

Kenyon College

Digital Kenyon: Research, Scholarship, and Creative Exchange

Video Collection

Gullah Digital Archive

2013

Washington, Jack and Martha

Jack Washington

Martha Washington

Deborah Oden

Ishmael Lewis

Follow this and additional works at: https://digital.kenyon.edu/gullah_video



Part of the [American Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Washington, Jack; Washington, Martha; Oden, Deborah; and Lewis, Ishmael, "Washington, Jack and Martha" (2013). *Video Collection*. Paper 176.

https://digital.kenyon.edu/gullah_video/176

This Video is brought to you for free and open access by the Gullah Digital Archive at Digital Kenyon: Research, Scholarship, and Creative Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Video Collection by an authorized administrator of Digital Kenyon: Research, Scholarship, and Creative Exchange. For more information, please contact noltj@kenyon.edu.

Gullah Digital Archive

Interviewee: Jack and Martha Washington

Interviewers: Deborah Oden, Ishmael Lewis

Location: Lady's Island, South Carolina

Date: July 13, 2013

DO: Washington. Hi this is Deborah Oden and Ishmael Lewis from Kenyon doin---from Kenyon College doing oral history with Martha and Jack Washington. And we're on Lady's Island. And today is July 13th, 2013.

IL: So could we begin by asking you, what does Gullah mean to you?

JW: It's a culture. It's a, It's a, It's a individual, it's, it's like English. It's like the language that I grew up talking when I was a youngster. And matter of fact it...I didn't realize that I was speaking it so later on in my life and when I had to go to school and we have to, we went to English and when we said "ain't" or we said "ain't you" or something like we were used to speaking in a typical way at home and everybody understood what we were saying. And so over the years I learned that it's a, it's a language that's separate from the so-called standard English. If, if that's a clear understanding, if you understand what I'm trying to say to you. Martha?

MW: You know to me, it's a like my husband say it's a unique language and when I was a kid coming up we would have family members come from different parts of the country like New York like to spend the summer with us. And they would always tell us that we spoke funny and we told them, we always thought that they spoke very proper. We say, "Oh they speak real proper, very proper". And we didn't know that, that it was the way that everybody else spoke and all we knew that went off to school, especially college we found out that we spoke a little different from everybody else.

JW: We said, "Come here ma'am". And we said, "Come here man". And it sounds different. And you were talking about nicknames, everybody in our neighborhood, in our community, had a nickname. They used to call me Jackie Pillows and so I remember one day one of my family members said, "Hey Pillows". And so my wife, she didn't know you know, my nickname and she said, "Jackie Pillows why are they calling you Jackie Pillows"? I said, "Well that's what they call me when we was coming up". How nicknames came about, you know it might be something you do, if you played football or you did something extra, something different and that difference, that's how a nickname was created, you know basically speaking. But everybody that I know in my community had a nickname. In fact some of my friends and family member they had two nicknames because they were more extreme in different ways.

MW: Another, another way that we, different people in the family had nicknames was because of some memorable event, something that happened and it could be hilarious then they would come up with this nickname that would remind you of that hilarious event about that person. And that's another way that that person could get a nickname. And that name would just be forever.

JW: Also if my wife would tell you 'cause she's got a lot of nicknames. We got married...the guy, he, he was the church service, you know who I'm talking about? Little guy that lives across the street, oh goodness, what's his nickname. What's funny is a couple people in your neighborhood---

MW: Buckshot?

JW: Buckshot. Buckshot is one, ok what's the other one, there's another one too, yeah Buckshot is one and that could be, do you know why they call him Buckshot?

MW: I don't know to this day, I don't know. But his real name is Harold Landerson but we call him Buckshot. I---to this day I don't know why they call him that but it was some memorable event was how he got that name.

IL: Could you tell us where you were born, what year? And then tell us something about your grandparents maybe even your parents?

MW: I was born in Charleston, South Carolina and I was born in 1957 and I grew up on James Island and James Island is a little island east of Charleston the city, Charleston. And I grew up on James Island and went to school there. My grandparents on my Mom's side, my grandmother we called her Yitta. And I don't know why but I was told later on that I think Yitta means grandmother in Italian but her real name was Sarah Scott. And my grandfather because my grandmother and grandfather didn't really get married to each other, I really didn't know him that well. And on my father's side both his parents passed away before I was born.

IL: Tell us something about your parents.

MW: My parents got married, I think about maybe seven or eight years before I was born. They got a house built and the mortgage on the house was like thirty thousand dollars 'course thirty years ago that was like a hundred and fifty thousand dollars today. So I have, I'm a twin and I have one other sister and three older brothers. And my parents raised us we all lived in one home, we had a nice front and back yard. And we all went to the same school and we all went to the same church. And I thought our parents raised us very well, they raised us with good moral values that we try to instill in our kids today.

IL: Do you have any stories from when you were younger? Like you got in trouble and---

JW: Yeah tell about your mom, you mom, yeah. When you went to the store and you came back with the wrong thing, how she would discipline you.

MW: Oh, she would tell us to go to the store and get something and, and when we would come back and give it to her, if it's not right she would throw it back at us. Or, if it's something wrong and they wanted to discipline us we got beat. I mean, we got whipped with a belt but they all would tell us, they would be real nice to us and say, "go out there, you see that tree over there, go and get a switch off of it or get a piece of branch or something off of it". And you would go out there and get it, and when you bring it back to them, then she would take all the leaves off of it and then you would get one or two strikes on your legs. Because then while they beatin' you they gonna tell you why they beat you. And that's how mom was, used to beat us with a strap too and a hairbrush.

JW: Yeah. My parents were basically the same. My mother actually did the discipline in our family and just like Martha said they you used to send us for the switch. And you know that was a bad time and they wouldn't send you for that switch unless you really, really did something bad you know. Our parents loved us but the discipline in our home they would, most people didn't want you to be disrespectful to no one. Matter of fact, where we came from everybody in the neighborhood could spank you, at that time. I was born in 1948 and it was a time where the races were really separated. But the same thing they would send you for the switch and you go down there, you get the switch. And when you came back you had to have the right size switch too, if you brought a little small switch back then they would make you go get a bigger switch back down. You know, so we used to go ahead and get the biggest thing we could find and matter of fact it's harder for them to spank you with a bigger switch than a smaller switch, you know. And like I said they were very, very---they would not spank you unless you really really needed it you know. My parents they---and my grandparents where we lived, my great grandmother was there, my, my, my great grandmother was there, my grandmother was there, my mom was there. And I remember this one incident, and I forgot how old I was, I know I was young. And the house, I ran under the house and my great grandmother called me to come from out of the house, from under the house. And I refused. And so she was upset with me, so she took a ostrich tale, and I'll never forget I could feel it right now and I'm sixty five years old. She took the ostrich tale, threw it under the house and she hit me right on my leg. Boy I tell you that was the most painful thing I ever felt in my life and I ran from under the house, back into her arms you know and stuff. That's how they were, I mean I loved her to death, her name is Rebecca. I named my eldest daughter after her, you know. And so like I say she was very---I loved her very much, she loved me very much. But she did not, you know, tolerate disrespect, you know. I loved her so much.

IL: What high school did you attend?

JW: Oh, I went to Robert Smalls High School. And I'm a 1966 graduate of Robert Smalls High School.

MW: And he, when we went to Robert Smalls he went there from first grade to twelfth grade. Where it was all African American the whole twelve years. I'm like nine years younger than he is, so my generation we started out at an all African American school and then when I was in like the fifth and sixth grade was when they closed all the African American schools and had all the African American go into the schools with the white counterparts. So I was in an all African American school from first to fifth grade and then from sixth grade on I was, I had to go through school with white kids. And I was in school with those kids until I graduated from high school. And I graduated from James Island High School in 1975.

IL: Could you tell us the difference? Your difference in---different experiences was it a difference going to an all black school and then going to school with whites.

MW: The only difference I knew was that we when we was at African American schools we got, if they said we had new books, the books didn't look new. But what we found out later on was that, they sent---they had all the new books that were printed from the publishers went into the school with the white kids first. Then when they got done with the books, then they would send it to the black schools and give it to---for the black kids. To be taught out of.

JW: Yeah we, at our school, like I said I'm nine years older than she, is so I had a little bit more experience. We, like I said we was purely African American school and we got the actually the leftovers was from the white schools. We would get our books and none of the books were ever new and sometimes those kids would put you know bad things in there like you know n you know go home and stuff like that you know upset us. But Martha she was fortunate to---and I don't think that, in a lot of ways that once they really mixed those children that some discipline, the discipline sort of went down, you know. I think the discipline and the school system now is really not good at all.

MW: Yeah, because when we were in school we were disciplined.

JW: Yeah, right,

MW: But when we went into the white school we weren't disciplined at all.

JW: Yeah, the discipline system is totally lax and I mean because sometimes when we went to math class and when we got on the board to do a math problem, and our teachers wanted us to get that math problem correct.

MW: Right.

JW: And if you go up there once you started working the problem and as soon as you put the wrong, like if you work on an algebra problem or something like that and you put a negative sign instead of positive sign, that's a chop right there.

MW: They would pop you right on the hand.

JW: I mean we knew that was a chop and some of those teachers they were waiting for you to mess up because they, because they told you how to do it and they would work with you and then you they felt like that you wasn't respecting them by not, you know, listening to them. And they were saying, at that time it was very, very important for us to, to get that kind of education and for us not to pay attention to that and for us making a mistake like that, that was like one of the worst things in the world you could do, you know. And so I think that you should have some kind of form of discipline you know you don't have to beat everybody but you have to have something to let them understand that they have to do it and do it correctly. And we have a system now and we don't have that many, to me, African Americans in our system in the first place. And we are being taught by the white teachers and I think they are not paying attention really they don't really understand those kids they like the language you talking about. These kids, around here, their parents their great---like my age, we speak a certain way my kids understand me when I say something. And they are imitating me sometimes because I guess that root that Gullah root that I have inside me, I don't see it, but it's there. And my children, my wife sees it and people around me see it so. To have someone else come in and try to teach kids like that, you know to me it's like a, it's like a communication gap, you know. They can't really---they can teach them but certain things that they have to learn from those children so they can, you know connect with them. You know, I don't think that that's happening, to be honest with you here in Beaufort nowadays.

IL: What did you do after high school what was the next step?

JW: Well for me my parents could not afford college education so I had, I had two choices. When I was coming of year, two choices. Either go to work, or go in the military. And so I went in the military and I'm glad I went to the military because the military enabled me to come back, you know and get a better education. So that's what I did.

MW: And I---

DO: How long were you in the military?

JW: Ok, I retired the military, US Army retired and then I you know went to school. I got a degree in electrical engineering and I'm also a master electrician.

DO: What school did you go to when you ca---when you got out of the military?

JW: Well I went to a South Carolina State College for a year and then I transferred to Carolina.

MW: After I graduated from high school, I went to a small technical college in Atlanta and became a medical technologist.

IL: So how long was it before you all met?

JW: I met her when I was thirty, thirty I was in---

MW: Five.

JW: I was in my mid thirties, and we met right here in Beaufort. She was at Beaufort Memorial Hospital and I was on the air station and we met at a, a military nightclub, I met in a club. Then she says, she's very very Christian, Church of Christ and---

MW: On the air force base. The naval base.

JW: Yeah, on the naval base, on the naval base, which was supposed to be a little higher up you know establishment not that hunky tunk club like that, you know it's really nice stuff. And that's where a lot of the young, some of the young ladies went out you know 'cause they know there's a lot of single military guys go out there, and which we were out there and stuff. And so we, we met and we was friends and we been friends, well we married now almost thirty years. And we been friends for about thirty two years, I mean she, she when I met her we connected and we was friends ever since you know. She helped me you know she, she grounded me spiritually she had three beautiful children for me, I like I said she ground me, completely spiritually. I'm you know I'm in the church I was going to church but I stopped. And when I met her you know, she got me back into the church which I think was a good thing for me and my children she kept us in church and which she still do.

IL: What church do you all attend?

JW: The Beaufort Church of Christ.

IL: Do you have---could you talk about heirs property, do you belong to an estate, such as that has heirs property?

JW, MW: Yeah.

JW: Firstly wanna tell him about yours 'cause yours is longer.

MW: My great grandmother, my mother's father mother, my great grandmother. It was she had six or seven children and she lived on the property that we all owned now which is called heirs property. And we get together once a year and we talk about, we have an account set up for everybody to put money in it to pay the taxes. And my grandfather's house is still on the land and some of our relatives still live on the land but the land belongs to everybody. So you have the right if somebody else move on the land, you---if somebody, another family member tell somebody outside the family that they can move on the property then I have the right to charge that person rent. To get money for me, because that land is also mine also.

JW: We, have a affect of five acre, five acre track. And when I was little coming up I remember the horses and the cows and they had livestock on it then. And most of the older family members are gone but what our family did was they, they partitioned the property and my brother is on, is on one piece and I have a cousin that's on one piece now. I have another cousin that's on it, my mom is on it and it's, it's, it's a it's split up now you know to where if, if we want to turn it over to our children it's, there's several pieces that's still cut off where they can get it if they want to move onto the property. But it's at a state where if they want the property then they have to you know, pay for the property itself so they can you know, get the deed to it. That's how ours is set up.

MW: Our property is on the water and should a developer wants to come down and put condos on these, on our property that's on the water, they would have several like over, almost a hundred person that they have to answer to before they can get the right to move on that property.

JW: Yeah.

MW: Everybody that has anything to do with that property, all the relatives have the right to that property.

JW: Yeah.

MW: And they, the developers, would have to clear it with everybody that had rights to that land. It's not just one person.

JW: Right. And where this property that Martha's talking about like I said it's on [inaudible] and it's near Folly Beach and it's beautiful, and there's like condos everywhere you know it's right near the---you can, I think it's about a mile or so from the Atlantic Ocean. You know, it's real nice property and everything I don't see in the future that, that land would be transferred over to a developer because there's too many family members that's involved in the property there's too many, you know. We had a meeting one time and I know I saw at least a hundred people and that wasn't even, you know half of the people that's has anything to do with the property.

MW: Right.

IL: You know who originally bought it, and how much they paid for it?

GW: Excuse me for cutting you off, how a lot of that property got to those African Americans was that you know slavery the slave owners right they, a lot of them turned the property over once they passed on, you know they had it fixed where those people could stay on the property. And that's how a lot of them accumulated---acquired the property and I think this is a case in Martha's family where they live about a mile from the house, they have this farm and it has the old master's house and they have the slave quarters right there. I mean it's---they restoring the property, and it's perfect, you know. So, that's what I really think happened, you know. So they family property.

IL: Could you talk about, we talked about how you all met, what the music could you talk about, that you all listened to, when you were all coming up? What was popular---what did you all do for fun outside of church or...?

MW: We had dances at the school that we went to on Saturday nights talent shows, concerts at the city's auditorium or civic center.

IL: Could you tell us some of the artists that like...?

MW: James Brown---

JW: We went to go see James Brown.

MW: Smokey Robinson---

JW: Smokey Robinson. Earth, Wind, and Fire.

MW: Earth, Wind, and Fire.

JW: Marvin Gaye.

MW: Marvin Gaye. Gladys Knight....

JW: Chuck [Inaudible]

MW: When she came to Charleston once, she came to Columbia, yeah.

IL: Ok.

JW: We here in Beaufort we had baseball was our, basically our pastime out here. We had the Savoy, I never could forget the Savoy. We used to play baseball after the baseball game then we go over to the Savoy you know it's, oh goodness we call it Hop. You know you have a Hop is like when you have a disco call it the Hop. We go in there and you know sit down and dance and we used to swing. You know the swing dance I don't they think---well they still they call it the shag, white kind of parts call it the shag, but we call it the swing. We did the swing, we also played horseshoe, we loved horseshoe was in everybody's backyard you know and we was really good at horseshoe. We played, like I said a lot of sports but baseball down here was a thing and we used to play different you know, Port Waller used to play, Lady's Island and then Lady's Is--we used to, we had different teams because it wasn't organized everybody played a different area Gray's Hill, we had Gray's Hill, we had Port Wall we had Scott, different sections you know. And they still kind of do that now but the county has taken over the park system you know so they play in the park now but they still kind of basically do it and they had a Port also had a girl's team and they still do matter of fact they have a girl's team and a boy's team they still do that now, you know since I was coming up.

IL: Who did you play for, when you were coming up what team did you play for and what position?

JW: Port Wall, Port Wall well I pitch and I played shortstop, outfield, just different positions. Yeah.

MW: And I played for Scott Hill and I was a catcher and outfielder.

IL: Were you all good?

MW: Yes I was good.

JW: Well, well, well I wasn't that good but I had a aunt, oh she was good. And what happened, and I had a---my brother is younger than I, matter of fact he's nine years younger than I am, he

was real good too. And I had a uncle that was very, very, very good too matter of fact this uncle, Luther, we used to call him Coon, now I don't know why they called him Coon.

MW: Love the nickname.

JW: You know that name, that name 'cause it has---when I found out really what my white color parts used to say, I thought it was like racial but I don't know really how he got that name. But he was a very, very good athlete. He could box also too. And Joe Lewis the boxer, he was a heavyweight champion, and he came to our school. And he was, you know, doing a exhibition and my uncle, you know actually got in the ring with him. And they were doing some up far and you know stuff like that. I remember that. But also my other, younger brother, John, 'cause he was very good. And when you was a good baseball player, football player, you could go---the team is getting ready to play another team, if they don't see you they'll come to your house and come get you. I mean, that's a person that's real good, they're gonna come to your house and get you. But they never get to come get me. They came, they came and got my aunt, and they came and got my uncle, and they came and got my brother. I remember that, coming up. Yeah.

IL: Could you talk about some of the family functions when you were younger? Like what did your parents cook, what was the favorite dish?

JW: Ok we always had greens, you know collard greens, like in today collard greens, red rice, cabbage, and the way they fixed cabbage they cook it, they put---I don't wanna say fat back but it's the seasoned bacon. And they would fry it and they would put onions, bell peppers, and then they would put the cabbage and let it, you know, steam but it would turn kind of brownish, right and they'd cook it brown and when I'm the military they had it---it was green, you know. They kept it---you know they just kind of steamed it, it wasn't the same you know we're used to that taste, it's a whole different taste they season it totally different. In you know the military or you know in a regular restaurant greens were one, and what else Martha?

MW: Red rice, potato salad, candied yams---

JW: Yeah.

MW: Macaroni and cheese, bread pudding---

JW: Cornbread.

MW: Cornbread.

JW: We also had in Beaufort---

MW: Rice, we always had rice with every meal at summer down here in the south and so it's rice and meat and a vegetable.

JW: Here, here, here in Beaufort also too this real close to the ocean and river and everything so our parents we always had some kind of seafood we had fish and grits. Matter of fact we had fish and grits for one of our breakfast. And we have shrimp and grits, with the shrimp you fry then you put bell peppers and onions in it, you know make a brown gravy, you know and then you put it over the grits a lot of people, a lot of people don't eat that.

JW: Yeah and homemade, homemade biscuits, fish and grits right, fish and grits, shrimp and grits. And also another dish that they did was sausage with stew of tomatoes, you know you cut the tomatoes up and you fry you know, and then you sauté it in bell pepper and onions and then you put the tomatoes in it and let it simmer, you know which is really good too with rice, all grits. We love grits, I love it, you know. That's another dish that we eat down here a lot. Also they, my grandparents they used to make shortening bread. Shortening bread is like a biscuit they roll it but they put it in a frying pan and it's like a real baked bread, and the grease is almost like biscuit. But they fry---they put it on top of the stove and they'd cook one side then they'd flip it over on the other side, right. And then they'd take it out and you know you cut it just like a pie it was just like biscuits but they call it shortening bread. We used to eat them in the winter time and with milk and hot chocolate that was another---and it was always, it always had cornbread on those stoves. We never, it wasn't that we came in the house or something playing---they always had cornbread, shortening bread or something there for us to you know to eat back in those days. Also the fishermans, they used to come around and sell mullet fish, I don't know if you're familiar with that but that's a fish that feed in the mud. And it's a good--it's a good tasting fish but you have to eat it when it's first caught, if you put it in the freezer it has a real, it has a different taste a muddy taste but if you eat once it's caught in 'cause they come by the house, and we used to look in the---and they had it in a tub. And you could see the fish still jumping 'cause they would go out with their nets and catch them and then they'd come and you know sell them to the people that's in the community. But you very, very seldom see that now. You have some people that sell them but it's not like jumping out the you know, the bucket. And?

MW: And we would have lots of fun getting with our friends and going crabbing, going down to the river and catching the crabs, and bringing the crabs back home and cooking them and have a crab raft in the yard.

JW: Yeah. Yeah---

MW: We'd crack open the crabs and eat the meat out of them.

JW: Right.

MW: Or you'd go down to the river and throw a net and cast for shrimp. And you shake the shrimp---all the shrimp would get caught in the net and you shake the net in the bucket and all the shrimp would fall out in your bucket. And you'd go home, you peel the shrimp, you could just take the heads off and boil them and have a nice shrimp, peeling each shrimp.

JW: It was simple.

MW: That's real good too or you could fry it and stew it and put it over rice or grits. So we eat a lot of food out of the water, fish and crab and shrimp. And in the wintertime we would have oyster

JW: Oyster, right oyster roast.

MW: We'd go in the river and get the oysters and have a oyster roast. Where you could put the oyster---you would have a open fire, and you would get a piece of tin, put the tin over the fire, put the oysters you just got out of the river.

JW: In a croaker sack.

MW: And you would put a wet blanket over it and when the steam start coming up off the top of the blanket and the oysters would crack open and then you got your oyster ready in one hand, and you got your hot sauce. Everybody would grab the shovel and take it off of the tin and dump it on the table and everybody would just grab it and open it and put a little hot sauce on it, that's good eating, oh yeah.

JW: Right, that's an oyster roast and then what happen is that your children is there too, and they watch how you open the oyster and then you show them how to open the oysters too right. And so when my kids were coming up, with us too and my brother's children, my sister's children all of us did the same thing. For them it's natural, you know and that's one of the cultures down here you know, that's different, that's a Gullah culture. You know, and like I said we had oyster--we had crab---we had fish---we had like a little cook out with the neighbor and we had stone crabs. And so what happened she's from---

MW: Maryland.

JW: Maryland and so what she did was she grabbed the crab---I was in the den area and Martha's like she was trying to get ready to crack with her teeth but it's stone crab so it's a real hard shell, she didn't know that. So you had to crack it with some hard object to get into the crab right and

so she---we caught her just in time because she you know she could of hurt her teeth or something like that. And you just had to know about it you know. My parents, my grandparents especially coming up they, they, they survived practically off this river system here. They had us eating eel, eel say is a water fish, a water snake I'mma take that back and they would, they would catch the eel. And they would skin them and they would cut them up a certain kind of way and they would fry them, and that was good eating, I wouldn't none of these I wouldn't eat it, it's a lot of stuff though. That they, that they did back then, I wouldn't eat now.

DO: How did they catch the eel?

JW: Well, when you go fishing you got a rod and reel and you got a hook on it right and they'll feed just like a fish and then they'll get on the line sometimes right, and then you catch them and when they come up you know if Martha was here with an eel right now she would just run away. 'Cause it's like---it's actually a water snake, you know catch them pull them up and the way to do that whack it on the tail with a bat or something. You know, hard arch it and kill it, and then they'll bring it home, and they'll skin it, you know put some salt and pepper on it. You know, and some flour and fry it and feed it to us. The uh, there's another species the uh, the one with the wings---

MW: The stingray.

JW: The stingray. The---my parents they used to catch the stingray and they would cut the wings off, wings are very, very tasty a lot of people when you see a stingray first thing you wanna do is throw it back in the water. But my parents---my grandparents they would catch the stingray and they would bring it home and they would cut the wings off it, right. And they'd throw the rest of it but the wing was very, very tasty too. Squid, they would eat the squid it's a lot of---

MW: Conch.

JW: Conch, yeah.

MW: It's really good.

JW: Yeah, conch. Conch's a shellfish, it's like a big snail but it's big right. It's a mussel and they would catch them. And they would boil them. And then they would take it out and cut it up you know, we'd have conch stew. I have a friend now that lives way down on the Island, she's really Gullah, and man she makes it very, very good.

MW: And the conch shells are so big, my grandmother every time they would get some and take the conch out of it and cook it in the stew and we'd eat it, they always saved the shell. And you can line your garden on the outside---

JW: Oh yeah.

MW: ---with conch shell. And it was so pretty driving by on the road.

JW: Yeah. We used to do that back then. You very, very seldom do that now but when I was coming up you would see those conch shell. And matter of fact that was like a status for a lot of people to get those conchs. You come up on the yard--- 'cause most of the driveways back then were like dirt roads you know and stuff so the conch was---

MW: They would line it up with the conch shell.

JW: It would the yard look---

MW: Really pretty.

JW:---pretty, you know. Stuff, yeah they did a lot of stuff like that. The oyster shells, what they would do back then---when you drove by my house you passed by a little bit of oysters down on the left of the driveway and what they would do since the roads were so---when it rains down here they would get mushy and 'cause a hard time coming in here.

MW: Dirt roads, dirt roads.

JW: They would get the oyster shells and just put it all down the road, and they'd crush up and then when, when it rains you know that road wouldn't be muddy you know so these nowadays they, they kinda outlaw it because they trying to restore, replenish the oyster, you know population here so now you can't do it---

MW: Yeah 'cause you could have oyster roads and take the oysters out and eat the oysters and what you do with the shells now, you throw it back in the river.

JW: Right.

MW: And it would continue to reproduce again.

JW: And then you gotta recycle everywhere, they take the oysters down to the dump site and then they take it out a replenish it back into the river so that they could, you know replenish the oyster population out here, yeah.

MW: Again.

IL: What's your specialty, hearing about all this good food, what's your dish?

MW: My favorite dish is red rice, fried chicken which I can't eat anymore.

JW: Spot-tail bass she loves.

MW: Oh, and I love spot-tail bass. And shrimp. And crabs out of the river.

IL: When you were coming up, did you work, did you have to work as a child did you go farming or?

MW: No, I didn't have to work my parents worked and they---but I mean I thought we were rich. We didn't, you know we had, at Christmas time we got a lot of stuff. You know, and I never thought that we were poor.

JW: Well I did, I had to, we had to head shrimp. The shrimp boys they used to come in and they'd dump off the shrimp and you had to head them and we got, I think it was like one cents a pound. And so to get a dollar you had to, you had to pick a hundred pounds of shrimp and that was a lot of shrimp you know to head them, you know you had to head shrimp. We go---we also worked on the farm in the summer months. My mother was friends with Mr. Gregory and a lot of people, you know, I don't know if you're familiar with Dr. Buzzard or not but he was a, he was a, famous root doctor. And my mother and him were very, very good friends but anyway in summer months he used to come get me my sisters and my brothers. And we'd go on the farm and his children was 'bout the same age of us and I had the opportunity to meet his mother, Mother Sam, which just like I say she was like a mother to me too, a grandmother but we worked from about seven o'clock in the morning to about twelve you know we was young you know and stuff. He was out there to learn---what they did they got us on the farms to teach us how to work you know the value of work and to, not to grow up doing that you know, you have to get yourself higher than that and so we would look down there, those roads looked like they were about a mile down there you had to pick you know the tomatoes. One, one time they cucumbers you had to pick the cucumbers you know so they could send it to market, I did that until I know I was in 'bout eleventh grade, yeah.

IL: Did you learn anything from Dr. Buzzard, any home remedies or anything?

JW: Oh yeah, man all kinds of stuff I can't even tell you. I know one time I can tell you, my mother got sick and she got really bad sick. And she went to several doctors and so she called him and they came over to the house and I remember looking at them and they had a little, a little bag, a little white bag. And, and I remember they told her to take it and so she took it and about a couple days later this stuff was gone. She was swollen up, she was really sick and she went to the doctors and the doctors didn't know what was going on. And when she called them and they came over there, whatever that was, and it was white, I remember it was white and I remember she got better from it. Yeah. And you know I saw people come from, you know from time to time all over 'cause they used to come when I was growing up. And they said well where's the doctor live, and then we would tell them the direction where they lived. And they would always give us money, right. And so it got to the point where I made several, in my lifetime, several hundred dollars because of that, you know. And matter of fact, his children grown now they have their own children, some of them have grandkids. And we still close, and we still you know, love each other and we talk about that a lot. It was like, I'm glad that I had that experience with them and as a matter of fact I was over in the area today you know, visiting one of my friends to come here and help me with this interview because she, like I said, they're very, very Gullah. Very, very, very Gullah.

DO: Talk to us about your military experience.

JW: I was a, I did my basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. And I remember the company and everything C62 I will never forget that as long as I live. I went over there in 1969-- - '66---- '67 I'm sorry. Anyway I---during that time the Vietnam War was in full fledge and I was assigned to the fourth infantry division at Pleiku that's up in the northern section of Vietnam and I served there for six months. I was in several fire fights and then after that I was transferred to the "Big Red One" to the first infantry division. And then I served there and then after that came home and then after that I went you know, to the military stations in the United States. Yeah.

DO: Did you ever experience prejudice while you were in the service from, or treated different than the other white soldiers?

JW: When we were overseas, when we was on the field, they were prejudiced you know this is like 1967, '68 when I first went over there what they would do you know the, the white kinds of parts they were always given rank quicker but there were, there were some that I met were, I mean---in the military you become aware of certain realities you know. And one was we was in a life death situation so we became close. And I found out that after we came back over into the United States that's where a lot of the prejudice took place because if you, if you had an officer from Alabama, he would teach you different than if you had an officer from say, New York.

Because of the Southern influence were used to talking to African Americans in a certain way and then in New York or some other place maybe California or something like that, the prejudice wasn't the same. You know, in the deep south---matter of fact still now I experience that it's like a subtle prejudice you know and they still, some of them still won't speak to you, it was different to make it short there was a difference, yeah. When I go over---we just came back from the commissary when I go over to the military on the military base, everybody speak to everybody, black, white, hispanic, whatever. And when you come back off the military base, it's different they won't---you know it's you have to speak first and it's very seldom that they'll speak to you first. You know so, and that's still, that still to me goes on here in Beaufort, South Carolina.

IL: Could you tell us how things have changed since you were younger, as the way the Island is now?

JW: Oh well, as far as, as far as, the prejudice is concerned we can go in the restaurants, you can go in any restaurant you want to. It's a---we were one of the first to integrate a restaurant at the Greyhound bus station they had a restaurant African Americans could go in the restaurant but you could go in the window, they had a window that you go ask for the food but they would serve it through the window. And the restaurant actually now is, the restaurant is not a restaurant anymore it's, it's owned by the Beaufort PD the traffic division you know, the meter division and everytime I go by there I think about that because I had a you know, a kinda bad experience in there. Also coming up my father knew this restaurant owner and he let us eat in the restaurant but it was in the back, in the kitchen. And I notice in the dining area, I asked my parents why we couldn't go out there and they have me some reason you know, but I didn't understand how it was then at that young age, but nowadays it's you know, like I said totally different. You know, it's like black and white nowadays you could do whatever you wanna do basically. And after I got the military you know, I felt like I had ownership to the country and as long as I you know was within the law that I could go and do anything I want to do. And that's how I am right now. Is that good enough, you want so more?

IL: This is your story Brother, you can say, you can talk as long as you want about what you want.

JW: Yeah, ok, thank you so much, yeah.

DO: Tell us about fishing, 'cause I see your polls?

JW: Oh yeah, I love fishing.

DO: So you go right down on the docks?

JW: Well actually that's not a good fishing spot down there. It's like a sandbar that's oyster creak they used to have a oyster factory that's not far from here. And matter of fact this road that y'all came down, that used to be the main road and you know this is developed as a matter of fact when I was young, coming up we used to hunt over here, none of these houses were here when I came up. But yeah, I um, I like fishing and I have a battle. A battle is a boat that is made of wood and it's a flat bottom boat and 'round here they used to go fishing in the battle. They go fishing, and they go crabbing, and they go shrimping, and people used to make them, you know build them for the people around here. And when we was coming up if you wanted to go fishing you don't need a boat you know, the boat was down there. And you could get in the boat and they had the oars and everything in there and then you go out, you go fishing and you bring it back right. And then over the years, over the years as Beaufort became populated with foreigners people began to you know take the boats from land, I went back, I came back out of the military and went down there was no more boats. You know down there and most of the people kept the boats on their own property. And I always wanted one so I had one built you know, several years ago and I loved that boat better than I loved the factory-made skiff out there, you know. But I like---my main fish is a spot-tail bass, I like catching it, I've studied it and it's a predatory fish and it eats almost anything but it likes certain bait you know shrimp is one of the---live shrimp is one of the main things it likes, it likes crabs and it likes minnow. And mostly from August up until January it's plentiful. And then you have the speckled trout, winter trout and that's a really nice sports fish too, my brothers and my mom and they like to catch whiting, right now that's what's biting it's a nice fish. And a lot of people, white kind of parts call it trash fish but we grew up on whiting, whiting, spot, and croaker those are the three main---and black bass I love black bass too. But those are the four fish that I really like, you know, catching.

MW: But to catch the crabs you---

JW: Oh, yeah.

MW:---when I was little coming up we went crabbing with our uncle, we would have a kite string with a piece of chicken, chicken neck on the end that we tied to the kite string and we would just wheel it around at low tide and just throw it out in the water. And at low tide you could see crabs walking on the bottom of the, of the water. And they would go up to the meat, the chicken neck and start eating off of it. And then you would slowly draw in the kite string until you can---you got to where you were able to put your net over it so when it runs off it runs right into the net.

JW: Yeah we had, our family they used neckbone. I don't know we---I think the chicken neck is a new thing because when I was comin---

MW: Well that's what we did, chicken neck they didn't.

JW: ---and I think the reason why, I think the reason why we didn't use chicken neck was 'cause chicken was a little bit higher than the neckbone. Neckbone was like a lower meat, right so I think my parents they cooked that chicken neck we had a lot of stew chicken neck growing up, right. But we used to throw the neckbone out and like Martha say you pull you could feel the crab kinda pulling on it right you pull it real slow, right. And to me that's a real cruel way of really catching crabs, right but back then that's how they did it. And they had the net and like I said they'd pull the crab over the net and he, the crab was looking at you all the time while this was going right. And he's trying to figure out eating and getting away you know but he's a crab and you a human so you got a little bit more intelligence right so he eventually let his, his instinct overpower him to get caught and you'd catch him like that same with the bass so he just like the shrimp he can't help himself, so he takes it right and you hook him you know. But that's how we, that's how we caught crabs now my brother and I what we do if they wanna have a crab roast around our house Saturday, Wednesday what we do we got four crab spots. And we just take them out throw them out you know we gotta float on it and the crab will go in there and catch their-self and by Saturday we got at least about a bushel of crabs.

MW: Full.

JW: And we just pull the crab part up and just empty it, and bring it home right. We ain't gotta do nothing, let the crab catch themselves. I wish I had a crab hut to show you but---

DO: Do you use this out here for anything?

JW: Yeah we got out there---I go out there every once in a while and fish but like I said, it's a sandbar, it's a sandbar out there and the fishing is not that great. Now further down the road down here I got a couple of spots, just down the road that I only go to and then in Port Wall where I grew up, where I go. But it's---and the bridge over there, that's where I catch a lot of black fish. But you gotta go on boat, you know, up under the bridge.

IL: Could you tell me about the first time---when did you pick up fishing, who taught you, your first time fishing?

JW: Oh yeah I can tell you my grandmother---

MW: From Addie. Another nickname.

JW: Well yeah I got a aunt and then I meant to tell you too my grandmother we used to call her Sister, I don't know why but everybody called her Sister. And matter of fact I knew several

families that their grandmother was named Sister, why that was I don't know. But that's another nickname. So....I got off the----

DO: First time you went fishing.

JW: Oh yeah well, see you remember I was telling you about, heading the shrimp see---

IL: What is heading?

MW: Take the head off.

IL: Ok.

JW: See, see well you take the shrimp---mostly--- you from up north so you probably never see a shrimp with the head on it you probably just see the shrimp with back part. But down here, when we catch the shrimp its got a head, its got a head on it, eyes come out....goodness, I want to show you. I got an older fishing one that's over there. But the eyes come out and it has a horn, it has a horn that sticks out right. And when the shrimpers would come in they would put the shrimp on the table and everybody, mostly African American, did that too. That was like a way of making a living and they would squeeze the head of the shrimp and it would pop off. That's called heading.

IL: Ok. Keep telling us about the first time you went fishing.

JW: Oh, oh yeah, you know right see where we was at we was on the dock the water was right there right and so my grandmother she loved and they used to fish---she didn't have a rod and reel. Back---a rod and a reel that's a lot of money for them so they would have a string. And they would make their own ring, and they would put a, a sink on it then they would tie it off and put two hooks on it, you know. And then they would throw it by hand and they'd get in the water and they would use the finger and when the fish bite they pull it in and stuff. And I remember when we start---younger we started getting rods and reels and we showed them how to use---she never didn't really want to do that. My mother still fish like that as a matter of fact. But that's how I started fishing, watching her right. And you throw it in the water and once you catch your first fish you're hooked. Once you catch the first one, and you start running, trying to pull it in that's how you got hooked. And I think I got hooked when I was maybe seven, eight years old.

IL: Do you have to get up real early to go fishing?

JW: Well yeah certain times we get up early. It's according to the tide.

MW: It's according to the tide, you fish, you fish according to the tide.

JW: See like we on a low tide right now. And what we normally try to do is fish on a low tide coming up, 'cause everything is coming in right. And then it gets to a certain level that it's moving you know and once it's moving you know, most of the fish you know, that's when you're getting your bite. But you wanna come on a low tide coming up certain fish are better---a slack tide, a slack tide is when the water's all the way down and it's getting ready to come back, it's still, a slack tide. And sometimes your black fish bite on that real good. And once it starts moving they'll slack off biting. But during high tide, the whiting they like high tide. They'll bite on a moving tide, do it mostly high and still then they'll bite much, much better.

IL: Did you have to fish as well or? Are you a lover of fishing?

MW: Yeah, well no I didn't---my brothers went fishing every now and then. But most of the time my parents just went to the fish market and bought the fish.

JW: She---yeah they used a silver hook. A silver hook.

MW: They bought the fish and brought it home. But we scaled it and mom cooked it.

JW: Right, right, they used---Martha's parents used a silver hook. A silver hook is like money go buy the fish right. In my family we catch our own fish.

IL: One second, go ahead. She called by silver hook.

JW: Yes a silver hook. We call, we call it a silver hook. Yeah.

MW: And remember if you ever wanna go shrimping you always cast in low tide. Because the shrimps, the shrimps are walking on the bottom of the, of the river, so you have to wait for the tide to go low in order to throw, to cast your net that the shrimp would get caught up in.

JW: Yeah it would be easier---

MW: So we can always tell when somebody's not from around here when they shrimping in high tide. Casting the net in all that water.

JW: Yes, see high tide is so high and you wan---

MW: But the shrimp is way down on the bottom walking.

JW: You want the, right, you want the net to kind of go all the way down you know. And if you, if you got a net in high tide you might catch one of two of them. But you're not gonna really, you're not gonna really get a good catch you know.

MW: Yes.

JW: So what we do is wait 'til a low tide you know a low tide coming up and it's sometimes in the little small creeks around Beaufort, the tide gets so low until they trapped in some low, low areas.

MW: Right.

JW: And so we just throw right in that area.

MW: Cast a net.

JW: 'Cause they can't get out. And we just come up with the boat and cast everywhere on top of them and catch them right there.

MW: Amen.

IL: Did you have---need a fishing license when you were younger?

JW: No when we was younger I forgot when they started making you have that license. But what see here in last past five years we have a influx---so much people here, until they---you could go on the bank and go fishing. Now you have to be, if you under, I think if you under twelve years old, you still can do it. They still let the little ones do it, but if you above twelve you in the bank now you have to have a license. And I agree with it in a lot of ways because you---certain species of fish, they fished them so much until they almost eradicated the species. And so they, everything is kind of regulated now you know you can only catch three bass and they gotta be fourteen---

MW: A certain size.

JW: They gotta be fourteen to twenty three inches right. And ok anything under fourteen you gotta throw back---

MW: You got to throw it back in the water.

JW: And anything above twenty three you gotta throw it back.

MW: You gotta throw it back in the water and so you gotta catch a slot fish anything between fourteen and twenty three that's called a slot fish. And you can catch any bass that particular size, all of them have a different you know, size limit the particular species of fish. And I think that's good and the bass population has rebounded a great deal but I want them to up that number because I think that---we can go fishing anytime sometimes in the fall and we catch the limit within about five minutes.

IL: Wow.

JW: Yeah and so what we do now, if the limit is three per person and there's three people on the boat, you can catch nine you know each person---even if the person who is not catching the fish, if the other person catching, he can catch nine fish for everybody you know. So that's how it works.

IL: Could you tell us about growing up, did you grow up in the church? Was that an integral part of your upbringing?

JW, MW: Yeah, yeah.

IL: Can you tell us about that?

MW: On Sunday mornings you had to get up and go to Sunday school and church after that. Every Sunday.

JW: My parents, if you said that you were sick on Sunday morning. Ok, and you couldn't go to Sunday school but then you had to lay down in that bed, if you sick, you gotta be sick enough to lay in the bed and so, say, "Ok if you sick then you gotta stay in this bed right". And so that motivated you, I said, "Mom I think I feel a little bit better---I think I'm gonna go ahead and go on to church right". But they didn't play that you had to go to church every Sunday, you know, they didn't play that. What I, what I've learned when I was at Sunday school we had a Sunday school teacher that, we had a Christmas Saving Club. And we used to save a quarter and a quarter was a lot of money for us back then and you would save a quarter every Sunday, they would put it for you right, and then December just like the first part of December they would give everybody the envelope and whoever, and I forgot how much a quarter brings back if you---but for us, it was enough money for us to buy a really nice you know, present you know yeah. It taught me a lot about saving.

MW: It taught you how to save.

JW: Yeah and how we came up everything was really centered around the church. When we was at home if we heard the bell toll, we knew that someone in the neighborhood passed. If someone got married you know it was another different kind of bell, if they was calling you to come to church it was different kinds of bells. And it hurt me to heart when they, somehow they outlawed it and some of the churches here now they have the bells outside in front of the church but they don't ring the bells anymore. You know, and to find out if someone dies in the community you, you better read that paper or somebody---other family will call you at your house and say well you know such and such person passed and a lot of times they don't even if know if the person nowadays, don't even know if the person might be buried, you know they had a funeral and you know they find out a week---a couple weeks later you know. And that's how it is now, and I think that's a travesty that they stopped that.

DO: Which church did you grow up in you know like?

JW: Yeah I grew up in Bethlehem Baptist church which is on River Road it's when you cross the Macktail Bridge soon as you come down on River Road it's like about a block to the right. That's the church that I was a member of but we had Bethlehem we had [inaudible] and we had [inaudible] one church would have first Sunday, one church would have second Sunday, one church would have third Sunday they rotated like that when I was coming up. But now all the churches down there they have churches every Sunday now. That's how we did it it was a community and so the---everybody in that community. They were members of different churches but this family might be member of Bethlehem and that family might be a member of FAB and that family might be a member of [inaudible] and that's how they did it. And that's how they still doing it right now, yeah.

MW: I grew up in a Presbyterian church.

DO: Are you a Presbyterian?

MW: I grew up in a Presbyterian, African American Presbyterian church.

JW: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I was surprised as a matter of fact. At Martha---Martha is [inaudible] I don't know if y'all familiar with that I think [inaudible] is very in their church cemetery.

IL: You have any good hurricane stories?

MW: Oh yes.

JW: Hurricane Gracie, and I think she can tell you about Hurricane Hugo. Hurricane Gracie I think it was in 1962---

MW: No it was in '59.

JW: Oh '59 I don't know why I keep thinking '62.

MW: I was two years old 'cause I remember it

JW: Ok '59. Yeah Hurricane Gracie was my first hurricane that I ever experienced in my life and we my mother and father had just built this house a shell home. I think the house cost like five thousand dollars but it was well-built back then and what we did when the hurricane came 'cause they didn't have the weather type stuff like how they got it now and we would look out and see the trees coming down. And then we would look and our neighbor well my cousin really her house was maybe block away but it was big field. You know it wasn't like it was just dirt roads and stuff and we would look and see the shingles just raising up you know as the wind blow. And we would look at hers and she would look at ours you know and when the hurricane was over with, and we came out and drove around it was like---we lived in a new place---every one of the trees were down. And Beaufort they had pecan trees down these two street Duke street, and Green street I mean it was like we was at school when we went to the barber shop. And when the pecans were blossoming you know we would pick them up and after Hurricane Gracie came through I mean it blew all those pecans. I think maybe one or two trees that's left since that time and also too the debris from the hurricane is still---you can still see remnants of it right now. Hurricane Hugo.

MW: And I went through Hurricane Hugo back in 1989. I had just had my second child and she was at the medical university hospital because she had came early so she was in the neonatal---well she was just brought down to the newborn nursery but she was in the neonatal and right after they put her in the newborn nursery and she just needed to get up to a certain weight that we could bring her home was 1989 September 22nd.

JW: She knows the date.

MW: And Hurricane Hugo hit Charleston South Carolina. I'll never forget we were in North Charleston and my twin was pregnant and I had my elder daughter and we were staying in our other sister's apartment. And the first thing happened was the wind came up and all the lights went out at the apartment. And when the hurricane came over it was just a lot of rain and it sounded like a lot of people was just running on the roof. So all you heard was boom, boom, boom, boom, boom like a lot of people just stomping on the roof. And you heard the wind blow and you could hear the tornados going by, all you heard was (makes tornado sound). Whirlwind going by would get louder and louder and it would go by or go over the house. And then all of the sudden everything would die down, that was when the eye came over, when the eye of the

hurricane come over it is absolutely no activity. Everything is quiet and so of course the lights had already went out so and we thought it was over but it was---we were in the eye, the eye was coming over. There was no activity so we went outside with flashlights and stuff, 'course there were trees down everywhere and the neighbor's shed was over in your yard and trees were down And then it came when the eye came over or went back over then the wind came up again and you heard the tornados and all the---stomping on the roof was debris that was hitting the roof. And it was just---it was really scary---

JW: I---

MW: ---because the winds were, it was going back and forth like this and it was about the blow open it didn't, so we went in the center of the house and we just hunkered down and hoped that you know that we didn't get blown away and we didn't so.

JW: Yeah I---

MW: But it was scary, it was scary and so the next time a hurricane come and they have voluntary evacuation, I'm going.

JW: Yeah. what happened I had to---

MW: 'Cause that's an experience I never wanna experience again.

JW: Yeah I had to work during Hurricane Hugo and they---

MW: And he was here in Beaufort. I was in Charleston.

JW: Yeah they left and we thought that they were gonna be safe in Charleston because they had a track that it was coming to Beaufort and I worked on the base for the government. So we had to stay back to protect the base and so I would call them. And so the first time I called them they was kinda laughing you know back in the background and everything. And I called them next time they said well it's getting a little windy and then the third time I called them only thing I heard was wind and they were screaming back in the background. It scared me, you know and I really felt, you know helpless because my family was away and I was some place else you know. And when I, the next day when I was able to go to Charleston and the closer I got into Charleston that's when you began to see the devastation of

MW: The destruction

JW: --- the storm you know all the polls were down trees were down and the closer I got into Charleston when I crossed the bridge into, onto James Island all the streets were like littered with trees and everything. You'd have to kind of like meander your way through. But and they were like in a state of shock. You know any kind of wind anything it was like they was like---

MW: Because it was like a bomb dropped on the street, everything was destroyed.

JW: Yeah, yeah.

MW: The windows were blown out of everything. And we were, it wasn't bad where we were because Folly Beach was on the south end of that storm.

JW: Right.

MW: And you don't wan---with a hurricane you don't wanna be on the north end of the storm because that's where the surge, the surge is when the tide comes up. And McClellanville was a little town that was on the north end of Hurricane Hugo and the water came up so high that when it did recede back down trees---cars were still up in the trees. That's how high the water came a lot of people's home got flooded. You know they had to go up in their attics and because they were on the north end of the storm where the storm surge was. And we were on the south end so we got, we didn't get flooded out. But we just we got a lot of wind and rain and debris everywhere.

IL: Did you grandparents ever talk about any storms? How did they get through it?

MW: Yes, my grandparents by the grace of God.

JW: My grandparents they talked about the 1940 storm and how bad it was. I can't give you any kind of self-experience only thing--- 'cause my parents how we learned a lot of stuff was word of mouth, and---but I often heard them talk about the 1940 storm and how bad it was and how things were and stuff like that. But that's the only storm that I remember my parents and my grandparents talking about 1940 storm. You know any storm your parents....just that 1940 storm.

MW: Only one I know my parents and grandparents talked about was Gracie.

JW: Hurricane Gracie yeah that's the one my parents, myself---you didn't experience Gracie. How old were you?

MW: No. I was two years old.

JW: Oh, you was two.

MW: So I didn't know.

JW: Well I remember that, I was young yeah. I think I was ten---nine.

MW: Yeah.

JW: I was nine, yeah I was nine, and she was two. We laugh about that all the time. Yeah.

IL: Is there anything else you would like to tell the youth? About how, how did you make it to where you are today? And some advice.

JW: Yeah I think that these children today, they lack mannerism. They have a---

MW: And respect.

JW: They have a, they have a disrespect for, for the elders. They won't speak to you, they feel like...they want stuff right now. They seem, they don't wanna work they, a lot of them---it bothers me. And also too, they don't value education like they should. They don't realize that the more educated you are, the better chance for you to earn more money. Some of these children now are accepting failure, and it hurts me when I see that. You know, so respect goes a long ways if you respect someone, or you respect your elders it goes a long way. Speak, you don't have to come up and, and hug you or whatever but just when they see you and you are older than they are, they are supposed to speak to you. That's how we're brought up, you are always supposed to---

MW: Respect your elders.

JW: ----respect your elders. You'll go a long, long ways and then remember that. And so that young man I remember he came by and he said hello or something. It could be, the least little thing of showing you that you respect him and they would do anything for you. But they walk right past you, won't say a word. And sometimes, some of my friends, they're afraid to even approach them. I'm old school, and I see young people and they pass by me, I like to yell. I'm military so I'm not afraid of them, I should be. But I'm not, you know. And most---and nine times out of ten, they remind me. I said did you see me last night, and they say oh good morning. You know something like that. You know it's something you say to them, that they understand where you're coming from. And then when the ones who speak to me, and I say, well yeah you were brought up right. 'Cause I know the type of parents that he came outta. Because the ones

that speak, those parents are really telling them, what they should do you know. And that's what bothers me. You know, is that a lack of respect and a lack of respecting education, you know.

MW: And our grandparents always had a say. Your grandparents would always tell you one of the things my grandmother would say, anything good in life do not come easy. And when you first hear them say that, you didn't understand that and when you grow up later on and you think back at, you know, you remember what they said. Then you knew well, I had to go to school in order for me to become what I am. I had to go through a lot of changes and it was a lot of hard studying and, but I buckled down and I did it. And because of that, it to me now it's rewarding. So now I know what it meant when my grandmother told me that.

JW: You wanna tell them about what your mother told you when you wanted to give up at the school? And you was trying to come home and what she told you?

MW: Oh yeah, when I first went off to college and I was, I was going to---I'm a medical technologist. I worked in the hospital laboratory where I analyzed all the body fluids so---and I went to technical college. So, I was in a laboratory and I had on a white lab jacket and everything, and my first lab was histology, pathology where they'd do forensics and CSIs and stuff like that. And we had to go to---and I went to school in Atlanta---we had to go to Emory University to see an autopsy, because in histology that's the lab where they perform autopsies. And I said, what. My first lab in college, histology, we had to go to Emory University and see an autopsy. Me, go and see them cut up a dead person. I called my mom crying. Oh man, I said, "Mom I don't wanna be a lab technician again, they want us to cut up---watch people cut up dead people". And I was crying and my mother told me to shut up, she was in Charleston, I was in Atlanta, Georgia. She said, "Shut up". And she said, "Shut up before I come through this phone". She said, "You stop it, and you go and you do it". And I did. I went, I listened to her. She told me to shut up, and I shut up, and she told me to go and do it and what happened was I ended up crying. I was staying with a Jewish family because the dormitories wasn't good for the girls so they had the girls staying in family homes and I lived with this pediatrician and his wife. And the pediatrician after I got off the phone, he said, "Ok, I'll take you to the hospital with me and I'll go to the school with you the next day and we'll talk to the teacher". I don't know how it ended up but when we did go back to school, I found a lot of the class, most of the kids, didn't go. So they didn't fail us, you know for it or anything. But, but I you know my mom she told me to shut up and go and do it and because of what she told me, I stayed in the course. And I took the course. And thank God, because of that I'm a medical technologist today.

JW: Yeah and matter of fact she's retired, and she's---

MW: Yeah.

JW:---retiring right now, and she'll be done in another year or so. And I'm so proud of her she, when we was having children, and I remember one day they call her at---from the hospital. And we was home it was myself and my eldest daughter and Martha. And when they called her, they--I think they asked her if, if she had a choice to either go to the hospital, and you know, to help them out there or she could stay home and so I remember she looked at me and then she looked at Sheena and she thought about it for a while, and then she went to the hospital. I was hurt and but that was my first experience and then what happened we became a part of the lab to be honest with you. When I would come in there, they would let me come in because they know, that we were husband and wife and so I got to meet everybody in there. And we became like a family and they you know, they was like, when they doing the hospitals lab, they would have like they'll go out on the boat, and they would have like a nice little seafood dinner and they would play music for them and everything. And I just got involved with them you know and so, all of them--- 'cause matter of fact, Martha were the only African American in there. And so when they have children right, they had and Martha had Sheena, that was only African American baby they would watch---and you know it was different you know and stuff like that. We got to be very, very good friends and matter of fact the young African Americans that coming in now and when I asked for Martha you know they'll say, "Ms.Martha". And I see the respect that they show her because she teaches them to try to get where she's at, you know so. And I respect, I respect her so much on her job I really do.

MW: Medical technologist, it's a rewarding career.

JW: Yeah

MW: And our pay scale is equivalent to a registered nurse. Because we go to school for four years just like they do.

JW: And she was trying to get her, her daughters to get into the field for some reason. They wouldn't do it, yeah. My middle daughter she's going into teaching, and my elder daughter she's business management major, she works in Washington D.C. for the mayors' office. And my son he's a graduate of the Citadel and he's---he wants to go into the military and he hopefully---he wants to go into aviation and hopefully he'll be able to do that. But none of them---all of them been in the lab and she had them looking into the microscopes and stuff like that, you know. And matter of fact I learned a lot too while I was you know, over the years of being married she gave an opportunity to look at different cells. You know, and stuff it was very, very interesting field.

IL: Well I would like to thank you all for giving us your time and allowing us to come into your home and listen to these wonderful stories.

MW: So this is, this is not going to be on TV is it?

IL: No. And I'm Ismael Lewis---

JW: No thank you so very much for interviewing.

IL:---this is Deborah Oden and it's July 13, 2013.

MW: Alright.

JW: Thank you.

IL: This is the backyard of Martha and Jack Washington.

