about children? When—when did you start having children?

JE: Well, I started having—my first son was born in [19]63.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: We got married in [19]60. He was born in [19]63. And our second son was born in August of [19]65.

SL: And so on top of all these other things you're doing, you're a mom, too.

JE: That's right. That's right.

SL: Are—well, you had to have loved that, too.

JE: Oh, yeah.

SL: It's not like you weren't familiar with what it took to be a mom.

JE: Oh, that—no. You’d think you—you know, I was a pediatrician. You’d think, “Well, I’ll—” you know everything about everything, you know?

SL: Uh-huh.

[02:35:23] JE: Let me tell you, the first day home with this baby all by myself was no—you know, I couldn’t write the orders and say, “Three ounces every four hours” or whatever. All of a sudden I had to do everything.

SL: Right.

JE: That’s when you really learn how to be a mom.

SL: Well, but . . .

JE: I enjoyed it.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But let me tell you, it’s tough.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: The first six weeks was really busy and really tough, and I thought—but I thought I had the most beautiful baby in the world. [Laughs] I know every baby’s the most beautiful baby in the world, but I know mine was.

[02:36:05] SL: [Laughs] Well, that’s good. And so, I guess by this time you’re probably—you’ve mentioned some of the organizations you were getting involved with and . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: And you met the—you met the Clintons through—which organization was it?

JE: Well, I met the Clintons . . . well, the first time I met the Clintons was really through a friend that lived—a person had him over to—across the street from us. But—but they were in—invited me to serve on the Arkansas Industrial

Development Commission.

SL: Wow.

JE: And so I was on the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission, and then, you know, and then under—in fact, under—oh, the senator—our other . . .

SL: [Dale] Bumpers?

JE: Bumpers—he had—he—I served—he—I was on the Women's Commission . . .

SL: Uh-huh. So . . .

JE: . . . for Senator Bumpers.

[02:37:13] SL: . . . did you meet . . .

JE: Govenor Bumpers.

SL: . . . Diane [Divers Kincaid] Blair about then?

JE: Oh, yes. In fact, I was on her commission—her group. That's what . . .

SL: Let's—let's talk about Diane Blair or a while.

JE: Yes. Okay.

SL: What a remarkable . . .

JE: Oh.

SL: . . . lady and women's advocate . . .

JE: Oh, oh . . .

SL: . . . that—that she was.

JE: . . . wonderful. Just tremendous. I mean, she really was—you know, she—she was just an absolute advocate for women.

[02:37:38] SL: Did you see the famous debate with [Phyllis] Schafly that she had when what's-her-name came in from—and they were doing the ERA [Equal Rights Amendment] . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . debate?

JE: Yes, I was there, so [laughs]—yes. Oh, that Schafly was a—in fact, I—I spoke at part of that—that other woman speaking, too.

SL: You did?

JE: Yes.

[02:38:08] SL: How crazy was that? I mean . . .

JE: Well, you know, I—Phyllis Schafly's just crazy as far as I was concerned. I know she's not, but that was—you know, she—if she was—felt that women should be barefoot, pregnant, and in the kitchen and do what their husband said. I don't know whether she did that or not, but she—you know, this was what she was out there on the stump preaching.

[02:38:41] SL: How do you think Diane did, at that?

JE: Well, you know, I—I—you know, I—I have always been enamored by Diane Blair, and I just—you know, she was just a—she's a charming lady like Dr. Edith Irby Jones is a charming lady, you know?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You just sit there and swallow up what she says.

[02:39:02] SL: I've—I know so many great stories about her from—from Bumpers and from Clinton . . .

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: . . . and from Fayetteville . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . and all of the students that she's always taught.

JE: I met her son . . .

SL: Bill [Kincaid]?

JE: . . . the other day . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . when—when I was up at Fayetteville.

SL: Uh-huh. He's a great guy.

JE: Yeah. Oh, yes.

SL: And his wife, Missy, of course, is great. And what—what a close friendship that she had with—with the Clintons.

JE: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

[02:39:38] SL: Well, tell me how you first met Diane.

JE: Probably through the Women's Commission.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: The Governor's Commission on the Status of Women.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And I remember, the first time I went to Washington to testify about something else, it was really related to public health.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And—and it was before Governor Bumpers'—Senator Bumpers' then—committee—he was having, this—he was having this hearing on public health, and they had—Public Health had invited me to come to speak, and so I was already there and—and—and—and I spoke. And so, when I finished, you know, Governor Bumpers—Senator Bumpers—he says—he says, “Where are you from? Why—where—where have you been? Why didn't I know you?” And I said—I

said, “Senator, you appointed me to your Commission on the Status of Women.”

He said, “I always knew I had good sense.” [Laughter]

SL: Well, you know, he tells a story that, you know, when he first met Diane Blair . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . she had two children on her hips . . .

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: . . . and—and after he got elected, she pretty much would get on the phone and just tell him what to do.

JE: Yes.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: Well, I—I’m sure she would do that.

SL: Yeah. And—and he did.

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: He would do the things that she told him to do. I mean, she was very persuasive and she made sense and . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . she was—she was right.

JE: Oh, yeah. Oh, no.

SL: She did the right thing.

JE: Oh, I always—she and I—we—she and I and two or three other women—we went all over Arkansas talking on—on the status—Commission on the Status of Women.

[02:41:30] SL: Uh-huh. Do you remember any particular conversation or event with Diane that just really—just really slayed you or, got to you?

JE: You know, we were always pretty much on the same page about stuff.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so—and, you know—and she was the chairman of our commission.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And she just assigned us what we were supposed to do and—and expected it to be done.

SL: Did she—did you ever see her, you know, kind of, fade a little bit or get discouraged or—? I mean, I know—I know she'd get angry . . .

JE: Yeah.

SL: . . . and—and stuff to get stuff through, but you never saw her spirit lessen.

JE: No. No . . . She was always—you know, she was always really about getting the job done in our commission meetings.

SL: Well, and she was also so approachable.

JE: Yes. Oh, yes.

SL: Never had any . . .

JE: Yeah. No. And I think, the times she and my—and myself and I can't remember the—it was a—a—a woman down in—was from down in Helena, that was on the commission. We went down there, you know, with—you know, to really talk about the status of women.

[02:43:19] SL: Uh-huh. Well, so let's see. I'm not exactly sure where we are here in your—in—in your history, but I—I can't help but feel that you've got to know that you—you had—you were very fortunate to work with her and get to know her.

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: I mean, she was just . . .

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: . . . off the scale. In fact, the Pryor Center is kind of cousins with the [Diane D.] Blair Center [of Southern Politics and Society].

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: At one point in time we were actually a part of the Blair Center . . .

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: . . . and I'm not sure we're still not. I'm not . . .

JE: [Laughs]

SL: I don't know how all that administrative stuff works, but, Jim Blair, of course, is a great champion . . .

JE: Oh, yes.

SL: . . . as well.

JE: Oh, yes.

[02:44:01] SL: Well, so, what other organizations were you—or what other activities—? I mean, now you're starting to be a little bit more activist . . .

JE: [Laughs]

SL: . . . or advocate, let's say.

JE: Yeah.

SL: You're and advocate—advocate now. Were there any more—other folks that were tapping on you to—to further women's causes or children's causes or—? It—it just seems like you're now starting to be engaged. You're no longer isolated.

JE: Yeah.

SL: You've done your schooling. You've achieved your—your goals, and—and now there are people that are looking to you for leadership, really.

[02:44:41] JE: Well, you know, I was always out there. You know, I was a very strong advocate for adolescent health and teenage pregnancies and, you know, that was a big thing with me. So I was a part of the Adolescent Health Group and trying to prevent teenage pregnancy and prevent AIDS [acquired immune deficiency syndrome]. And I was always about pushing for women's health. So those are big—have been big things for me. And, of course, to me education was always absolutely top priority.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And, you know, I felt, well, none of it was going to work if we didn't . . .

SL: Educate.

JE: . . . educate our—our populous.

SL: Uh-huh. You also—were you part of the Single Parent Scholarship stuff, too, or . . .?

JE: No.

[02:45:22] SL: No? So, when did—what other things did you—how did the Clintons cross your path again? Let's kind of . . .?

JE: [Laughs]

SL: Of course—of course, you know, I'm trying to lead—I'm trying to trace that—that involvement with—with Bill and Hillary Clinton.

JE: Well, I—I—I think that . . . probably, they knew me or got to know about me through—you know, Bob Fiser, who was chairman of the Department of Pediatrics at the time . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . who—and he was trying to get someone to take over the Department of Health. And so I think it was, probably, through—and—and, you know, and through—and—and probably Diane feeling—you know, had—knowing that I had worked on the—you know, Commission on the Status of Women. You know, it was probably people like that, that probably bought my name up.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And so he called me to ask me, if—you know, and I had been on the . . . you know, their commission for . . . I must be getting tired. My brain is dying . . . Let me just—forget about it. But I need—be that as it may. But anyway, he called and asked if I would—if I would consider serving as director of health. Well, you know, at the time, if I'm a full professor—tenured professor on the university faculty, to—to be offering me a job as director of health was really not offering much of a job as far as I was concerned.

SL: Right.

[02:47:30] JE: And so, you know, I told—you know, I kind of—you know, I gave him a flip answer. You know—you know how when you don't want something you give them—you can give any flip answer you want.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: I said—I said—I said, “Oh, well. I'll—I'll—” I said, “If—I'll—” After he'd talked, I said, “I'll think about it, if you give me a ten-percent raise, I—I keep my tenured professorship at the medical school, and you let me run the health department.” He—called me—he said, “Well, let me see.” He said—called me back about three weeks later. You know, I'd totally forgotten it.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: And he said—called me back—he said, “Well, I’ve got it all done. Will you take it?”

SL: [Laughs]

JE: I said, “I said I told you I would, didn’t I?” He says, “Yes, you did.” He says—I said, “Well, I don’t want to lie.” He said, “Thank you. Bye.”

SL: [Laughs]

JE: So that’s how I ended up at the Health Department.

[02:48:42] SL: Well, you know, I know that he—that teenage pregnancy, particularly in Arkansas . . .

JE: Yeah.

SL: . . . was a big issue for him.

JE: Yes.

SL: And he probably knew that you were very much aware . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . aware of that.

JE: Yes, yes.

SL: And so it was kind of a good fit.

JE: Oh—oh, yeah.

SL: I mean, he saw it . . .

JE: And—well, and then I’d done this, you know . . . diabetes care for rural teens, which was public health kind of rant, like.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And I had worked with children and families, you know, in DHS [Department of

Human Services] for some time, so he knew all of that, too.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And then, you know—and he—well, he knew I was a pediatrician on—at
[Arkansas] Children's Hospital, so . . .

[02:49:29] SL: Well, and this—the teenage pregnancy thing—he also saw that as an
economic issue.

JE: That's right.

SL: And it was.

JE: And it was.

SL: Yeah. So you kept your word.

JE: Yep.

SL: He [laughs] expected you to keep your word.

JE: Yep.

SL: But did he keep his word? Did he . . . ?

JE: Oh . . .

SL: Did he let you run the thing?



JE: Yes, he did. He really did. I never—he never—I never had any problem, with
him complaining about anything in regard to the Health Department. I think I
probably dropped a few bombshells at times when he—he didn't know he was
going to get a bombshell. I guess immediately after I became the health director
he was having a meeting in his conference room and we were all sitting around
talking about what—on youth and families. We were getting ready to go to a
major conference. And when he got to the Health Department, he wanted to
know what was the Health Department going to do, you know, for you. I said that

we were going to prevent teenage pregnancies. You know, the media was around, and so one of the media said, “Well, Dr. Elders, how do you plan to do that?” I said, “Oh—” I said, “We’re gonna have a health education and—a—in schools and teach, you know, comprehensive health education in schools and—school-based clinics.” So he said, “Are you going to have condoms at school?” I said, “Well, we are—aren’t going to put them on their lunch plate, but, yes.” And, of course, you know, he—they looked and he turned as red as my shirt.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: And so they said, “Governor, Dr. Elders said—.” He looked and he swallowed a few times. And he said, “Well, Dr. Elders told me what she was about before she became the health director, and I support Dr. Elders.” We’d not talked about that in particular, so I told people as I—before—this was—he was still governor—when I was going around talking—you know, I was talking to just people all over the country at that time. And so I told him the one thing that I knew—you know, they had asked me about Bill Clinton as president, you know?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And I said, “Well—” I said, “The one thing I—I know—” I said, “My governor knows how to swim in Jell-O.” I said, “I dropped him in the ocean and I know he can swim in Jell-O,” so . . .

SL: [Laughs]

JE: So he—that was kind of how we started. And this started—I hadn’t—well, then after that, you know, they was always talking about the health director was gonna put condoms in schools, you know? They talked about everything else, but I just—I didn’t realize there was a [problem]—I realized teenage pregnancy was a

problem, but I didn't realize what I was saying was a problem.

SL: Well, you know, by all rights it shouldn't have been a problem.

JE: Right.

SL: And it was the exact right thing to do. And you know . . .

JE: Yeah.

SL: . . . I'm gonna—you're gonna find as we go through all this stuff that I think everything that you had to offer and had to say was *exactly* what needed to be said.

JE: Well . . .

[02:52:50] SL: But what—what's amazing to me is, this is the first time that I'm hearing of any bombshells or anything—any—anything controversial or anything that would raise an eyebrow . . .

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: . . . in your career. And I—but is—is this right? Is this the first time that you said something and all of a sudden . . .

JE: That's right.

SL: . . . it meant, it was controversial or . . . ?

[02:53:17] JE: That's right. Well, see, this was, three weeks—I had only been a health director for three weeks [laughter] when this happened, so—and so it started—you know, before—you know, I was in a research lab working on chickens, talking about what made long bones grow. So . . . but—but then after I got to—you know, after I got to Washington, the thing that I told people all the time—I said, “Bill—” I said, “Bill Clinton knew what I was about when he asked me to be the [United States] Surgeon General,” I said, “Because we talked about it, and

I said, ‘Governor, you know what I’m about.’ And he said, ‘Yes, I know.’ He said, ‘But I want you to do for the country what you’ve done for Arkansas.’”

[02:54:10] SL: And let’s talk about that. You—there was a reversal in that pregnancy rate.

JE: That’s right.

SL: I mean, there . . .

JE: Oh . . .

SL: . . . was traceable, bona fide . . .

JE: Absolute . . .

SL: . . . results.

JE: That’s right.

SL: This was no bending the numbers . . .

JE: Right.

SL: . . . to make . . .

JE: That’s right.

SL: . . . to justify a policy.

JE: That’s right.

SL: This was policy that was implemented, and it was successful and it made a difference.

JE: Right. That’s right.

SL: So you . . .

[02:54:32] JE: You know, no parent—no parent wants their teenager to be pregnant.

You know, we—they may not want them to use condoms. They may not want to talk about sex, but they *sure* don’t want them to be pregnant or to have an—you

know, STD [sexually transmitted diseases] or HIV [human immunodeficiency virus]. But, you know, I had taken care of adolescents for thirty-five years. I had talked to parents one on one for thirty-five years. And whereas I knew—you know, regardless to what they may say—“Well, how—oh, I just wouldn’t do that,” they wanted somebody to talk to their children. They didn’t want their children to make a mistake.

[02:55:16] SL: Well, so that was really the bottom line. And you saw that and . . .

JE: That’s right.

SL: . . . you were in a position to do something about it.

JE: That’s right. All of that’s right. And—and, you know, that was one of the things I felt that—you know, this is a problem. It’s been a problem in our country for a very long time. And I’m—and, you know, and *I* have an opportunity to do something about it. And there is no way that I’m not gonna try and do it.

SL: So . . .

JE: Bill Clinton knew that, too. He knew that there was no way that I was not going to expend every effort, and he knew that I wasn’t going to back down from the people who were—just because they got out there and said something.

[02:56:07] SL: Okay. So there’s teenage pregnancy. There’s sex education.

JE: Yes.

SL: So—and health education.

JE: Yes.

SL: But there’s also—you were also an advocate and felt absolutely that there needed to be universal health care.

JE: Absolutely.

SL: And so you and . . .

JE: And I still feel that.

SL: . . . you and Hillary were kind of on the same page.

JE: Right. That's right. Oh, absolutely.

[02:56:35] SL: Can you talk a little bit about Hillary Clinton and—and—I mean, did you have anything—? Did y'all ever talk about universal health care or . . .?

JE: Yes, we did. I—you know, I—I don't think I—I very *much* support what Hillary was about. I very much support universal access to health care. I'm not sure the plan we had going in was quite the right plan. It was an excellent plan for sick care, but, we've got a good *sick* care system. We've got the best sick care system in the world. The problem is, is we don't have a health care system. The reason why health care keeps costing so much and keep going up, is because we don't—we haven't taught our people how to do the things to keep them well. And so, unless we really focus on prevention—*preventing* problems—so I feel that they've got to be prevention-focused and solution-oriented if we're going to really make a real difference. And so I very much support the universal access to health care for everybody. And until we do that, we aren't going to do anything about the cost. We aren't going to reduce disease. We're going to continue to be thirtieth or fortieth behind other Western industrialized countries because we're—have so many people. As long as we have 47,000,000 people with no access to care, we're going to continue to have problems. You know, we won't take care of prenatal care, and yet we don't mind going out there spending \$1,000,000 to take care of a very low birth-weight baby, and I'm not against spending \$1,000,000 to take care of a low birth-weight baby. I'm for *preventing* low birth-weight babies



if we can, and keep them healthy and make them a normal, healthy baby, whereas it costs \$30,000 now to deliver a normal, healthy baby, and they're normal and healthy and—but, you know, we have many of the low birth-weights that cost \$1,000,000, and we continue to pay for the rest of our lives.

[02:58:53] SL: So you would think that anybody with a lick of sense would get that.

JE: I would think.

SL: And I just don't—I've never understood how all that gets twisted around and just doesn't happen. I—is it . . . ?

JE: Yeah.

SL: I mean, I—okay, so there's—there's lots of dollars here [laughs] . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . that are on the table. There's—there's the pharmaceutical companies. There's the—the medical [community].

JE: Right.

SL: The doctors.

JE: That's right.

SL: The doctors are . . .

JE: We were a part of the problem.

[02:59:26] SL: Uh-huh. So how—how do you break that?



JE: Well, I think that that's where we really have got to look at how do we develop a *system* to deal with the problems we've got. See, the problem is, is that we don't have the system. We don't have the wagon to carry what we've got. We've got all the tools. Every—you know, we've got the best doctors, the best nurses, the best hospitals—cutting-edge research—but we don't have the system to deliver it

to the people. We've not educated our people. And if our people don't get involved with the education and get involved with keeping themselves healthy, we can't win. You know, people are going out—getting involved in, you know, high-risk sexual behaviors, ending up with HIV/AIDS. We don't have a cure for AIDS. We have some medications that make people live longer and better, but a third of the people that have the disease don't even know they've got it. So we've got to educate our people on how to be healthy. Until we do that, we aren't going to get there. And this is why I wanted to have comprehensive health education in our schools from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Educate young people on how to eat right, not to—not to drink excessively, not to engage in high-risk behaviors, not to smoke. You know, the things that we know that they shouldn't be doing—well, the time to teach them is when they're in grade school or all the way through. Don't wait until they get out there and get busted and in jail, and now we're gonna give them a crash one-week course on how to be good.

[03:01:17] SL: So, really, it does come down to education, doesn't it?

JE: That's right. Oh, absolutely.

SL: The—the belief there is that if you start it early enough, the behaviors change.

JE: That's right. It's about education, education, education.

SL: And if you started early enough, not only do the behaviors change, but the beliefs change.

JE: That's absolutely right.

SL: And—and the—the—you—you start to believe in the preventative side of things instead of bringing your problems to someone else to fix it.

JE: That's right. And—and, you know, you wonder, well, why is that poor, less well-

educated children, get into more trouble? It's because of education. So, you know, we know how to do something about this. It's just that we've not had the will to get it done. I always say, "What good is reading, writing and arithmetic if you don't teach them to be physically, emotionally and—and—and psychologically fit." So . . .

[03:02:34] SL: It—it—it sounds, you know, perfect to me. It sounds like the [laughs] perfect plan to—to implement that . . .

JE: Well . . .

SL: . . . early one and—and . . .

JE: You know, and—and I think that—you know, one of the things—you know, when you start talking to everybody—everybody in America gets sick care. It's a matter of how sick you have to get to get it.

SL: Well, and it's even more complicated than that now. I mean, you can—you can be—you can be carried into a place . . .

JE: That's right.

SL: . . . and if you're a Medicare patient and that doctor's already met his quota for Medicare patients, he doesn't have to give you any care and he—and you can even offer to pay for it and he can't take you because it sends up a red flag for corruption—for fraud.

JE: That—yeah.

SL: So it's complicated.

JE: So—no, it's very complicated. And what we have—it—we need to fix our system.

SL: Uh-huh. [Sighs]

JE: We can't fix it by rearranging the chairs on—on—on a—on a sinking Titanic.
We've got to change the system and make it happen.

SL: Okay.

TM: Hey Scott—need to change tapes.

SL: Let's change tapes.

[Tape Stopped]

SL: Good. Okay?

Joy Endicott: Yep. Speed on FireStore.

SL: Well, we're having fun now, aren't we? [Laughter] Well, we've been talking about your becoming involved with the Clintons. We've heard the story about Bill getting after—roping you into being . . .

JE: [Laughs]

SL: . . . the director of health for the state of Arkansas.

JE: Yes.

SL: We've—and we've talked about how he wanted you to do the same for the country that you had done for the state of Arkansas . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . and we've talked a little bit about how—what you did there and that—it was great.

JE: Yes.

[03:04:41] SL: Big difference. What—what we haven't really talked about is the—how ferocious the political arena and environment can be on the national scale. And it doesn't really doesn't seem to matter—I'm just gonna say this—put this out there . . .

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: It doesn't really seem to matter whether you're right or wrong. They can—they can make it whatever they want to make it for their own . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . purposes and let the chips fall where they may. And the country is for better or for worse. It just doesn't—it's just amazing to me that something so simple and something so prima facie . . .

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: . . . and logical—it can be met with such ferocious opposition. So . . .

[03:05:39] JE: So much of that—I think so much of the ferocious opposition that we see is probably really related to the fights between the parties—the Democrats and the Republicans. You know, when I was in Washington, everybody wanted a health care plan. You know, they had—the Democrats was—had Hillary's plan. [Republican] Bob Dole had a plan. One of the senators—the senators had a plan. The House had a plan. And then there was probably some other—two or three other plans. Everybody had a health care plan going on. Well, we ended up with absolutely nothing. You know, nothing happened. But what the big fight was about—not so much that at that time that everybody didn't want to—want everybody to have health care, it was the fact that nobody wanted the other to win. They didn't want—you know, they'd never wanted it to be said that the Democrats got universal health care for all the people. They didn't want the Republicans to get—you know, so—so I think it was more of a fight, you know, between the—the different groups than it was really a fight about the principle of “Do we feel we need universal access to health care for all of our people?”

SL: Before we go any further, let's—let's tell a story.

JE: Okay.

[03:07:13] SL: When did you know that you were gonna be tapped for surgeon general?

JE: Oh . . . not—not too long after Bill Clinton was elected president.

SL: I mean, did you go out and stump for the campaign at all?

JE: I was the health director, so I didn't go out and stump for the campaign at all.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But health—health departments all—I was the secretary for the state and territorial health officers for the whole country. So they were inviting me to come to their state to speak to their health departments or their health groups or whatever—so I—I had been to thirty-four states. But, you know, it was—I was not stumping—you know, I—I was not out there campaigning. But, obviously, you know, I was telling—I was telling everybody that I—that asked me and when I was out there about—about my governor, and they wanted to know if he was really as genuine and all of these things that—and, you know, I—I mean, and I thought that he was even better than any of the things that they were saying.

[03:08:42] SL: Well, and also they were probably—had keen interest on your—the success that you had . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . that had happened under your watch.

JE: Well, and this is why they were inviting me.

SL: Yeah. So you must've gotten another all from Bill Clinton after he won.

JE: Well . . .

SL: Or two.

JE: Well—well, now, he—you know, he—he talked to me and—and asked me about being the surgeon general. And, well, see, someone else had already talked to me about it, and he talked about my being the secretary of health. Well, then—you know, this kind of—I think his—his arm got twisted, and so he made—you know, put someone else—made someone else the secretary of health.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But he wanted to know if I would be the surgeon general. I told him I already had a better job than being the surgeon general.

SL: Well, so tell . . .

[03:09:39] JE: So how did I ended up in the job if I had a better job?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And I did. And I really was not going to take it, but my mother called me and she said, “I saw the president on TV the other night, and he just looked pitiful.”

SL: [Laughs]

JE: “You’re gonna have to go on up there and help him.” Well, can you imagine my mother with an eighth-grade education thinking the president of the United States just looked pitiful? But—so, you know, I thought about what I could do as—and—and, you know, and we discussed some of the things that we were gonna change and the—and some of the shifts in the department that was gonna be moved to put under the surgeon general to make—and so—well, I obviously said yes. You know, I was there. And I really—probably the surgeon general’s job was a better job for me. I really enjoyed being the surgeon general, and I went out every day doing what I felt needed to be done for this country. You have to

realize that all of the major organizations that had been studying and looking at adolescent health care—looking at teenage pregnancy—looking at school-based clinics—were all—it all—they’d been working for ten years. I had the benefit of all of their work, and they was thrilled—they was feeding me constantly and was thrilled to death that I was—that was able to be out there all the time talking about what they felt strongly about. So this was not original with me. It was really using the compilation of all the hard work for these multiple different groups to really make things happen to really make a difference. And we all thought that we could get that done. And, in fact, out of the health care reform piece of legislation, [Senator] Ted Kennedy—you know, he—he—we got along—he liked me—he got that through the Public Health Committee—bam! Now, this was the adolescent health piece for the school-based clinics and all of this stuff. Well, Bill Clinton didn’t want that piece to go because he wanted the whole thing to go. And I understand that, you know. Don’t try to sell it off a piece at a time if you can get the whole pie. And so—so, consequently—well, when the whole piece went down, well, that went down, too.

[03:12:37] SL: Do you think that the president was a big naive about that? Do you think maybe he should’ve said, “You know what? This is—this is a good thing. Let’s keep what we’ve got right here and we can work on adding more”?

JE: Well, I—I—well, I think perhaps that’s right. You see, Ted Kennedy and the senator from Kansas.

SL: [Bob] Dole.

JE: Not Dole—the other one. The lady.

Joy Endicott: Nancy.

SL: Oh . . .

JE: Nancy . . .

Joy Endicott: Kassebaum.

JE: . . . Kassebaum. She—Nancy Kassebaum and Ted Kennedy wanted it to happen, and they was head of the Public Health Committee, and they could've gotten it all the way through. And then [Congressman Henry] Waxman—you know, we had people over on the House side who was very willing and could really have taken it through. But then, you know, it just kind of lost . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

[03:13:27] JE: And—and—and, well, then, by this time, the Right Wing had mobilized their forces. And they mobilized their forces to be against me.

SL: And that was—was that part of that Contract with America movement?

JE: Yes.

SL: Newt Gingrich and . . .

JE: Yes. Yeah. But they were—they were fighting against—you know, their big thing—I was their—you know, I was their bull's-eye. You know, they was really against—they was really probably against Bill Clinton. They didn't care one hoot about me or anything like that. But it was the things that I was talking about that they could—gave them something to attack.

[03:14:17] SL: Uh-huh. Well, let's talk a little bit about the things that you were talking about—that—that raise—that made you such an easy target for those guys . . .

JE: Yeah.

SL: . . . on the way right. You—what were some of the things that you said that really

got 'em going?



JE: Well—[laughter] well, I think the—some of the things that I said that really got them going, which, you know, I was really for women's rights—the right to choose. And they felt that I was about, you know, really wanted to have—you know, I was about having abortions. Well, you know, I felt that, you know, let's try and prevent unplanned pregnancies—that I've never known any woman to need an abortion that was not already pregnant. And so I accused them of having a love affair with the fetus—that if they *really believed* in children and supported children, they would support education—they would support health care—they would support having universal access to health care for everybody—the would support, you know, education for children, and that they didn't. And so how could they say that they were for children—that they loved little babies as long as they was in somebody else's uterus? But the minute they were born, they dropped them . . . So, you know, that was not . . .

[03:15:55] SL: Well, and, of course, the moment that you accused them of having a love affair with the fetus meant that you didn't care anything about the fetus.

JE: [Laughter] Well—well, that wasn't true. But, of course, you know, that . . .

SL: But that's—that's kind of the—the . . .

JE: Uh-huh

SL: . . . spin, on it.

JE: Yeah. Well, but, you know, I think that, you know, this was just, what—you



know, how they really felt about it. Well, see, I didn't know when I went there—I didn't really know—well, I guess I knew abortion was a hot issue for them. I knew that because of the problems we'd had here. I really didn't know the

comprehensive health education was an issue. I thought everybody believed in comprehensive health education—teaching young people to be healthy. You know, I—I just couldn’t believe anybody would disagree with that. And—and, you know, and then, of course, we got into the big issue when I was—gave a talk at the UN [United Nations], and I was asked about the issue [laughs] in regard to masturbation. And, you know, and, you know, I—I said that I felt that, you know, masturbation was a normal part of human sexuality, and that, you know, eighty percent of women masturbate; ninety percent of men masturbate, and the rest lie.

SL: [Laughs]

[03:17:23] JE: And, you know, then I said—“First of all—” I said—and they said, well, “—if I thought it would reduce the spread of AIDS.” I said, “First of all,” I said, “Masturbation has never given anybody a disease, never gotten anybody pregnant, never made anybody go blind, never made anybody go crazy, and you know—never caused hair to grow on your hands, and you know you’re having sex with somebody you love.”

SL: [Laughs]

JE: So . . .

SL: And, boy, did that make ‘em . . .

JE: That—that—well, that created . . .

SL: That got ‘em.

JE: That created a real firestorm. And I—and I didn’t even realize I’d said anything that was upsetting.

[03:18:12] SL: Well, and I guess their spin was, you’re advocating them to—the—the public schools to teach masturbation.

JE: Yeah. But, see [laughter], who needs to teach anybody masturbation, you know? You know, I think we need to teach children a healthy sexuality, but we don't, you know? We just feel—let them learn it in the streets and feel that—they feel that the only thing you need to do is just tell them to say no until they get married. Well, the mean age of getting married now is twenty-seven years old. And the mean age of onset of puberty is eleven and a half years. So what are they gonna do from eleven and a half to twenty-seven?

SL: Well, I would guess become psychotic. [Laughter]

JE: I don't know what they feel they're gonna do with this hormonal imperative . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . that's going on out there.

[03:19:18] SL: There was also the drug thing.

JE: Yes.

SL: And that really sent up a bunch of flags.

JE: Yes.

SL: Talk to me about that. Where—where—?

JE: Well, again, you know, I always get in trouble when people ask me questions, see?

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: You know, and—and—and I say what I think and I—I—the one thing I always tell people, “You—you can't go back and talk to me about what I said. I know what I said because I only say what I believe in, and I'm not reading it.” But then someone asked me if I felt that the legalization—if I felt that the legalization of marijuana would reduce crime, and I said that there was many studies—maybe it was drugs—there was many studies to show that the legalization of drugs would

reduce crime. I said, “But I’m not sure that it—you know—of what we’re—
we’re going to do about it. We’re spending \$17 billion a year. It’s gotten us no
place, and I feel that—that we should study it.” And, well, of course, the results
immediately [flew out?]-“We aren’t going to legalize it and we aren’t going to
study it.” And so, you know—my response, “Well, somebody need to.”

[03:20:41] SL: So, you know, I’m thinking about President Clinton now and . . .

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: . . . and all these red flags are coming up around his surgeon general.

JE: [Laughs]

SL: What was it—I mean, did he—I mean, at first I—I feel like he continued to . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . support you.

JE: Yes.

SL: Because he could see the truth and . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . and he—he knew what the bottom line would be. But somewhere in there, it
became—you became a liability . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . to his presidency.

JE: Yes.

SL: And did he—I mean, did—did y’all have a talk before it got to that level or . . . ?

JE: No.

SL: He—he was standing with ya.

JE: Yes.

SL: So what do you think it was that tipped it?

JE: Well, you—you know, you never know. I suspect—I have always thought—now, you know, again, we're talking about—this is no facts. This is . . .

SL: Right.

JE: . . . just my . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . thinking.

SL: Uh-huh.

[03:21:41] JE: I've always thought that it was other people. It was the people who was, advising him and giving him information and, who—who really was making the—the decision, and then I think he just decided that it was easier to let me go than it was to keep fighting, you know, the people that was giving him—his advice.

SL: It—it was like—they've always got to be running, don't they?

JE: [Laughs] Well . . .

SL: They—they've always got to be thinking about how it's going to affect . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . the other things . . .

JE: That's right.

SL: . . . that they're trying to do.

JE: That's right.

[03:22:30] SL: So that had to be a difficult call for both of you.

JE: Well, you know, I think it was probably . . . it may have been somewhat painful for me, but I thought that it was, a call that he felt that he needed to make for his

presidency at the time. And I—you know, I think you have to know that when you—you go off and get involved in a political arena that this—these things—kinds of things will happen. And, you know, I'll never—and I'll always be grateful to [chancellor for the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences] Harry Ward. Before I left, he went to the Board of Trustees at the University of Arkansas and he—and he asked them to give me a leave of absence without pay for four years, and an additional four years if it was necessary. And so that was—and the board agreed to do that. So when I got fired, well, then, you know, all I had to do was call—I called—well, all I did, anyway, was call Dr. Ward. And he told me—well, when did I want—? He says, “When do you want to come back.” And so I told him that, you know—you know, I said, “For insurance purposes and all that,” I said, “I need to—” I said, “We can be back and start on the third.” You know, maybe Sunday was—New Year's Day was, like, one day and it—and there was a week—I don't know. Anyway, it was . . .

SL: A number of days.

JE: It was a . . .

SL: Just a few days.

JE: . . . day or two. And so, well—he said, “Well, we'll start you officially on the third.” And so, well, then I just told the people in Washington that I wanted my last day to be effective January third. And so—and, you know, and Harry told me to make—you know, he says, “Because of all the uproar and all, you need to be here.” He said, “You can take time off later on.” He said, “But on the third—on Tuesday the third you need to be here and available.” And I was.

SL: What a guy.

JE: Oh, it—it is. You know, he had just—it was just—and, you know, everybody was saying, “Oh, anybody that talks like that—she don’t need to be here teaching medical students.”

SL: [Laughs]

JE: Medical students? But, you know, it was a smooth transition, but I had—I really—it was really hard work when I first got back, because I was trying to make speeches across the country . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . and I was trying to work. And so I was really many times working seven days a week, you know? You know, day—you know, flying—you know, get through with work at 5:00 [p.m.] or something and get on a plane at 5:30 and be back the next day at noon. You know, it was a—it was hard work for a while.

[03:25:41] SL: So you’d go give a speech and you’d be talking about the same things that you’d been saying . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . all along.

JE: Yes.

SL: And so there—you—the things you had to say actually resonated through the country.

JE: Yes.

SL: I mean, there were those that got it.

JE: Right. That’s right.

[03:25:59] SL: So, you really were a—a political victim, you know?

JE: Well . . .

SL: Not—not your message, because it did resonate.

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: Still resonates today. There’s still . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: Health care is still not fixed.

JE: Right. Teenage pregnancy still is going up again.

SL: Yep.

JE: AIDS is . . .

SL: The whole “just say no” thing is *not* working.

JE: Right.

SL: You know, so people are gonna return—we know that people are gonna return to . . .

JE: The government has spent a billion dollars for a program that there was no proof at all that it worked. And now they have proof that it doesn’t work.

SL: So, it’s gonna swing back around, isn’t it?

JE: Yes. Oh, yes.

SL: And so there’s that victory. I mean, there—there’s that certainly. I—I—you know . . .

JE: Well . . .

SL: . . . it’s just something I think that the country senses.

JE: Yes.

[03:26:56] SL: Like all things, one door closes—others open.

JE: Yes.

SL: You know, part of the casualties of politics can sometimes be family, and I know

that your son had drug issues . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . at the time and I know that the press jumped on that and played it up and made it—I don't know if it was more . . .

JE: Right.

SL: . . . or less than what it was. I'm sure it was more than what it was. But what this did do for you—this did give you and opportunity to come back to family.

JE: That's . . .

SL: And to—and to have—to be with your family.

JE: Oh, absolutely. You know—you know, whereas the press jumped on—maybe played it up. But, you know, my son did have a drug problem. We was able to get him taken care of and get him treated. And—and he's—and, you know, today he's doing extremely well, and I'm very, very proud of my son. And I would, you know, just say that maybe God took care of me. Maybe I needed to be here—needed to be with my son. But I'm—I'm going to—I tell people all the time—I learned about how my—you know, we talked about my racial think—feeling and thinking is. My son went down to Jackson, Mississippi, to a clinic there and he was there for three months—really did well. And then he went out and started working for a lawyer that I had done some cases—worked for, and my son just really thought that this lawyer could walk on water. And I—I—I said, I told—I—I was at a conference and he was there and we—I was talking, and I told him—I said, “You know,” I said, “one of the things that I—I—that I learned about Mr. Foreman—” I said, “I know for sure one thing.” I said, “My son had to come to Mississippi—the state that we think is probably the most racist state in the

union—and meet up and—and—with Mr. Foreman, a white man—” I said, “And this white—” I said, “It took this white man, in Mississippi, to save my son.” And I said, “I’m very—” I said, “I’m really very grateful.” Well, I think I very much embarrassed him that I said something like that. I said—but, you know, you find out how racist you are. I said, “You know, I never would’ve thought a white man in Mississippi, would be the person to save my son.” But he was. He gave him—had him to work in his law firm and he really, you know, worked with his hours. And then, you know, now he’s—you know, he still goes to meetings almost every day. He’s on the board for—adolescent board for Baptist’s unit down there. And he’s into real estate development, and he’s just really doing—I’m bragging, and I realize I shouldn’t brag because . . .

SL: Oh, no, you should.

JE: . . . once an addict.

SL: This is . . .

JE: Once an addict, always an addict. But I think he has—you know, he’s learned so much and he’s—and he’s doing well today.

[03:30:30] SL: Well, you know, I wouldn’t call this bragging. I—you know, whenever you—whenever someone gets lifted, it’s okay.

JE: Yes.

SL: Part of the lifting-up process for others is to hear about a lifting.

JE: Yes, yes, that’s right.

SL: So . . .

JE: So—in fact, I guess that’s what he’s doing. Almost—he still—every day he still goes to a meeting somewhere.

SL: Uh-huh. Well, that's good stuff.

JE: And he's—he's—he's not had a drink or drug for eight years now.

[03:30:59] SL: Well, what about the rest of your life, now? I mean, you have another son, right?

JE: Yes. He's teaching at—at Jack Robey [Junior High School].

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: He's the vice-principal for Jack Robey down at Pine Bluff.

SL: Uh-huh. And do you have any grandchildren?

JE: No.

SL: No? Well, what's up with that? Do we need to talk to them about that?

JE: Well, I said I was too good. [Laughter]

[03:31:30] SL: Uh-huh. And—and how about Coach Elders? What's he up to now?

JE: Well, Coach Elders is running around managing our real estate.

SL: Yeah.

JE: And he feels he's working too hard.

SL: [Laughs]

JE: Fussin' every day . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . about how hard he has to work.

SL: Well . . .

JE: But he's doing wonderful and he really—he goes—he gets up—exercises every morning, goes swimming, then goes walking for three miles. He's one—really doin' wonderful—and slim and trim, and—whereas, I'm fat as toad, so . . .

SL: Well, so you're happy here.

JE: Yes, I am.

[03:32:10] SL: Are you still—do you still go around talking and . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: . . . people still call you and want to hear what you have to say and . . .

JE: Yes, oh, yes, I . . .

SL: . . . guys like me come in and want to do interviews and . . .?

JE: [Laughs] Well, not as many, but, as many as I need.

[03:32:28] SL: Uh-huh. Is there—what about, all the family from Howard County?

What—what's . . .?

JE: Well, there's nobody there now . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . except my brother.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And . . .

SL: What's he up to?

JE: He—well, he—he—for—for a while he was running his garage. He was a really—a really excellent mechanic.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: But now he's teaching mechanics over at the prison in Texarkana. [Reference to the Federal Correctional Institute]

SL: Wow.

JE: So he's—he's doing—he's over that—that program.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And—over the—it's federal prison down at Texarkana for—and so he's over that.

And he's really enjoying that a lot and he's raising some cattle.

[03:33:09] SL: You all still have property there, though.

JE: Yes, we still have property there. We . . .

SL: Do you ever go there at all or . . .?

JE: Yes. Oh, yes, I go down there once or twice a year. Usually everybody comes down there around Thanksgiving.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: And they come down and go deer hunting and go fishing, and different things like that. So that's . . .

SL: Do y'all throw together a Thanksgiving feast when . . .?

JE: Oh, yes, we do. It used to be I cooked the whole Thanksgiving feast. It was because my mother did it for years and years, and then I found out I just couldn't stand up and work that long.

SL: Yeah.

JE: And so now everybody brings the—brings . . .

SL: Potluck.

JE: Yes, potluck.

SL: Well, it ought to be that way anyway.

JE: Oh, it's better.

SL: Everybody gets to bring their best stuff.

JE: That's right.

[03:33:53] SL: Uh-huh. Well, Joycelyn, what have we not talked about that needs to be said?

JE: [Laughs] I think we've talked about everything.

SL: Well, I don't think we have.

JE: All right.

Joy Endicott: Tell me about your Asian influences here.

SL: Okay.

JE: All right. [Laughs] About the—my Asian influences—these were—most of them—many of them, were—I had Asian graduate students, who worked in my lab when I was at the medical center. And many of them—you know, when they would go home or something [Telephone Rings] they would bring me different pieces of art. Some of them [Telephone Rings] I bought and some of them, they just . . . [Telephone Rings] . . . gave to me for gifts.

SL: They were gifts. They . . .

JE: Yes.

SL: Yeah.

TM: It's okay . . .

SL: We're gonna go ahead and let this ring out . . .

JE: It'll stop. [Telephone Rings]

SL: . . . here just a second.

Joy Endicott: Let it get the machine.

[Answering machine's outgoing greeting can be heard]

SL: Is that Coach's voice?

JE: No, that's my son.

SL: That's your son. Umm—so . . .

Joy Endicott: So a lot of gifts . . .

SL: Go ahead.

Joy Endicott: A lot of this are gifts. That's what you were . . .

JE: A lot of them are gifts. A lot of them I bought at estate sales, and a lot of them are—they would go to Thailand or something and then they would, you know, buy things and then bring them back and I would buy some of them, especially a lot of the artworks.

SL: Uh-huh. Well, they're all beautiful. I mean, every piece looks really nice.

JE: Oh, I—I really—I've enjoyed all of it.

[03:35:27] SL: And how did you end up in—on—out at Marcia Cove here? How—how did this come about?

JE: Oh, listen.

SL: I want to . . .

JE: That is a story.

SL: All right. Well, let's hear that story.

JE: The—the story of out here at Marcia Cove—we were living on the lake up in Lakewood, which we—we loved and it was wonderful. But I was looking the paper—just sitting looking in the paper one day and I saw this house advertised. They were having open house. So I told my husband—I said, “I think they're asking—” well, less than \$200,000 for it. But I said—I said, “But they don't have anything out there that's worth that. If it is, I need to see it.” And so he said—he said, “Well, all right, we'll—we'll—we'll just drive out there.” So we drive—drove out, and when we turned the curve we decided, “Yeah, there probably is one house out there that's worth that.”

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: So we came and the doors were all open, so we just walked on it and—you know,

and looked over the house. And—and then—and—and—and then the—we asked about it and they said it was gonna go up for auction on the courthouse steps the next day. They was asking \$342,000 or something like for it. And so I—well, we didn't have \$342,000, so weren't—we didn't worry about going down to the courthouse steps. And so about nine months later—some—a long time after that, we went—we went down to the courthouse and asked who—about the property. And they told us, “Well, Simmons [Bank] had bought it.” Well, they—I guess they had the loan, so they bought it back . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: . . . or got it back. So my husband said, “Well, we'll—oh, we'll go down and find—so—find out about it.” So went down to see Simmons and met the lady there. She said, “Yes.” She said, “We do have that house.” And she said, “And I was hired and my job is to get rid of that house.” So my husband said, “Well—” said, “Well, what do you want for it?” She says, “Well, we—we are asking \$192,000.” Well, my husband—we had looked it when it was \$340,000 something or something.

SL: Uh-huh.

JE: So my husband said, “Well, I'll offer you that for it.” So she said, “Well, don't you want to think about it?” She said—he said, “No.” He said, “That's—we'll—that's what we'll offer you for it.” And so she said, “Well—” you know, she kept on trying to convince us—“Well, no, this is not what you want to do.” [Laughs] And we said, yeah, we were sure that that's what we wanted to do. So she looked through it. She said, “Oh, yeah,” and said, “Well, they—we had burglar's insurance on it, and I think it's worth—we—we've got, I think, about \$50,000

worth of insurance that we can—anything that needs fixing that you can, fix it.”

So we went forward. We wanted this house. So, well, it took about eight or nine months. We were—and finally—you know, and we had sold our house. The people . . .

SL: [Laughs]

JE: . . . were waiting to get in, you know? And so—well, then they were saying, “Well, we have—” they said, “Well, now, we’ve let you stay—we bought it and we’ve let you stay for six months.” This was the house we were living in in Lakewood. Said, “Well, we were really hoping that we would be able to . . .”

SL: [Laughs]

JE: “. . . you know, get it by now.” So we told the people here that “We have to move.” And they said, “Well, but you can’t move. You haven’t closed. We don’t know what is gonna happen and all that.” So we told them, “Well, that’s fine. We’re—” and finally, she said, “Well, you ought to just go ahead and move in.” Said, “If it don’t close you’ll have to move out, say—and if—and until it closes you can live in there for at least six months free until we get it all settled out.” So, “Okay.” So we came out. We moved—we came out and we moved in. We hadn’t closed or nothing. And, well, obviously, I wasn’t worried about it closing. But, you know, then they didn’t loan but—oh, you know, the VA [Veterans Administration] loans. I said, “We thought we could use both our VA loans.” They said we couldn’t use but one. So then the max you could loan—get on an VA loan was \$135,000. So that meant that we had to take the—we had to pay the rest, you know, to get this house. So—well, we realized then that we were gonna have to sell our house on Lakewood in order to get the money to

make the down payment on this one. So—but we came, moved in, painted it and everything. So that’s how we got this house.

SL: Well, now, you know, the road is Marcia Cove.

JE: Uh-huh.

SL: Is there—is there a cove around here somewhere?

JE: Uh-uh.

SL: There’s no lake or . . .

JE: No.

SL: . . . big water around here.

JE: No.

SL: I always think “cove” and I think . . .

JE: Yeah. Oh, no, no.

SL: . . . a little arm on a lake or something.

JE: Oh, no.

SL: Okay. It’s quiet out here.

JE: Oh, very quiet. See, you don’t have cars, you don’t hear nothing.

SL: No. Uh-huh. It’s been great. [03:40:23] Well, is there—is there anything else you want to say? What about—what about Coach? Do you want to say anything else about Coach?

JE: Well, I—I—I want to say that . . .

SL: Other than getting the Martin house finished.

JE: That’s right, other than getting the Martin house finished. But I’ve been married to him for forty-seven years. I know he’s gonna—not gonna get the Martin house finished, so there’s no point in me getting mad and upset today.

SL: [Laughs]



JE: But one of these days it'll—it'll end up—but Coach has been, perhaps the most wonderful, tolerant person. And, you know—and I say tolerant because you have to know that I went through some difficult days as—after the surgeon general. And it was Coach who said—we—when we was talking about what we were gonna do and they was going to give me a different job and blah—and so Coach said—you know, we were sitting there one—about 3:00 in the morning one morning in Washington, and he looked over at me and he said, “Shug, why don't we just go home.” I said, “Wonderful.” And that was the decision we made, and I want you to know I've never, never thought about anything different.

SL: That's good. Trey? Are we good?

TM: Well, I was . . .

SL: Anything else?

[03:41:46] TM: I was kind of curious about, if you look at the United States' health issues that we might be developing now. I mean, what do you see are—are the major hurdles that the United States is facing—or the world, for that matter?



JE: Okay. Well, you know, I think, that the major—you know, if we talk about—if we talk about the United States or if we talk about the world, I still think the major health problem that we have—really, even as far as the world is concerned—is related to ignorance. It's education, education, education. And we've got to educate people and teach them how to take care of themselves and how to be healthy. Some of the specific issues that I think that we—obviously, AIDS is still a problem, you know? We don't have a cure. We don't have a vaccine, and it's totally preventable. But yet we've not taught people how to

prevent and protect themselves. We've just got a problem with obesity. You know, our—in fact, it's probably thought—thought that maybe our life expectancy may, in fact, rather than increase, may begin to decrease because of our severe obesity resulting in, you know, hypertension, cardiovascular disease or arterial sclerosis—you know, hyperlipidemia. So these are factors, I think. And it's not just true in the United States. It's true all over the industrialized, certainly, part of the world. And I think that we've got to educate people on what they can do for themselves—how they can keep themselves healthy and the things they need to do to make a difference. You know, they—you know, we've got to teach them about smoking—not smoking, not drinking, not engaged in high-risk sexual behaviors. And—and I think that this is—these are things that—that we can do. You know, this is not rocket science.

SL: Uh-uh.

JE: But it's the things that's going to make a difference for health. And we all—we all want to live a long time, but we don't want to live a long—we don't want to be sick. We want to be well. And we want to be healthy and doing the things we like to do. And I think that we've got to educate people on what they need to do to achieve that.

SL: Okay.

TM: That's great. Thank you.

SL: That's great. That's great. Are we all right? You ready to be done with this deal?

JE: Yes. [Laughter]

SL: Thanks. Thanks. You're so wonderful.

JE: But at least—at least we got it done.

SL: We got it done. We got it done.

JE: If we just—if we just kept on pushing.

SL: Now, we can come back if you think of something else.

JE: Oh, no. Thank you.

SL: I . . .

JE: No, I won't think . . .

SL: I can spend another four hours with you.

JE: No, I won't think—I won't think of another thing.

SL: [Laughter] Well, it's been wonderful. I—I wish Coach was here. I'd get his basketball stories.

JE: Oh, well, you can't . . .

SL: But you know what? It's your anniversary. It's Valentine's Day.

JE: Yeah.

SL: We gotta get the heck out of here.

JE: Yeah. Yeah. Well, see, he—he was feeling he had a good excuse. You're still here, so . . . [laughter]

SL: Well, you might want to call him and tell him we're getting out of here.

JE: Well, no, he'll—he'll be here soon enough.

[End of Interview]

[Transcribed by Cheri Pearce Riggs] [03:44:59]