RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH DEBORAH SHUFORD

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Kathryn Tracy Rizzi: This begins an oral history interview on Friday, June 22, 2018, in New Brunswick, New Jersey with Deborah Shuford. The interviewers are Kate Rizzi ...

Avery Kelley: Avery Kelley.

Anthony DelConte: Anthony DelConte.

KR: Thank you so much for coming back and doing part two with us today.

Deborah Shuford: Oh, thank you for having me. This is really a very enlightening and fun project for me, and it's not just American history, it's also my family history. This is a chance for me to walk back in the past and also combine that with the future and my future endeavors. You have to know your past if you want to go on with your future. This gives me a great opportunity to explore my family's history, which is American history, and to move forward and to share with future generations of my family and with my future students.

KR: You have a long military tradition in your family, going back many generations.

DS: Yes.

KR: Please tell us about your family's military history.

DS: Oh, my goodness, where do I start? I guess I should start with World War I. That would be my mom's cousin, William Baldwin, from Lowndes County, Alabama, and he served in World War I. Then, we have several military family members who also served in World War II. This would be the military branch of the Army. I know that we have a relative from World War II who actually died in Pearl Harbor. That would be Thomas Glover, Jr. from Montgomery, Alabama. Moving on to the Korean War--and this information was shared with me from my mom's sister, my aunt, Dorothy Sanders--we had cousins who served in the U.S. Army during the Korean [conflict], and that would be Ben Miles, Jr., George Miles, Clinton Miles, Daniel Baldwin. Thomas Glover, Jr., again, was in World War II. Just to go back to the Korean War, that would be Ben Miles Jr., George Miles, Clinton Miles and Daniel Baldwin. Also, my Aunt Dorothy Sanders, her husband, Lowell Sanders, who will be eighty-six in August of this year, 2018, he also served in the Korean War, and another uncle, Ralph Johns, served in the Korean War. By the way, there was a great, great uncle, Rufus Smith, he served in the U.S. Army during World War I as well. Then, going on to the Vietnam War, that would be my dad's younger brother, and that would be Uncle Eddie Mack Shuford. We have a really long history as military members in our family who served. We became a military family, and that goes back to World War I.

KR: What do you know about your relative who was killed in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941?

DS: Thomas Glover Jr., according to my mom, who will be eighty-two at the end of this month, June 2018, and her sister, Aunt Dot, who will be eighty-four, what they shared with me, was that the moment he graduated from high school in Lowndes County, Alabama, he wanted to serve in

the military. He wanted to give back to our great nation. I think pretty much that generation, which we call the Greatest Generation, I think that was probably pretty much the sentiment of everyone in the United States, that when you have the opportunity to serve and to help our country, you do what you can. In those days, most of our family members in Lowndes County, Alabama, they were farmers, and when they received the call to serve, they put down everything. They decided that it was more important, that family first but also country first, and so they felt in order to help our family and our nation, that they would have to serve. It wasn't a question of whether or not to serve, it was just a known fact that this was something that my family members would do. As I said, it started with World War I, which I've learned recently. With Thomas Glover, what we know about him is that he decided that he would enlist and he would go serve. We're still trying to gather, to this day, trying to find letters, if we can, from other family members, just to find out what that experience was like. I know that once he was killed there, there were years that no one ever talked about it.

In my family, when people died either from active duty in the military or unusual circumstances, which is what we liked to call it--through violence, not of their own doing but living in those times, living in Jim Crow South. I think what Thomas Glover wanted to do was, well, from what I was told from other relatives, is that he decided that if he served in the military in World War II, that the conditions that they were living through in Alabama, in the '30s and the '40s, would change and that there would be more opportunity and that they would be given work and that they would be allowed to have the freedom and joy of being United States citizens without harassment, without violence and without being terrorized. In those times, what Thomas Glover Jr. would share with family members is that in order to be safe, you had safety in numbers in Alabama and that you weren't allowed to go to many places after dark. You were allowed to work on the farm, and you were allowed to go to church on Sunday. I think that was a safe haven, our church, Lily Baptist Church in Lowndes County. That was a place where you could go to church all day and you were safe there, but sundown you had to return home, or you could work on the farm. Before the sun was set, you had to be home again. What I'm trying to say is you were allowed to work and you were allowed to go to church, and your social activities included mostly the church. [Editor's Note: Jim Crow laws refer to state and local laws in the South that instituted segregation and restricted voting rights of African Americans during the era that spanned from the end of Reconstruction to the mid-20th century.]

You weren't allowed to explore the beaches in Alabama. I know recently I was watching a report about the beautiful beaches in Alabama, when none of my relatives, at that time, in the '40s, '50s, and '60s, were ever allowed to go on a beach in Alabama. Basically, Thomas Glover, Jr. would share how when he went to Hawaii that he was able to see some of the most beautiful beaches, explore those beaches and he was allowed to go on the beach, but he wasn't allowed to go on the beaches in his home state of Alabama. From what I've been told, he thought Hawaii was probably the most beautiful place on earth. To him, it was, because of the opportunity and freedom that he had there. Sadly, and it was a tragedy that he died there, but he was with the troops that he loved and wanted to be with. From what I've been told, that's where he wanted to be, and so that gives us a great comfort in knowing that he was where he wanted to be when he passed away at Pearl Harbor.

KR: I am curious if he was buried at Pearl Harbor.

DS: I'm glad that you brought that up. In those days, because of the situation in Alabama where we also had relatives who served in the military that are actually in unmarked graves, in the case of Thomas Glover Jr., we never got his remains. To this day, there is a memorial in Pearl Harbor, and his name is listed. That would be similar to the memorial in Washington, D.C. for the Vietnam veterans. We know that they have his name listed, that he did serve, and that he was killed there, but as a family we've never been given his remains. However, we have been given flags. We have so many American flags from all of our family members who've served in the military, that we received from Veteran Affairs. There were flags that were given to us if they died in action. Even when my Uncle Eddie Mack died years later, after Vietnam--he served in Vietnam, but he did not die there. He died in Michigan in an accident, an automobile accident, trucking accident. I think a truck hit his car, and that was in '98. My grandmother was given the flag to honor his service, and we still have those flags. What we don't have, sadly for Thomas Glover, Jr., we don't have his remains.

The other military family members are all buried in Alabama. They're all buried in Lowndes County. We do have their flags, and we had military to arrive and full honors during their funeral services. It's sad that we didn't have that for Thomas Glover, Jr., but then again, as Americans, I don't think anyone really had the opportunity to have that type of service. Even now, if we wanted to, we were told that we could have a service at Arlington National Cemetery in his honor, and so we are kind of considering that just to have a formal service. We may, at some point, do that, which would be nice. At that point, we will be given another American flag during that service, and they said that we would have a funeral with full military honors to honor Thomas Glover, Jr. for his service. That gives us great comfort, because, again, that's probably the only family member that we didn't have a funeral for and that's way before my time. African Americans in the South--and I know you've probably seen a lot of documentaries in Louisiana--you have what we call a celebration of life. It's more of a celebration than a sad funeral service. I'm sure we'd like to do that for Thomas Glover, Jr., do something at home, and I still say at home in Lowndes County because that's where we're all from, but also have a service at Arlington. I think that's important because I think that's what he would've wanted because he was where wanted to be and he enlisted and wanted to serve, and I think that's important.

It's important for future generations, for our family and for all young people, to see that. I still think that that was the Greatest Generation because we're talking about people, men and women, who were seventeen and some were sixteen, who decided they were going to [serve]. They received the call to serve and they decided to serve and they were teenagers. That's important for the young people today to know that these were teenagers who were fighting for our rights and for our freedom and these were just kids basically. They weren't in their twenties. They weren't in their thirties. They were serving at a very young age, and sadly some were not able to return home to their families. We have to honor their service and remember them and never forget the contributions they've made to our society.

KR: Your Uncle Eddie Mack.

DS: Oh, Uncle Mack.

KR: Do you know if he was drafted or enlisted?

DS: Uncle Mack enlisted. Again, with my family it seemed to be a tradition going back to World War I, whenever there was a call to duty, so to speak, they would answer that call. With Uncle Eddie Mack, again, he wanted to serve, but what I did learn from him and I remember when he would return, during certain times, when he was still on active duty, he would not share every detail about his service in Vietnam. There were some things that I could tell that he decided that were best kept in secret. We used to have a saying that there are some things that you share and there are some things that you take to your grave and he basically did just that. I guess because I was so young, in elementary school, and it wasn't appropriate, it wasn't age appropriate, for me to have that kind of information about the Vietnam War, which at the time, was not a popular war. I know he was very sad when the war ended and he returned home because he didn't get the kind of honors and the parades. I guess he felt that he returned home, but he returned to a different home. When I say home, I mean his home country because the sentiment at the time was that, as a nation, we lost the war. Uncle Mack and a lot of his military brothers and sisters returned home, and I won't call it disgrace, but they returned home to an environment that did not welcome them as military men and women who served in Vietnam. On the other hand, we had family members who when they returned after World War II, or even William Baldwin returning from World War I, they came back with the parades and the family picnics and the cheers and the applause. That's something Uncle Mack did not have.

Uncle Mack mentioned to me--and I don't know whether this is true or not because I'm not in the medical profession--but he never had children. Later, before he passed away in the '90s, when I was much older and able to understand, he shared something with me that continues to haunt me to this day. He had a beautiful wedding, and I would say he got married in '94. It was in a country club in Michigan, because he was working for General Motors when he left the service and he lived in Detroit, Michigan. He had a wonderful wedding with a beautiful bride and a wonderful stepson, but he wanted to have children of his own. He never did, and that marriage ended in divorce a couple years later, I want to say, '96. Then, sadly, he died in the accident in Michigan, in the auto accident, in '98. He said something to me, that just recently I started to think about it, is that he thought that perhaps he could not have children because of Agent Orange. I never really thought about that when he was getting married and I never thought about it when he passed away in '98, but just listening to a lot of our medical professionals today and doing a little research on my own, it may have been a possibility. I can't confirm that, but he did share that with me. He always wanted children. My grandmother had nine children, and they all had children. Uncle Eddie Mack was the only one of all her seven sons who sadly did not have a biological child. He had a stepson, and he, later in years, he regretted that. He said he had a lot of nieces and nephews, and I'm one of those nieces. He was very generous to all of us and very kind, very giving and he was just a lot of fun. [Editor's Note: The chemical defoliant Agent Orange, which the United States government used in Vietnam to clear jungles, causes a number of serious health problems in humans, including cancer.]

He would tell a lot of jokes. I think there's always the comedy and the tragedy, and with him, the way that he dealt with tragedy, including his own personal tragedy of not having children and also losing some of his friends in the military during the Vietnam War, was to tell jokes. Behind,

I would say, a sort of façade, behind that façade was a lot of sadness. It was something that he carried to his grave because it was too graphic and he didn't want to share it with us.

When he enlisted, when Uncle Eddie Mack enlisted in the military, he enlisted with a cousin. Actually, it was my mom's cousin, second cousin, and that would be Francis Miles, who is still with us today. Francis is getting married for the first time. Francis never had children. I'm planning to visit with him in August, and hopefully he'll share and give me some insight on their service in Vietnam. I think now is the time to do it, when he's in a better place in his life with getting married, moving on with his future. Perhaps he can share some of the details of what happened, actually happened, to them in Vietnam and if they were exposed to Agent Orange. Uncle Mack said they were, and I'm quite certain that if that is true that Cousin Francis will confirm that because they were very close. They worked on the farms together. They enlisted together, and so they went into the military with hopes and dreams of returning to a better nation and we are a better nation. It's just sad that environments that you go to, and if there are chemicals involved, sometimes it causes a type of illness.

In that respect, there may have been something that happened to both of them that we'll never know because it's been so long. Even if you have a physical now, I don't know if [there] will be any detection of any chemicals in your body unless a toxicology report is completed during an autopsy and I don't believe that we ever get that. After the accident, there was an autopsy, and so I did get some records from the accident from Uncle Eddie Mack. Basically, it was a police report, and in the police report, there are descriptions of what occurred and at the point of impact. Never was I able to get a report involving any chemicals that may or may not have been in Uncle Mack's system from his service in the military. That was never reported. It was basically a police report, and it just basically gave us a full detailed description of the auto accident that was not his fault, that another motorist hit him, and so it was a tragedy. It was very sad for us because he was basically the life of the party during every reunion, family reunion, that we would have in Alabama, and we always expected to see him.

Of all my father's brothers and sisters, [Eddie Mack] was the first to pass away, and that would've been 1998. That was followed by his baby sister, Aunt Erma Shuford Quarles, who had cancer and she passed away in 2010, and then my dad, five years later, in 2015. For my grandmother to see her son pass away after serving in Vietnam, that was very hard for her. Uncle Eddie Mack passed away in '98, and my grandmother passed away in 2002. She did take it really, really hard, and I guess, rightly so, anyone would. It's hard to lose a child, and that's not the way it's supposed to be and that's what my grandmother shared with me. She was so proud of Uncle Eddie Mack and his service in the military. She was very proud of that. Also, my Uncle George Shuford, who is still with us, also served in the military, and so she was proud of her sons who served in the military. I think when I reflect on Uncle Eddie Mack, I think his story is probably the most tragic of all. Not so much Thomas Glover, Jr., because we all know that that was a surprise attack at Pearl Harbor. With Uncle Eddie Mack, I think the tragedy is that he survived in Vietnam and then he died on the road here, home, in Michigan, so therein lies the sadness. He didn't die in active duty, and he did not die from Agent Orange. He died from a collision, an auto accident.

KR: When Eddie Mack and Francis Miles were overseas in Vietnam, what communication did you and your siblings and your mom and dad have with them? Did you write letters?

DS: Letters. Of course, today, we have smart phones, and I know with military, I donate a lot of phones to the military through the AT&T stores. If you donate a phone, they can refurbish the phone for military servicemen and women. At that time, we didn't have cell phones, so there were letters, lots of letters. In fact, we're trying to recover some of them. My mom will be eighty-two at the end of this month, and she kept a lot of letters from Francis and from Uncle Mack, so, yes, we had a lot of letters.

Those letters were delightful letters. They talked about the food in Vietnam, the people in Vietnam. They talked about travelling, for the first time leaving the great county of Lowndes County, Alabama because they had never left the county [laughter] or the state until they enlisted in the military. I often think that a lot of the family members, that's the reason they wanted to serve, as well as to serve the country, but to have the opportunity to leave the county and to travel because they didn't have cars. They had tractors or horses really. They had one tractor that belonged to my grandfather, but they had horses back then. When they served in Vietnam, I don't remember them having cars. In the letters, they talked about driving the military vehicles, which they loved driving. They were very excited that they were given the opportunity, that they would let these wild, crazy young men drive military vehicles, so they had such freedom. Again, leaving Alabama and going abroad gave them freedom that they never had growing up in Alabama. To them, it was an opportunity to meet new people, to travel, and to finally have freedom that any young person would want, especially teenagers, and so they were able to do that.

They really enjoyed the people. They talked about the Vietnamese people and how well they were treated by them. Sometimes they would mention that eating with them would remind them of having a Sunday dinner after church in Alabama, because the Vietnamese would have all their family members and they would congregate and they would share a meal. They would have dinners together, and that reminded them of Sunday dinners at our home church in Alabama. Whenever they were homesick, they felt that the people there in Vietnam would embrace them and treat them like family members. That's very interesting, because you're there, you're in a situation of war, and in war there is tragedy. There is death. There is suffering, but there's also the human element of that war and of that tragedy. In the midst of all the fighting and the bombing, you still have families, and you still have children. They were really delighted in the children that they met in Vietnam, because for some reason they saw in those children a sense of innocence. They mention in the letters how the children were very innocent and that they would play with these children. The children embraced them in their uniforms, and they knew that they were Americans and they were from the United States. They would give the children candy. When they had the time, when they were not engaged in combat, they had the opportunity to show the children in Vietnam that they weren't there just to fight and they certainly weren't there to harm people, that there was another side to U.S. citizens and that there was that human side, and that one day, they actually wrote in their letters, that they hoped to be married and to start their own families and have children. They enjoyed meeting people that embraced them.

They never mentioned any racism in Vietnam. That's one thing that I recall from conversations with Francis today and from the letters--and I was very young when those letters [were written], so I didn't fully understand--but they never mentioned anything about racism. They never mentioned black and white. I even have a photo with Uncle Eddie Mack with what I call his military brother, which I always post on Facebook every year during Memorial Day and Veterans Day. It's an interesting photo because you have Uncle Eddie Mack, and he's shoulder to shoulder with his military brother. Eddie Mack is African American, and this gentleman is, I don't know his ethnicity, but he is, I would say, Caucasian American. The two of them in that photo, it just says it all. It shows you that they were in it together, and they're posing as if they're family members. They're not posing as soldiers, but they're shoulder to shoulder and they're smiling, and that's something that would not have happened to Uncle Eddie Mack in Alabama when he was growing up. This photo I have. I have it on my iPad, and I share it with my students.

In fact, some of the students asked if they could have the photo, and so I allowed them to copy it. They blew it up because of the nametag of the other gentleman. We're trying to find his family. We're still trying to locate them, and I guess through social media, we can find them hopefully. We've been posting and reposting this photo, hoping that one of the family members will contact us so that we can share the photo, number one, but share my Uncle Eddie Mack's feelings for this person. This was like another brother, and he had a lot of brothers. [laughter] He was one of seven, but this gentleman, it was something special about that photo. They found each other thousands of miles away in Vietnam, and they would never have met and probably would not have been allowed to be friends in Alabama at that time. That, I find very interesting. In all the sadness and everything we hear about Vietnam in Vietnam, they found something that they didn't have in Alabama, which is very interesting. Even Francis today talks about that. He talks about Vietnam, and he talks about it in such a nice way.

I was recently watching the documentary with Anthony Bourdain. I keep watching the one on Korea and the one on Vietnam because it helps me to understand the love and compassion that my family members had for Korea and Vietnam. It gave me more of an understanding about the people and the history and the culture there, and I think that's important. It's so sad that we lost Anthony Bourdain because what he did, I think his program was brilliant and it wasn't a cooking show. It was a show about people and human dignity. He used his occupation of being a former chef to go into these areas, into these communities, and into these countries so that he could show us the humanity of these countries. That's something that if Anthony Bourdain had not done that, I think we probably would've had a one-sided opinion of Korea and of Vietnam and other places, other countries. He did a great service. This is just my personal opinion, I would like to see the military acknowledge Anthony Bourdain and what he did for us, because for a lot of people today, they look at Korea and Vietnam as wars that perhaps we should not have engaged in. Then, you watch Anthony Bourdain talk to these people and see that today there is a different Korea and a different Vietnam, and not to be political, but perhaps in our own way, our U.S. military contributed to the new Korea and the new Vietnam. I think they had a lot to do with that, and I certainly feel that that's what my family members thought when they were there serving our country. [Editor's Note: Anthony Bourdain was a chef and television personality who lived from 1956 to 2018. He was known for his television series *Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown*.]

KR: Anthony Bourdain passed away two weeks ago, on June 8th, the same day we did part one of this interview.

DS: That's right. It's interesting, because we were just talking about him in part one. Then, I go home, and then I'm like, "I can't believe this is happening. I was just talking about him," and getting very excited about other episodes that CNN would share and I continue to watch. Sadly, I go home, and then we're watching a tribute to Anthony Bourdain. They had a marathon. I started watching, and they were showing the Philippines and Korea. I said, "What he did globally was he showed us what we can accomplish as human beings," that it wasn't just about the food, but he used that, food, as a way to open the door, so to speak, to people who are just like us. Again, when there's war, there is tragedy. There is death, but also there's also a chance to avoid that when you watch Anthony Bourdain and maybe that's what he was trying to do. We probably will never know, but if you watch those episodes, maybe in his own way, because if you think about Anthony Bourdain's age, in his sixties, dying in his sixties, perhaps a lot of the military members were friends of his. Some of his friends served in Vietnam, probably. He grew up in New Jersey, and perhaps this was his way of showing the nation that there's more to life than winning a war and that even if you have a war and then you go back to these countries, everybody wants the same thing. They want to raise their families. They want to be happy. They want their children to have a good life.

When I look at Anthony Bourdain and I think about some of the countries that he explored, he went to Germany. If we have these opinions, whether good or bad, about Germany, he showed us a different Germany. We think about the Greatest Generation serving in World War II and we think about Japan and we think about Germany, when you watch Anthony Bourdain, he actually talks about our service in the military in those countries, but then he shows you, "This is the country today." Whatever you thought, whatever your opinions were about the war, whether they were popular or not, when you look at what Anthony Bourdain showed us, it's that they're just people, just like us. He was brilliant in doing that. He was probably one of the best journalists to cover all the nations that were, at one point, war-torn nations that now are still here. This is his legacy, something he left for us, and perhaps, in his own way, he was showing us, that before you engage in war, that if you go and meet the people in the country and talk to the people and bring them to the table and share a meal with the people, you may have a different opinion. I certainly do.

It certainly changed a lot for me, and it made me feel a sense of comfort, knowing that my family members served in Germany, in Hawaii at Pearl Harbor, in Korea. Now, I can understand why they went. I think we're better off for the fact that we have military families and servicemen who make that sacrifice, that great sacrifice, so that we could have the freedom that we have today. That's what Anthony Bourdain showed us, that in spite of our opinions, in his travels, he saw nations of people and children and men, women, children, the elderly, and what our nation could be and should be. He had such a love for humanity. I think that's what that program was about, and that was his legacy. That will be our legacy. If we watch the program, we can learn a great deal.

There was an African filmmaker, Ousmane Sembene, who died in maybe 2007. I know they did a film festival at AFI Theatre in Silver Spring, Maryland, when I lived in that area in Northern Virginia. What he said, and he shared this at Rutgers University during the interview, is that he had many jobs in Africa but he chose filmmaking because he knew he could reach more people. I think, in that respect, Anthony Bourdain knew--and he had written a couple of books--but he knew that if he did this program, he could reach millions of people. Even though he's no longer with us on this earth, that program and those episodes will always be here, and they will reach generations after generation after generation.

In terms of history, when people want to explore the countries that we fought in, they will have the episodes from Anthony Bourdain's program to explore those countries and to get a clear and concise understanding of the people in those countries and perhaps have a different opinion and seek to have knowledge in a way that you wouldn't get through books, especially if there is a language issue there. When you're watching film, you can turn the volume down, and visually, when you see what Anthony Bourdain did, even if you don't understand the English language or the language of the country, you actually don't need the audio. You just watch the visuals, and that says it all. Therein lies their humanity, and that's what it's all about. It's about humans on this earth, and that's what he tried to share through his program.

KR: When the Vietnam War was going on and the anti-war movement was in full swing in America, what discussions were going on in your household? What were your mom and dad talking about?

DS: Well, I remember my dad wanted to serve in the military. [laughter] He had his Selective Service card, as I mentioned in part one, that he carried in his wallet. When he passed away and the nurses gave me the wallet and I'm going through it, it was still there. I remember the last visit when he was in the hospital and he told me, "Take my wallet home." I opened it and I saw Selective Service, and I said, "Why are you carrying this?" He said, "In case they call me." I said, "You're in the hospital. I doubt that they're going to call you, and now you're like eighty years old." He said, "Well, I always wanted to serve in the military." We did have a conversation about, he said, "My brother Eddie Mack served in the military. All my cousins," he said, "Daniel Baldwin, William Baldwin, all the Miles, Ben Miles, Jr., Ben Miles, Sr., Francis." He said, "I'm the only one. I didn't get to serve." So, I asked him, I said, "Well, why would you want to serve?" He said, "Because it's the right thing to do." My father always believed in right and wrong. He always believed in the law. He said it was the right thing to do. He said, "You know Mack served in Vietnam." He said, "I know that it wasn't a popular war." He said, "But he did serve." When we would have dinner, when Uncle Mack was serving, my father enjoyed reading letters from Uncle Mack and from Francis.

When they would come--each time one of our family members would leave Alabama and before they were shipped out, they would come through Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland and then from Andrews they would come to McGuire-Dix in New Jersey. At that time, I had never been to Andrews in Maryland, but we have relatives there. So, they would visit with relatives there, and they would drive them to Andrews in Maryland and it's a joint base now. Then, they would go from Andrews and they would come to McGuire-Dix, which is Joint Base McGuire-Dix now.

My father would get very excited about driving us down to the base, because we would always watch the airplanes take off at Newark Airport.

Growing up in Newark that was a big thing. On Sundays, we would watch the planes take off. Then, my dad would stop and get ice cream from Dairyland, this place Dairyland, and then we would watch the *Ed Sullivan Show*. We had one television, one black and white television, in the living room. We'd watch Ed Sullivan and every western you could imagine, *Bonanza, Wagon Train*, I can remember them all, *Have Gun-Will Travel*. That's what my dad was big on, westerns and country western music, because he grew up in Alabama.

When it came to the war, Vietnam, he never said a negative thing about it because Uncle Mack was serving in that war. My father felt it was the right thing to do and it was the right thing for other family members to serve. He always said he wished he could be right there with him, in spite of the fact that it wasn't very popular now.

My older brother, who is named after my dad, Willie Fred Shuford, Jr., recalled--and this was in Newark--that there were a couple of guys who were drafted. They just refused to go. They did not go to Canada. My brother said, because he had the bedroom in the front of the house which faced the street, he heard a jeep and it was actually the military police and they were coming to take away one of our neighbors. My brother said--and this was during the Vietnam War--my brother was still in high school. He wasn't quite old enough. This person on the block--my brother told me this story before he passed away--my brother said that he heard this jeep and you could hear the jeep come to a halt and you could hear them drag this guy out of the house. During Vietnam, if you didn't flee and leave the country and you were drafted, you were expected to serve. My father's answer to that was, "Well, you know, he should've gone." He told my brother, "You know that I carry my Selective Service card and that when you reach the right age, I'm taking you to sign up." My brother was frightened by the fact that the military police came to our block and dragged this young man out. This guy was older than my brother. He didn't sign up for Selective Service. They found out that he was at home, and the military police, they came and they dragged him out of there.

[When] my brother was of age, turning eighteen, my father signed him up right away. My brother had a full scholarship to the University of Minnesota, but my dad told him that, "Yes, you do have a scholarship, but you do have to carry this card with you wherever you go and that if you don't and you get stopped, you could be arrested." My father always believed in the law and reminded us that if we did the wrong thing, we were going to end up in Angola Prison in Alabama, so that was our fear. My brother carried that card, and even when my brother passed away two years ago, he still had his Selective Service card. He told me that story again about the neighbor being dragged out. [Editor's Note: Louisiana State Penitentiary is a maximum security prison that is nicknamed Angola because the land it is on used to be a plantation known as Angola.]

My brother also said at the University of Minnesota--and my brother was recruited as a football player, so he had to leave early. In those days, you couldn't fly out of Newark because they didn't have the flights, so you had to go to LaGuardia [in Queens, New York]. At LaGuardia, I remember my dad asked him, "Do you have your card, your Selective Service card, in your

wallet?" just a checklist of things that he needed. Then, my brother told me two years ago that--and this is when he was in the hospital at the University of Minnesota after I had donated the stem cells to him--he said to me, while he was a freshman at the University of Minnesota at Morris and then later in Minneapolis, when he transferred to the Minneapolis campus, this is during Vietnam, this is '72, and he was freshman, there would be tables with military men recruiting. Also, he said that he thought that they also checked with the university regarding students who didn't have their Selective Service cards. I don't know how they did it. He didn't give me all the details, but my brother said that he knew then that my father was right, that he had to carry that card, that if he were called, he would have to leave the football team, leave the university and he would have to go to Vietnam like Uncle Mack. He said he was prepared to do so, because that's how we were raised and he knew that if that was his call to duty, that was his destiny, he would have to do it. My father, the whole time my brother was in Minnesota, I think my father thought that my brother would be drafted, and so that was another conversation.

On one hand, we had the conversation about Francis and Uncle Mack and reading their letters and how much they thought Vietnam was a beautiful country. It was so pretty. It was very green, and it reminded them of the farm in Alabama because it was rural. The city part was a city part, but it was so green and so pretty. My father said, in some parts of the letters they thought it was a shame that it was so thick and so green, that if you watch footage, documentary footage, now and you watch a lot of the journalists, they show how they had to burn some of the country for their own protection. My father talked about that, and my father would say, "It's a shame. They said it's so pretty." I don't remember them taking photos. I don't know if it was allowed then, during Vietnam, to take photos. My father said in the letters that he read to us, and I remember him reading them, how pretty it was and that he said it's a shame that they have to burn part of the natural environment in that country.

On the other hand, now, my brother's in Minnesota and we thought he was going to get drafted, but we thought it would be a good thing. We didn't see it as a bad thing. This is before the war ended. This is before the fall of Saigon. We're thinking that if he got drafted, this is a good thing, he's following the family tradition. Some of the pictures that we received from Uncle Mack and Francis, they were in uniform and they were smiling. The picture that we have of William Baldwin, which I can get and share with you later, he's posing with his wife and he's in World War I and he's smiling. As kids, we thought when you're serving in the military, you have a great life, great opportunity, you're doing a great thing for the country, and all is well with the world. We never saw the ugly side of Vietnam, and they never shared it. [Editor's Note: American forces withdrew from South Vietnam in 1973. In 1975, North Vietnam launched an offensive into South Vietnam. On April 30, 1975, Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese Army.]

Then, my brother, two years ago, before he passed away, had reflections that what if he had left the University of Minnesota and if he had gone to Vietnam. What if he had enlisted? He was never drafted. He said, "Now, I think what if I had enlisted, I could've always returned to the University of Minnesota to complete my education, but now I'll never have that opportunity to serve." I think that when you come to the end of life, you start to have these reflections, and I think that was one that my brother reflected on. As a high school student, he had a fear of the military because of what he witnessed. I don't know. He said it was like three in the morning, watching the neighbor being dragged out by the military police in the jeep. On the other hand,

years later, he saw all the opportunities that the military gave to other family members, and it was a missed opportunity for him.

I remember when my son was in high school in Maryland, and my brother calls me and said, "You know Miles is turning eighteen soon. You've got to make sure he signs up for Selective Service." He said, "And now it's online." It was just interesting that my brother told [me that]. He said, "My son signed up." My brother's son is named after my dad and my brother, Willie Fred Shuford III. He's a graduate of the University of Minnesota. My brother called me and said, "You know, Will, I reminded him, 'You've got to sign up.'" His son signed up for Selective Service, and then my brother calls me when my son turned eighteen and says, "You have to make sure you sign him up." I'm like, "W ow, I didn't even think of that." All I was thinking is, "Thank God he's graduating from high school and he's college bound," but it never dawned on me that you still have to do that, that we're in peacetime. The last time I recall was the Gulf War and some of the ROTC students at Rutgers, I know that they got their orders and these were classmates of mine.

I must have had a glamourous view of the military. Our family members, they would always send nice letters. They never sent a negative letter no matter what, and even some of the old letters we go through now, they're all very positive. When I had classmates at Rutgers University who were in the ROTC, they were very excited about being commissioned lieutenants and these were men and women. Then, right after graduation, they got their orders and next thing I knew, maybe a few years later, they were in the Gulf War. I was like, "Wow." It just never dawned on me. When my son turned eighteen, I guess I just didn't think. I wasn't thinking. It was my brother in Minnesota who calls me and says, "You know, he's turning eighteen now. You have to make sure he signs up for Selective Service." He also said, "Buy him a nice wallet." My son was an athlete, he was a football player, and he didn't even carry a wallet. We lived in walking distance of the high school. My brother said, "No, you've got to buy him a wallet and you've got to put that card in the wallet with his learning permit, his driver's learning permit, put them in side by side in the wallet." He's giving me all these instructions, and I'm like, "Why?" It just never dawned on me. [laughter] I said, "Boy, you're just like Dad," is what I told him. "You're like Dad." They're so much alike. He said, "Trust me, I know what I'm doing. I've been there." He said, "I could have gone to Vietnam," and that's what he mentioned to me. I was like, "Wow."

My son, who graduated from the School of Arts and Sciences here at Rutgers University, has his Selective Service card in his wallet to this day. He's now in the United States Army Reserves. Now, he has the Selective Service card in his wallet, his driver's license, and he also has his Department of Defense ID that he carries with him. Today, he's at McGuire-Dix on duty. I hope I didn't go too far off from Vietnam.

KR: Thank you for sharing. We would like to ask you some questions about your childhood.

DS: Yes.

KR: Before we go on, are there questions that you both have?

DS: Avery?

AK: I do not have anything.

DS: Nothing about Vietnam?

AK: There is not really anything that comes to mind because some of the things that you mentioned about Vietnam I have heard in a few other interviews.

DS: What have you heard exactly in other interviews? I am just curious.

AK: Well, this one interview I am transcribing, the interviewee served as a nurse during Vietnam. She mentioned how when she was working as a librarian, she was friendly with a lot of the people who were from Vietnam because most of the staff was Vietnamese in one of the libraries that she worked at. She did mention that in this one particular town, when she wore her uniform, she did not feel that she had to think about it. She did not feel like it was going to be a problem if people saw her in uniform.

DS: Okay.

AK: The people were welcoming. There were a few times where the base that she was on had been shot by the Vietcong.

DS: Oh, wow.

AK: Overall, I think their weapons were pretty bad. Every now and then, there would be a stray bullet hole in a random building, but nothing really hurt them.

DS: That's interesting because with the letters we received and even talking one on one with my Uncle Mack in later years as an adult and talking with Francis recently on the phone, they never mentioned things like that. It's almost like they're trying to protect us, even today. They never mentioned the combat situations. They never mentioned the danger that they faced. Uncle Mack is no longer here, but Francis is. They served together. Francis, to this day, never says anything negative about Vietnam. He never talks about what they faced during combat and they were in combat, but he won't talk about it. That's just a part of him he won't share, which is interesting to hear you to say that. Sometimes, we're watching Hollywood movies, and we see a different picture. Some of the Hollywood movies are very graphic and some are not. Unless you get it firsthand as you did, you just don't understand that war is war and it's not very pretty and that there is a danger there. That's something that, to this day, we don't have in my family because they would never tell us about that. They only said it was the right thing to do. My dad, the right thing to do. My brother, "You have to tell your son to carry his card. It's the right thing to do." That's basically where they left it.

AD: I have a question about your Uncle Mack and Francis. Neither of them seemed to talk about the negative aspects of the war. Did they ever show any signs of post-traumatic stress disorder or develop anything?

DS: Yes, yes. I didn't realize that until--and I'm glad you're asking that question--at Uncle Mack's wedding, it was kind of like the word had been lifted from his shoulder, like he needed this marriage, he needed this wife, and he needed this stepson. When he married Ellen, this beautiful woman, and they married in a country club--I don't know how they afforded that. It was the General Motors Country Club and I guess because he worked for General Motors and I really believe that because of his military service they gave him a huge discount. Most employees at General Motors do not have weddings at this country club. It was always for General Motors executives, but because my Uncle Mack served in Vietnam, they said, "This is for you." It was like they were giving him a gift, this wedding, and they knew he needed it. He did show some signs, and it's like he needed this marriage and he needed this stepson because he never had any children. He needed to feel like when he got this gift of having this wedding that General Motors I'm sure secured for him, it was like, "Welcome home, this is your home, the United States and we care about you and we want you to have a beautiful life and a beautiful marriage." Prior to that, I would say he was a bit of a loner. I don't remember too many girlfriends. He needed the stability of that marriage. He would sometimes, when we would visit him, he wouldn't talk about this at McGuire-Dix, but when we would go down to pick him up and bring him back and sit in the living room with Mom and Dad and my other brothers and sisters, we'd have dinner and then he would get quiet. He'd have this far off look in his eyes, like he wasn't present at the dinner table. His mind was still on Vietnam. I know that now. I'm so glad you asked that question. I remember we were all at the dinner table, we're kids and laughing and talking, having our family dinner, but he would sit back at the dining room table, he would push his chair back like he was taking it all in, but it was like he was so far away, distant. Then, afterwards, we would go in the living room, and we had this one television set.

[RECORDING PAUSED]

KR: We are back on.

DS: We are back on?

KR: Yes.

DS: Uncle Mack, after dinner we would go into the living room. We had one television in the living room. I know that we're sitting there and we were watching, I remember one time, I think we were watching Ed Sullivan. Ed Sullivan was a former journalist, and so Ed Sullivan would this variety show. I know he enjoyed that. We still have Ed Sullivan Theatre in New York. I think on CBS *The Late Show,* that's actually where they tape and that's where they have the live show. It's called the Ed Sullivan Theatre. You can find it in Manhattan, New York. I remember with *The Ed Sullivan Show,* he liked that show because it was a variety show and he would have comedians, entertainers and new acts, The Jackson 5, The Beatles, and he talked about how much he liked that show. I remember he would not watch any war movies.

In those days, you didn't have all the cable channels. You'd have the major networks. You'd have CBS, NBC, ABC, and if you were in New Jersey or New York, you would have channel nine, and channel seven was ABC's affiliate. Channel two, CBS. Channel four [was NBC].

Then, you would have these independent stations. You would have channel eleven, which was, back then, the call letters were WPIX. WPIX would show a lot of black and white movies and they would show war movies. I do remember one time, when he was channel surfing and changing channels, we did come across a war movie, and he quickly changed the channel. I didn't understand why. Probably for him, it was just too hard to watch, but he loved watching Ed Sullivan. I didn't understand. Growing up, we loved watching old black and white movies because they were free. It was free broadcast television. It wasn't like cable where you have to subscribe and pay for the service. It's not like Netflix where you pay for the service. This was free. I remember him switching channels very quickly. Those are two cases where sometimes he's sitting there, he's with us, but then he's not with us and he was very distant.

The only time that he was really, really with us was at his wedding. That's the only time I remember seeing him where he was present and present-day, and he was having so much fun because he had a room full of family in this fancy country club that none of us could afford and this was something that General Motors allowed him to do. It was their way of saying, "Thank you for your service. We want you to have this beautiful wedding with your family." We had family from all across the country, and I know I travelled from Northern Virginia, from Fairfax County. We all arrived there together, and it was just a beautiful day for him. I often think this was probably one of the happiest days of his adult life.

Prior to that, yes, sometimes I just remember he would just kind of move to a corner, and I think he was reflecting on his service and things that he saw and did. He just didn't seem to come to terms with the actual reality of his military service. I never thought he came to terms with that, and I think he kind of put it away in a box. The letters, he never talked about any of that, in his letters, never talked about it. It was always about the people, how beautiful the country is, the food, his military brothers and sisters that he loved working with and serving with. Once he returned home and he was with us, you could see it all over his face. I didn't realize it at the time, but now when you're asking questions and these are very good questions, it gives me an opportunity to reflect and recall and these are the things that I recall and this is my personal observation.

I wish my older brother were alive today because he probably knew more than I did because he was much older and he probably had a better understanding of what Uncle Mack was going through because he could've gone through it as well. There wasn't that much difference in their ages because Uncle Mack, my father was the eldest of nine, and Uncle Mack was probably, he may have been five or six years older than my brother. My brother was right behind him in terms of going off to Vietnam to serve. I think my brother knew more than we did. I'm sure he did because he talked about at the University of Minnesota and the tables with the military and I guess they were doing checks and balances in terms of students that were on campus that may or may not have been called to serve, enrolled in classes. My brother was very clear that if he were called, he would just have to leave. He would just go to the athletic department and explain to them that he would have to go serve and that he knew that he would miss his opportunity as an athlete but this was more important. My brother understood what Uncle Mack was going through. I'm sure he did. In his history courses, my brother took a lot of history courses at the University of Minnesota, and he shared things with the professors there that he didn't share with us as well. These were conversations that my older brother and Uncle Mack had together

because they had sort of a camaraderie, because they both knew they could've been serving, my brother could've served with him. Had the war continued, I'm almost certain that my brother would've been in Vietnam with Uncle Mack and Cousin Francis.

He did have post-traumatic stress disorder, but the only thing he did say was that--and this was maybe two years before he passed away; this had to be 1998, two years after his marriage--I think because he was married and he had a stepson, wonderful stepson, but I think he kind of felt like he wanted his own biological son. We can always adopt. They thought about adopting. I kind of think maybe his wife, I don't know what happened, we'll never know with the two of them and their marriage, I know they were at his funeral, but I think he really wanted to have a child. Now, I'm thinking, based on your question, that's part of his post-traumatic stress disorder, and it may have somehow caused the marriage to end. I don't know. I don't know what happened, but I know that he mentioned that he felt that he perhaps could not have a child because of Agent Orange. Maybe he blamed Agent Orange because he couldn't have a child with his wife. Maybe the wife, maybe she felt like, "Well, you have a son. You have a stepson," but maybe that wasn't enough for him, because all of his brothers and sisters had children except for him. I think he had a hard time dealing with that, and that was probably part of his post-traumatic stress disorder as well, that he couldn't have children. He waited until the '90s, late '90s, before he ever mentioned Agent Orange. He had the opportunity to mention this to us before, but he mentioned it just before his marriage ended and two years before he passed away. That's very sad.

Francis, I think dealt with it. Francis, he's like a comedian, again, the comedy and the tragedy. His way of dealing with it is to make everyone laugh. I think Francis is now living for the two of them, so he talks about Uncle Mack all the time. Then, he will talk about how they served in the Vietnam War together, but he gives us a more glamourous view of that service than Uncle Mack did. Francis [does] not withdrawn. He doesn't pull away. He talks about it in the most favorable terms. He's very positive about it. You have two men that served together, and one that definitely showed signs of some kind of stress and then the other who deals with his stress in a total different manner, very proud, very happy that he's getting married in about six months and just deals with it on a totally different level and will never ever, ever, to this day, say anything negative about the war or the troops. He's very positive. I'm looking forward to seeing Francis again, because last time I saw him was my father's funeral, was three years ago. I'm looking forward to seeing Francis. Even then, Francis, he's so military. He said, "I'm going to be up 0500." He talks in military time, and I'm like, "Francis, everyone here, some people here are civilians." He said, "Well, you know what that means." Or he'll say, "1600, I want to have my food on the table." He's still very military and very funny. He was the first one, in his suit and tie, ready to go to the funeral, very disciplined in that way but very funny. He's dealing with it, and maybe this is why he's able to survive because he's just so programmed. He made a nice adjustment from the military to civilian life. That's a great question. I don't know if Uncle Mack ever did. I think what General Motors did for him was outstanding. I really believe that, and I actually should write them a letter. I think I will.

I went to the Veterans Affairs office in Newark, New Jersey by the way because when my grandmother passed away, I couldn't find the flag. I went there, and, believe it or not, our military has a database that goes way back. The moment I showed my driver's license, and my

name they typed in, Uncle Mack's name. I'm going to go there again and explore the other relatives that I mentioned here today. They typed his name in, and they said, "We gave the flag to your grandmother." They have the date, the time, the time that he passed away. I was amazed, as you are now. They said, "When you return to Alabama, if you can't find that flag, we will present another flag." I said, "Wow, you would do that." They said, "Absolutely." It's the database and the information that they maintain and it's unbelievable. They said to me, "Thank you for your service." At the time, my father was the one who told me to go to Downtown Newark in this federal building, in the same building as the IRS, Internal Revenue Service. They're off to the left, and to the right is the military office. The military office, they are so nice, and before I could exit the door, ten people came up to me and said, "We just want to thank you and your family as military families and thank your uncle for his service." They said, "We especially want to thank your family and your uncle and your cousin for serving in the Vietnam War," which I found very interesting. Of all the wars that my family members served in, they felt it very important to stress the Vietnam War and to thank us. I think in their own way, they probably--and they would never say this and rightly so--they probably wanted us to know that war, no matter what people say, that family members served in that war and that we should honor their service as well, which I thought was very interesting.

AK: Did Mack ever go back to Vietnam? Despite how traumatic his experience may have been at times …

DS: No.

AK: … It seems like he did enjoy it.

DS: That is a great question. He never went back. It's funny, when I was a student at Douglass College, I asked, I said, "Uncle Mack," I was young, a freshman, I said, "I'm taking some classes at Douglass College at Rutgers University and we're talking about the Vietnam War and World War II." I said, "Do you ever think about going back?" It was a quick response, and it was just one word, "No." When I think about, I'm like, "Oh," but, "You would send these great letters." At the time, I didn't think of it until I actually was invited to do this oral history now, and this is important for us as a family too. It was just one word, "No." Now that you ask that question, when I talk with Francis, I think I will ask Francis. I will say to him, "Have you seen the episode of Anthony Bourdain's travels to Vietnam, and would you be willing to take your new bride there and show her the places that you actually saw and the people you met?" I think I will mention that, based on your question. Thank you for asking that, because I would like to know. Since they served together, this is the way I could get an answer from Francis, Cousin Francis, and I would learn more about my uncle through Francis. They went through high school together, elementary school and high school together, and then they served together. The only way to learn more about Uncle Mack, I would have to learn it from Francis and I would have to do it now while he's still young enough to give me the answers. That's a great question. He just said, "No." Without any further discussion, that was it, and I never asked again. To answer your question [said to Anthony DelConte, who asked about post-traumatic stress disorder], maybe that's why.

This is not my area of expertise, but I really think that when he mentioned the Agent Orange issue. I don't know if someone mentioned that to him or just watching news reports, but I really think some type of therapy would've been helpful.

I have to share this with you. My family's from Alabama, and they don't believe in therapists. They just don't. I think I can speak for--a lot of African Americans don't believe in therapy of any kind. It's just not something that you do, and they don't believe in nursing homes. Even when family members return from war, if they needed medical treatment, they didn't even go to a hospital. My grandmother would take care of them, and if you read her obituary, my grandmother, we talked in part one about the quilts that she made in the linings [of coffins]. Well, during the Spanish [flu], she made things for them. That was her way of serving during the Spanish [flu epidemic of 1918], which I learned and it's also included in her obituary. They always felt like as a family, we have to take care of each other. They never depended on the government to take care of them. I don't remember Uncle Mack ever going to a veterans' hospital and he really should have. He should have gone for some type of therapy or something, just talk to someone. I think he should've talked to someone. I don't know if it was Agent Orange. It could've been anything. Or maybe he needed to have a physical there.

I was just recently talking to my tax preparer, who served in the Navy, and he just went to East Orange Veterans' Hospital because he had a respiratory problem, but he did serve in the Navy, so he went to the veterans' hospital. Then, my brother, my youngest brother, who served in the National Guard at McGuire-Dix, he wasn't feeling well, and then he just got letters from the veterans' hospital, [which said] "We just need to see you and make sure you're okay." So, the military, no matter what service, World War I or II or Korean War or Vietnam or Gulf War, they always take care of the military and their family members. My uncle had the opportunity to go for any type of service or treatment that he needed, and he just chose not to. Quick answer, no, in terms of returning to Vietnam, and the other issue was he was not going to a hospital.

KR: To go back to what you said about your grandmother.

DS: Yes.

KR: It says in her obituary that she helped treat people during the influenza epidemic in 1918.

DS: Yes.

KR: This was also known as the Spanish flu.

DS: Yes.

KR: What do you know about that? Did family members get the flu, or was it people in the community?

DS: During the Spanish flu, she did help people then because you really didn't have, there wasn't a hospital that--well, and it's not just for African Americans--you're talking about Lowndes County, so you are so far out in the country, away from Montgomery and that's where the

hospitals were. If you're out in--and I have to mention some of these towns in Lowndes County--Letohatchee and in a lot of these towns, and my mother is from Hayneville, you have to actually go to the city, to Montgomery or Birmingham, which is over an hour and thirty minutes away, to get any type of medical treatment. Basically, you had women--and they were midwives, too; they would deliver babies--you had to actually get help from the women in the community.

My grandmother did a lot of those things. That's a great question; she did. Making the quilts, I think it's in there, you see she made the quilts and the linings, the pillows. With the outbreak of the Spanish flu, she did all of that. She just did amazing things. I think I mentioned in part one that she sewed everything. I think my father said they only went to the general store to get dungarees. We call them jeans. They call them dungarees. She sewed everything, shirts, suits. She made everything. She was very resourceful, very clever, very thrifty. Not only did she make it for the nine children that she had but for extended family and for people in the community. This is just what she did. She loved doing it.

She was a political activist, too. On one hand, they thought she was this nice church lady, because she went to church every single Sunday. Now, my grandfather did not. He believed in God. He believed in country, but he did not go to church with her. [laughter] She went, and she served on all these different committees and established scholarships for people. She was also a political activist. So, people were thinking this woman is so nice and she's a church lady and a farmer's wife, but through that she was able to work as a political activist and no one bothered her, which I found very interesting. She marched in Selma to Montgomery also. Not my grandfather. He was like, "Elizabeth." He called her Elizabeth. Her name was Elizabeth Farmer Shuford. He said, "They're going to take our land away." He said, "If you do that and they see that you're doing that, they're going to take our land. We're going to lose our farm." She was fearless. It didn't seem to bother her. She's way ahead of her time. She just did some outstanding things for the community. Then, Judge [Fred] Bell, first African American judge in Lowndes County, she worked on his campaign. [Editor's Note: In March 1965, three marches took place from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama in support of civil rights. In part one, Deborah Shuford discusses her grandmother sewing quilts that would line the inside of coffins. In the summer of 1965, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee organized voter registration efforts in Lowndes County, Alabama. The county became known as "Bloody Lowndes" for the retaliation that white county residents inflicted upon African Americans residents and civil rights activists who engaged in civil rights efforts. The coffins were used to help people, who were in danger, escape without being detected.]

If she were alive today, she would be working in our November midterm election. She would be doing that, because that's what she did. Even before she passed away, on her farm, in her own home, she was making lunch for one of my uncles, my Uncle Jessie, who lives across the road, because in that area, there are no streets, there's no pavement. It's just roads and just land and family members all down the road, and Uncle Jessie lives directly across. She was making lunch for him, and she was working on other activities for the church. For the senior citizens, she did things with that, with the seniors, and she was a senior herself. She was ninety-two when she passed away but very active, yes. You had another question.

KR: When you were a child and your family would travel to Alabama, what did you learn from your grandmother?

DS: It's funny--and I would never want my mother to feel offended by this--but I learned how to live from my grandmother and how to live the right way. My mother's wonderful. My father's wonderful, but I think my grandmother showed us a way to live. No matter what adversity they faced and they faced a lot in Alabama, she showed us a way that you can live and survive and can help others.

My mother helped a lot of relatives who wanted to get jobs in New York and they'd get off the train in Penn Station, Newark, and they would come stay with us, until they found work and a place to live. A lot of our family members who--and you had a lot of people from the South coming from the South to get jobs in the North during the Great Migrations. There was one in the '20s. There was one in the '50s, as you know, in the History Department. My mother, she would help people, and she got that from my grandmother.

Even my mother said that my grandmother, Elizabeth Farmer Shuford, treated my mom like she was one of her daughters. My mother said that. I called her yesterday and she told me that again. I found out, when my mother's mother was murdered in Alabama, my mother never got over it. I think my mother needed therapy. I thought she was eight. She was six. So, my mother was six years old when her mother was murdered. She was three when her father passed away from an illness, so she was raised by, not long, by her grandmother. My mother's grandmother died in my mother's arms. My mother has her own tragedy. Uncle Mack has one with the Vietnam War. My mother's tragedy is having her father die when she was three, her mother murdered when she was six and then my grandmother that my mother adored, she was old, she was elderly, and when she died, my mother was holding her, trying to bring her back to life. My mother has her own tragedy with dealing with death. I said to my mother, when she called me and we were talking and I told her I was coming here today, I told my mom, I said, "You know, I know that those days and even now African Americans don't want therapy, but I think it's a good idea for you to go into some kind of therapy because you are never going to move forward and you will never recover from death." Each time someone dies, it becomes a personal tragedy for her, even people who aren't related to us. She was never able to deal with death.

What I learned from my grandmother, Elizabeth Farmer Shuford, is that death is a part of life. Yes, you are going to be sad about it. She said to us, "One day I won't be here. I don't want you to be sad. I want you to continue to do the work that I've done." She said, "But it's a part of life." My grandmother had an understanding of life and death, and that's what I learned from her. That's something I can't learn from my mother because my mother cannot come to terms with that. She sees it as something wrong happened to her, starting with losing her father at three and then her mother being murdered when she was six, then, most recently, losing my dad three years ago. My father was eighty, but she didn't see it that way. It's something that happened to her. Then, when my brother passed away two years ago, oh, she just fell apart.

I was his stem cell donor and we all thought that he would have more time with us. The University of Minnesota said that giving him stem cells gave him an extension of life and that

they gave him all the meaningful treatment that they could give him. The University of Minnesota, they were excellent, because they worked with our medical professors here when they faxed my medical records from Rutgers Medical School to the University of Minnesota. We did everything we could do. In fact, it wasn't just me. It was my doctors at Robert Wood Johnson Hospital who were sending my medical records to the University of Minnesota, and they were scanning and faxing these documents, so that we could get the best possible meaningful treatment for my brother. They helped me do it, and so I tried to explain that to my mother. I said, "We all did everything. It's not just me." I said, "I had doctors at 125 Paterson Street who are with Rutgers University, Robert Wood Johnson medical team. They were helping too." They were sending my medical information to the University of Minnesota. We're all in the Big Ten, and they were trying to give them all the information they could share so that they could prepare me as a stem cell donor, which I am today. I said, "Mom, we all did everything." Her reality is the fact that she lost her husband in 2015, she lost her son 2016, she lost her parents. She can't come to terms with that.

My grandmother saw a lot of violence in Alabama, and it never deterred her. It never stopped her from doing the kind of work, that you see in her obituary, that she did. She saw a lot of tragedy, more than my mom. It's a small community in Lowndes County, so my grandmother knew my mom's parents, her grandparents. She knew how my mother suffered, so when my mom and dad got married right out of high school, my grandmother became my mother's mother.

I kind of wish that my mother had not [moved North]. I wish in a way--my mother needed to stay in Alabama. I only thought of this last night preparing for this interview today because my mother, she needed more nurturing for my grandmother than we did. My mother needed to stay with my grandmother, and my grandfather told my father, he said, "You know, Bill, we don't want you to leave and go up North." That's what they would tell people in the South. They would say, "Don't go up North. Stay here." My grandfather said, "You know you can make a living here. You may not get rich. We're farmers, but you can make a living here." My grandmother said to my mother, "Well, maybe you should stay a little longer." My grandmother knew that my mother was a young bride, and that she really had not grown up. She was married with a baby, but she still was a child. Basically, I don't think my mother really ever grew up. She will be eighty-two, but she lost her innocence when she was three and she just never recovered. She said to me last night, she admitted this, she said she will never get over death. I said to her, I said, "You know, Mom, what Grandma told me and I'm going to tell you is that death is a part of life." My mother won't accept it. She can't accept it. I don't think she ever will.

We did have her go to therapy after she lost, not my dad, but my brother. She had to go. She just wouldn't eat. She wouldn't sleep, and this was two years ago, but then she stopped going to the therapist. This therapist in Maplewood, New Jersey was very good for her. He had done wonders with her, so we're trying to get her to go back now. I really think she needs to go back. This is hard to say about my own mom, but she'll be eighty-two at the end of this month. I don't think she ever really grew up because she lost her parents at such an early age. Then, she was getting the nurturing from her mother-in-law, my grandmother, but then they left and they came to New Jersey, to Newark, New Jersey. We would go every summer, and every summer my

mother did not look forward to going and my father did. My father, that was his home, it was her home, too. My mother, the tragedy, it's something about children losing their parents.

I'm bringing this up today and not to sound political because I know we all have different views, but watching the children and the separation of the children and the parents today at our U.S. borders. My mother called me, and she has been watching CNN, MSNBC, all the news outlets that you can imagine. She's watching it, and she's talking about these children being separated from their parents. What she's doing now is reflecting on the loss of her parents and comparing it to these children. She said, "They will never see their parents again." She's devastated. She's getting stressed out over it. I said, "The government will do everything they can to reunite these children with their parents." She said, "You don't understand." She said, "Even a three-year-old who loses a parent, it does something to them." She said, "You don't understand." She said, "I never got over losing my father and my mother." That's the first time she ever said that to me, and that was last night. So, just watching what's happening at our borders with children being separated from their parents, she came up with the idea with me. I said, "Well, they can reunite them." I said, "I'm not in the federal government, I can't tell them what to do." I said, "From what you're saying, that if we brought the children to the starting point of the U.S. border and if we brought their parents back to the starting point of the U.S. border, those children, the two and three year olds, will then walk to that parent. They know their parents." I say that based on what my mother shared with me. I think that we've got over 2,000 children; two nights ago there were children that were flown into New York to LaGuardia Airport. I know that Governor Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio were actually concerned about these children, unaccompanied minors, on American Airlines. American Airlines was not aware that that's why they were unaccompanied minors. We have unaccompanied minors on airplanes all the time.

When I worked for People Express, from Los Angeles to Newark, from LAX Airport to EWR, which is Newark Airport, I would have about eleven unaccompanied minors, but that was through divorce and visiting families on vacation and what have you. These children, it's the separation of parents, so I tried to explain that to my mom, that the airlines know what they're doing and they are doing what is necessary to get these children to safety. My mother didn't see it that way. She saw it as a separation, and then she started recalling her childhood, which kind of threw me for a loop because she had never said that to me. That's when I realized that she has never recovered and that she needed my grandmother more than I did.

When we were going, travelling from New Jersey to Alabama, and my grandmother and I would have long talks on the porch, like you watch in some of these movies, you're sitting on the [porch]. It's so hot, but you have these trees, so you have that breeze with my grandmother's homemade iced tea, the sweet tea, the lemonade. I was a kid, so I loved the sugar then. The lemonade and iced tea was so wonderful. I would sit on the porch with her, and my grandmother would tell me [stories]. She never told me stories about the lynchings and the violence, but my mother would. As an adult, my mother told me, not as a child. She told me once while at was Douglass College. My grandmother would always tell you the best part of living in the South, having family, the extended family. The church and the family was one for her, all of her church members, the church ladies, those big church lady hats that President Obama talked about. He talked about when he travelled to the South, and there was one little old lady in the back. She

said, "Fire it up, ready to go," and he's looking to find, I guess, a tall person, and there's a little lady with a big, wide-brimmed hat, that was my grandmother.

My mother, she lost her parents, and one uncle, she told me, was lynched. Her vision and her thoughts of Alabama are more tragic. My grandmother lived much longer. She lived to be ninety-two. She saw a lot, but in all of that she knew the humanity and she knew that she needed to help her community. There were people, not just African American but Caucasian Americans who actually had less than my grandparents who had a farm. At least they had food. They never starved. My father, before he passed away, and he would always tell us, travelling to New Jersey from Alabama, he was so excited and he would always talk about swimming in the pond behind the house. He never said he couldn't swim at the local pool. He just said, "We love swinging on the tree limbs and we'd jump into the pond. We'd go fishing in the pond," because he had this on the farm. Even though during Jim Crow, they weren't allowed to go to the city pool in Montgomery, it didn't bother him. He never talked about the negative aspects. My mother would. She's always talking about the terrible things that happened in Alabama, and it all stems from losing her parents.

My grandmother never told me about the lynchings. She never told me about the floor boards in her house, and we slept in this house, and the Night Riders riding around trying to take the men and she would hide them in the floorboards. These old houses had these long wooden boards, and you could lift them up. We used to play in those things. We didn't know that where you used to [hide]. [laughter] We thought hide and seek, the games we played in Newark on the city streets, well, we were like bragging to our friends, "My grandmother has this house that if you hide down there, no one will ever find you." [laughter] The kids in the city thought that was cool. We thought it was cool. Those boards would hide people, and my grandmother did that. Well, for her, sharing that with us was for us to have fun; she never told us that she had to hide people there to save their lives. That part, I would get from relatives, once I graduated from college. Once I was in my twenties, they would tell us that part. My grandmother never did. I was in graduate school when she passed away, and she still never told me anything about the violence, about the lynching, about any harsh words that were thrown her way. It didn't stop her from living.

To answer the question again, what I learned from my grandmother is how to live and how to accept life and death, because I didn't get that from my mother and at no fault of her own, she doesn't have that to give. At her age now, if she doesn't have it, and I'm an adult, and I have my own son, so what I teach my son is how to live.

My son loves Alabama. What I did was every year I would take him to Alabama and he loved it there. My grandmother was still alive. My son was ten, so he remembers his great-grandmother and then as an adult, his grandparents. My father was so proud when he learned my son was graduating. Well, my father was here, 2014, and my Uncle Joe, who served in the Korean War, they loved Rutgers. They loved College Ave. Uncle Joe with the military physique was sprinting down College Ave. He's going to be eighty-six this year, so he was in his eighties coming down College Ave, 2014, because he said, "You know I was in the military. I served in the Korean War. I know what I'm doing." He drove from Ohio, and this is four years ago. He's eighty-two. He drives from Copley, Ohio to the football stadium because he wanted to go to the

football stadium. I said, "What are you doing over there?" I'm over on College Ave." "I'll be there in a minute. This is great." Then, he goes, "I know what I'm doing. I served in the Korean War." I'm like, "All right, Uncle Joe." Then, he comes here and he shares stories with some of our alumni who served, and I think he met somebody who may have served with him because we stayed in the dorms on College Ave. Uncle Joe met some men who were his age who were here for the reunion weekend and they shared military stories. Then, he went around the Voorhees Mall and he saw the memorials that we have for our alumni who actually had to leave and serve in World War II. He enjoyed that. Uncle Joe, I learned a lot from him but also my grandmother. Uncle Joe loved my grandmother. My grandmother loved uncle Joe. She loved every family member who served in the military. She loved everyone in the community, and she fed the community.

She was like the mother of the community in Lowndes County. Anyone who was in need, they grew enough food. My father shared this with me. They had more than enough, and my father said during the depression--my grandmother shared this story with me. She said, "Well, people have to take care of people." That's what I learned from her. She said, "If you have an abundance of food, you don't need all of that food. You share with the community." She would put a lot of preserves, because they had every tree you can imagine and she would put them in the mason jars and then she would deliver them. I think my grandfather had a wagon and a horse. I don't think my grandfather ever bought a car, to be honest with you. I never saw him in a car. They would deliver whatever, eggs and preserves, and they would feed people during the depression. She also did that. During every war, she said, "That's what you did." From her, I learned, how to live, how to die, and how to survive. That's something I would never learn from my mother because she never learned that lesson and I don't think she will. Her grief takes over everything, everything. Her entire life, she said to me last night, was filled with grief, and now she's in grief over these children at the border because now she recalls and reflects on her own personal tragedy in her childhood. She can't get beyond that. From my grandmother, I have learned that you can survive anything, the Spanish flu, the depression.

My grandmother, I remember, talking to me when I was in graduate school because I had to do a paper, and we were talking about the crash of the stock market. I called her and she was sharing stories about, "We went through that. 1929, the crash. We went through the depression." She said, "But we're still here" and she said, "As a nation we come together in times of hardship." She said, "You share what you have." She always believed that. From my grandmother, I learned all the life lessons that I have today, and that's what I share with my nieces and nephews and with my own son. I could never have gotten that from my mother, so what I didn't get from my mother, I actually got from my grandmother.

My father understood that, and he knew that even though we were in New Jersey because that's what they needed to do for work, my father wanted to return to Alabama. My mother did not. I think if her parents had lived, she would never have left. My father wanted us to have the connection to family, never forget where we came from. My father never would have told me this, but he knew that what we didn't get from my mother we would always get from my grandmother. My father, at one time, said something to the effect that my grandmother also raised my mother when they got married. They lived with my grandparents.

My father left to come to New Jersey for work. My grandfather tried to talk him out of it, and then just before my father passed away, he had his own reflection on life and realized that he should've gone back, not so much for him, but my mother needed to go back. Things would've been different for her had they returned to Alabama. She needed that because then my father was actually raising my mother the way he was raised because my mother never had that. Here he was with a young bride that he actually had to raise, because she didn't have the nurturing that my father had.

She had the love [of relatives]. Francis, who served in the military, is my mother's cousin. Francis is the youngest of all the Miles who served in the military. They all served in the Army, Ben Miles, George Miles, Clinton Miles and Francis Miles. Francis and his brothers and sisters, they were the extended family for my mother. Those are her cousins, and they tried to get her to move back too. They all understood that my mother never recovered from the loss of her parents and her grandmother. They tried to make up for it, but they had their own families and Francis was in the military. Now, Francis is getting married, and she will go to the wedding. Thank God, she said she would, and he calls her every day. My dad's brothers in Alabama, they call her every day. My dad's sister, the one surviving sister, Aunt Bernice, she lives in Maryland now. She calls every day because they're all worried about my mother. They've been worried about my mother since my mother was a child. They're older, and Uncle Bob is older than my mom. Uncle Bob is in his eighties also, but they always said that she never should have left. My grandmother, she needed a mother, and my grandmother was that mother.

My father understood that in order for his five children to have a healthy life and to have what we needed to survive in this world that we needed my grandmother too because my mother just couldn't give that. It's very sad. My father understood that. We made that trip in that hot station wagon. [laughter] Back then, there was no air conditioning, and it was so hot. My father said, "Oh, you roll the windows down, you'll be okay." We rolled the windows down, and the hot air would come in. The thing about going to the South on [Interstate] 95, you take 95 South and I know the young people take that now because you're going to Florida, but we weren't going to Florida. You want to jump in on that?

AD: That is where I drive, because I am from Florida.

DS: You know 95 South. Well, the thing about 95 South, my father's like, "You can roll the windows down." The point about that is, sure, you can get that breeze in New Jersey and Delaware--we mentioned this in part one.

AD: The heat.

DS: The heat. Once you cross that Mason-Dixon Line, I'll let you jump in on that.

AD: It is the humidity and the heat, and it just comes and it hits you like a wave.

DS: You're out of the North.

AD: You sweat in two seconds.

DS: We're leaving the North and we're going 95 South, and the moment you cross the Mason-Dixon Line, you are officially in the southern part of the good old U.S.A. The heat reminds you that you have now crossed over. We had the breeze while we're on the [New Jersey] Turnpike. You're in Newark and you're at Exit 14. You get down to [Exit] 1, it's still nice and cool. My dad's like, "Roll the windows down." We're like, "Yes." We're playing the radio. Then, we get to Delaware, and it's still pretty cool. We cross that Mason-Dixon Line, and the hot air is coming in and there you have it. My father was like a kid in the candy store the moment we would hit the Carolinas because then you're almost there. In his mind, we're almost there. North Carolina is a huge state. Then, you get to North Carolina, and it's even hotter than it was when you went through Washington, D.C. People think Washington, D.C., it is our capital, but it's also the South and it's a heat that I can't even describe. It's so humid and wet, whereas in Minnesota, my brother loved Minnesota because it's dry. It's a dry heat. My older brother would always brag about being in Minnesota. We'd say, "But you have all that snow." He said, "Yes, but in the summer, we have a dry heat." That last trip, my father believed in that trip to Alabama even when we were in college, we made that trek.

The last time we made it all together was just before my brother got married. That was the last big family drive, and my brother was like, "Boy, this will be my last trip in this car." Taking these cars on these family trips, but it was a great memory. My father understood we needed those trips back to Alabama. My grandmother travelled everywhere on Greyhound. She would just go on Greyhound and visit because once we all were everywhere, in school, my brother's in Minnesota, I'm here, she would just travel to visit people. My grandfather never left the county. I mean, he'd walk everywhere. He died in his nineties. I think he was over a hundred, but he didn't really tell us.

My grandmother believed in being a community activist, getting involved in politics, and we learned from her how to be engaged in your community, engaged in your state, engaged in your country and engaged in life. We learned our life lessons from my father's mother, and my mother learned from her. My grandmother taught my mother how to cook, how to sew, how to take care of my older brother. My mother told me last night, because I had to call her because I knew we were meeting today. My mother said my grandmother, once my brother was born, my grandmother took over. She showed my mom how to [care for a baby]. My mother said when she came to New Jersey--she was happy but she was also sad--she was exhausted because when she was living with my grandmother, my grandmother changed all my brother's diapers, fed them, bathed him, everything. My mother, all she had to do was get up, my grandmother would make breakfast for her and you had a country breakfast. My grandmother would go out to the chicken coops, she'd get the eggs, bring it back, the fresh milk from the cows, the water from the well. My mother ate very well. My mother waited on her, and my mother said she didn't have to do anything.

My grandmother didn't have the luxuries of modern home then. She had the old-fashioned washboard where you wash clothes and you scrub it. Again, I have to go back to Anthony Bourdain, because they were showing Zydeco and people in Louisiana and how they got that instrument with the washboard. My grandmother still had one on the back porch, and so my mother said that's how they washed clothes on the washboard. If you listen to the sound of the

washboard, it's what you hear in the Zydeco music in Louisiana. [Editor's Note: Zydeco is a Creole musical style that possesses blues elements.] I was watching that episode last week, and it was great for me because I have relatives in Slidell, Louisiana and in New Orleans and they still have those washboards. They use it. You make sounds with it, and they're like an instrument. My mother talked about how my grandmother would take my older brother's diapers to the back of the porch and she washed them and she'd go down and scrub. My mother never had to do any of that. My mother, she shared this last night, she said, "Your grandmother was more of a mother. She wasn't a mother-in-law. She was my mother." I said to myself, "And that's why Dad knew it was important for us to go to Alabama and in that heat." It had to be a hundred, but he knew we needed to go.

Every summer, when he worked for the Cioccis at Apex, which my father loved Apex for that reason, these were Italian Americans who believed that in August you shut down. I think this comes from Europe. They would close Apex Gear Company, in Newark, New Jersey, which was not far from the Tiffany plant, Tiffany's with all the silver and gold in New York, they had a plant near Apex in Newark, New Jersey. My father said the Tiffany plant would be open, but Apex [would be closed]. The Cioccis believed in family also. I think that's why he loved working for them for fifty-two years. They would shut the whole [plant down]. Apex Gear, they have all these government contracts, but in August they shut down. Some members would travel back to Italy, and our family would go to Alabama. The whole month of August, they would just shut down Apex. Then, they'd come back.

They were like us, and that's why we became one big family, the Cioccis and the Shufords. They believed in family. You were saying something about your relatives, your aunts and uncles, but if you talk to them, they believe in that family time, no matter where they work. I know with Europeans, they have more vacation time than we have. Maybe the Cioccis, coming from Sicily--they're from Sicily--and I remember Steve Ciocci would take this break for lunch and he said, "Why don't you come and have lunch with us?" They'd have all this food. Then, for Christmas holiday, the Cioccis, when the company was doing well, everybody and their spouses, everybody would have this big Christmas party and they believed in having all this food. Even when Steve was sick with brain cancer, similar to Vice President Biden's son, Steve would invite me to come in and have something to eat. They're always feeding you. Then, when he got really sick and they didn't have the big Christmas party, then they had the food catered in, into the gear shop, but they always believed in food and family.

My grandmother believed in food and family, and she believed in feeding the whole community. When we would leave, those trips from Alabama, the car was already loaded with a bunch of kids, but the hatchback in the station wagon, my grandmother would pack all these jars of peaches and all these different preserves. They had these barrels with apples in it that you go to farmer's markets now, and they have all these apples in these wooden barrels. Well, the back of that station wagon was weighed down. There was so much fruit and vegetables, and the butterbeans I remember, she loved butterbeans. We'd have butterbeans, string beans, collard greens, kale, before kale was popular, because now we find it's a super food. My grandmother understood that, so all these leafy green vegetables were packed in the car. We had plenty of food. We never had to stop for food on the side of the roads in North Carolina and Virginia. We had that. We just left the farm, so we're a farmer's market. My father understood that, too. My

mother would have all this stuff, and she would freeze it. That food would last until the next summer, all the vegetables because they're non-perishables. These fruits and vegetables, you could freeze, and I guess the way they grew things, there were no pesticides, so this stuff would go in the freezer and we'd have it for months.

Those jars, my mother would put in the cabinets in the kitchen. When we'd have toast or pancakes, I remember my father loved doing that Sunday mornings, because he didn't go to church but he'd make a big breakfast. My mother went to church and we went to church, but he was like his father. He would make the pancakes and get those jars down, and we'd have fresh preserves on our pancakes. Then, we'd come back from church, and in the afternoon, it was time to go to Newark Airport and watch the planes take off. We got a big kick out of that. It was free, and I thought about it. I said, "You've got four kids, you needed to do that." We'd go to Newark Airport, watch the planes take off. This was our tradition before we went to Alabama. That's what we did. He'd stop and get the ice cream and then we had to watch Ed Sullivan and then we had to watch *Bonanza* and then we had to watch *Big Valley*. One of the characters, his name is Jarrod and the other one is Heath. These are actors from *Big Valley* western. My mother named her last child, Jarrod Heath. [laughter]

My mother, she has her ways. She named me after Debbie Reynolds because she was so sad that Elizabeth Taylor stole Debbie Reynolds' husband. She told me this. I asked her in college, "Why did you name me Deborah?" My name is Deborah Denice Shuford. She said, "Because Liz Taylor stole Debbie Reynolds' husband." I said, "That's how I got my name?" She said, "Yes." That's why they call me Debbie to this day. My mother, she had a fun way with her, but my father had the more serious side. He was a disciplinarian, because he always wanted to be in the military. It was his way of being in the military, the way he raised us. Then, my grandmother gave us all the life lessons that we needed that my mother needed, that my dad needed and that's what we had. We had a rich, fulfilling life.

[When I was] growing up in Newark, my father loved the city of Newark because he had never really lived in the city until he graduated high school. We would go to the drive-in. Back then, you had these drive-in movies and these lots, and this one was near Newark Airport. I think the old sign is still there, and you'd have these little audio devices that you would put on your window and roll your window up and that's where the audio came in. Then, you'd have these big screens, and that's how we went to the drive-in. Everybody did that in the cities, and some people from New York because they didn't have drive-ins then over there. They would come in over the bridge. People would pack kids in the car. You're in your pajamas. It must have been a dollar or two dollars for a whole family, and we never got out, except to go to the restroom and get ice cream. That was Saturday night, and then the Sundays at the airport.

Then, once we returned from Alabama, then we could go down the [Garden State] Parkway and go to Cheesequake Park and Wildwood and Asbury Park, because back then it was free. My father could load up the station wagon, and my mother made boiled eggs and sandwiches. We'd have the peanut butter and jelly. They would go to the delis. Back then, you could get a pound of any type of deli meat and it was very cheap and a loaf of bread, and she'd make all these sandwiches. She'd make these big containers of Kool-Aid and iced tea and lemonade. Once we returned from Alabama, for the rest of the summer, when Apex was closed, we'd just get on the

Parkway every week and we'd go to a different lake or Asbury Park or wherever my father felt like going. That was our childhood because you're leaving the city. It was so hot in the City of Newark that you'd go down the shore, and that was the thing.

In the City of Newark, it was great because we had the drive-in. We had the airport. We had the train station. We used to watch the trains go by. We thought that was a big thing to do. These were free things that families would do in the City of Newark, all families of all ethnicities. The Portuguese, the Brazilian community in the Ironbound, they're right behind the train station. They'd show up with their kids at the train station. Then, the Irish would come from the West Ward and the Italian families from the North Ward and this is all in the City of Newark, and everybody would go to the train station and they would go to the drive-in. Saturday nights, after leaving the drive-in, or before, depending what movie you were going to, we'd go to Caruso's. They had the best pizza in the world, Caruso Pizza. They have since closed.

Then, my father, on Friday nights, if my mother didn't feel like cooking--and my father cooked too; he was a really good cook--he would go to Branford Place in Newark and we'd get Italian hot dogs. Well, Italian hot dogs were created by Italians in New Jersey. It's a Jersey thing; you can't find that anywhere else. You'd go to Branford Place in Newark, New Jersey, and I wish they were still open. Someone put on New Jersey Memories and Newark Memories, photos of Italian hot dogs, originated in New Jersey. There was a round piece of bread. It was like a circle and you slice it in half, like a half moon, and then they open it. You'd watch this man do this in the window, and he'd slice up all the onions and the peppers and he would put that in and then the potatoes and then the hot dog and then the mustard, delicious. It's a Jersey thing, and this was on Branford Place in New Jersey.

Then, the cannolis and the zeppoles, down the shore. I still get, I go out to a place in Springfield on Route 22, the guys make it they way they would they make it down the shore and they're hot like hot little donuts, like the little munchkins you get at Dunkin Donuts. Those don't taste good. You got to get the zeppoles. The zeppoles, they're hot. They come out of that oil. My father would go pick up some of those, down on Mulberry Street. Newark had everything. You thought you were like Anthony Bourdain, but you would go down Mulberry Street in Newark and everybody was from somewhere else and you would get food from all over the world. My father would get chestnuts there. The zeppoles were hot and he'd have it with his coffee and they would put the powdered sugar on it. When you taste that, you don't ever want to go back to Dunkin Donuts. Then, the bagels, the bagels because of the water that they use. The real bagels, the real pizza, it's here, New Jersey and New York. It's the water that they use to make the bagels here, so when you get these bagels from Dunkin Donuts, those are not bagels.

Mulberry Street, which they now have condos in Newark, they used to have, back in those days, you could get your fresh fish, all of your produce, all of the vegetables, fruits and vegetables, then all of your bakery goods, everything was on Mulberry Street near Penn Station in Newark, New Jersey. My father didn't really have to go to the supermarket. He would get fresh things there because he grew up eating fresh food. Years later, he would go to a supermarket like Foodtown or Pathmark or later years he went to Shoprite, because Mulberry Street, developers came in, because of the proximity to New York, and now there're condos there. Then, in the Ironbound section, the beer factories, when they closed in Newark and most people worked

there. They'd work in the factories, and they would walk home. Well, those are now lofts. A lot of people from New York are moving there and moving into the old beer factories. When we were growing up, you could go to Mulberry Street and you could get everything you needed to eat there. Then, you could watch the trains come and go, come and go, and people watch is what we did.

We had the best of both worlds. We had being in the City of Newark, where it was a global community and you'd meet people from all over the world. Then, we had our home community in Lowndes County, Alabama and our family church there, which we would go to in the summer. My father understood this. We needed to learn about diversity because he didn't have that in Alabama. He understood that we needed that in New Jersey, but then we also needed to have that foundation that my grandmother provided. Between my father and my grandmother, they taught us how to survive because they knew how to survive and they knew how to survive by just living from the earth and never spending a lot of money. My father bought one new car in his whole life. It's a great way to live.

KR: When you were growing up in the Weequahic section of Newark, what were some of your interests? What were some of the activities that you did?

DS: We had the best after-school programs back then, and I guess because they had the budget. I was listening to WBGO radio last night. On Thursday nights, you listen to the Mayor of Newark, Mayor Ras Baraka. He was recently reelected. I was listening to him talk about the budget and that they don't have the money that they had. A lot of the community activists and community members were concerned about having after-school programs.

When I was growing up, I don't know what kind of budget they had, but they had people like Phil Barone, who was also Italian American, and his mother, he never married but he worked for the Newark Public School System and he worked in the recreation department. After school in the City of Newark, they would have programs where you would have all types of team sports, and then it was either Tuesday or Wednesday night, Mr. Barone and his staff of Mr. Purval, Mr. Levy, Mr. Dretzel, Ms. Turner--I remember all their names--because they would have events that kept us busy, so kids didn't get in trouble then.

On a weeknight, and it was a school night, they'd have a skate night and they would open the gym and we would roller skate in the gym. It was either a Tuesday or Wednesday night, and that was a big, popular thing at Chancellor Avenue School in the Weequahic section, which was right next door to the high school, Weequahic High School. It was funny because some of the high school kids would come over to the elementary school so they could skate with us, and it was in the Chancellor Avenue School gym, separated by just an alleyway. You'd have the elementary school, which was the feeder school to the high school. Again, the high school and the elementary school, that's the same school that the great [author] Philip Roth, the late Philip Roth, attended those two, Chancellor Elementary School and Weequahic High School.

It was great in that community because Mr. Barone and his team, they kept us engaged. You either had team sports, all kinds of team sports, the basketball, and it was a K through 12, a kindergarten through eighth grade elementary school, and then you'd go ninth through twelfth

grade right next door at the high school. They would have, after school, they taught us to play chess, checkers, and then they had paddleball. This was all on the playground. If it rained and if we had bad weather, then they would bring it into the gym. Then, one night a week, you'd have the skate night.

Mr. Barone loved Broadway. You'd have this annual play that he would do. I remember one of the first plays that I was in, because you had to be in maybe fifth or sixth grade before he'd allow you to be in the play, because the younger kids, boy, they just had short attention span is what he would say. He did *Pajama Game*, and I remember that was probably the first play that I was in. Then, he would do *Sound of Music* and all these other Broadway plays. In fact, Mr. Phil Barone was the first educator to take us to New York City to a Broadway play. He thought it was important for us to go to this play, and the play I saw was *Purlie* with Melba Moore. Now, Melba Moore was, and she still is, a wonderful singer and actress; she's in her seventies now. Melba Moore got her breakout roll in *Hair*. We go back to Vietnam, and it was actually a play about Vietnam that we could not see. He understood that, but he liked Melba Moore and she was in *Hair*. In *Hair*, some of the Rutgers alumni shared with me, the older ones, in their sixties and seventies, said that play, "They take their clothes off," and that was a first. Then, you go back to Vietnam; they said there were people in the play that were considered draft dodgers, so the military would show up in New York City at that play. I remember Mr. Barone sharing stories about that. He never would take us to that play, because it wasn't age appropriate, number one, and number two, he never let us perform that play. We would do plays like *Pajama Game*, *Sound of Music*, fun things. There was another one with Frank Sinatra, because he loved Frank Sinatra, and there was a play that Frank Sinatra was in and we did that play. There were so many great plays. You'd do this once a year. So, he was well aware of the restrictions, the budget restrictions, but he wanted to bring art to the community. We'd sell tickets, and the money that he got from the play that we performed, he would, in turn, use that money to buy tickets for us to go to a Broadway play.

He's in his eighties now. It's funny because I met an alum here at an event at Douglass campus, who knows Mr. Barone. Mr. Barone, we reached out to him. I just started making phone calls through the old yellow pages telephone books and I found him in Verona. We called him. It's funny, this man in 2009 remembered all of us. He said, "You know, your parents raised you very well and I never forgot you guys." He said, "If you can, come see me. I don't live that far. I live in Verona." The second time I called, his niece answered because he has some hearing issues now because he's in his eighties, but she's making arrangements for us to go visit him. I have a friend in Minnesota now who's an actor who started acting in seventh grade because of Mr. Barone and those plays. He used to act in these plays and now he's teaching in Minnesota. Brian Grandison, who teaches at several universities in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and we're on Facebook together. He's acting in theatre in Minnesota, and it all started with Mr. Barone in Newark, New Jersey. He was doing these after-school programs because he wanted us to be engaged when our parents were at work so that we wouldn't get into trouble.

You had people like Mr. Dretzel, Mr. Levy, Mr. Barone, Ms. Turner, Mr. Purval, they worked for the Newark Public School System. At the time, they would hire these people to do after-school programs with children in Newark. They did it in the Ironbound, the North Ward, the West Ward, it was all over the city. Sadly, they just don't, I guess, have the budget now, but

back then, kids didn't get into trouble because they had us--we were exhausted when we got home--they had us do our homework and do all these activities. Then, you'd go home. You have dinner, and you're ready to go to bed and come back to school the next day.

That's what got my brother into team sports. Mr. Barone got the students engaged in team sports in seventh and eighth grade. I remember playing basketball on the girls' team in seventh and eighth grade because of Mr. Barone, and my brother did as well. I think that's what led my brother to his athletic ability. It started with Mr. Barone in seventh and eighth grade. I also found a picture of my brother, we call him Billy, Willie Fred Shuford, Jr. and a friend Ronnie Smith, standing in the gym at Chancellor Avenue Elementary School on Skate Night. Then, they went to Weequahic together. Mr. Barone helped my brother with his athletic ability. My brother went to Weequahic right next door, and then he ran track, played basketball, played football, baseball. Then, he got a four-year scholarship to the University of Minnesota, but it started in elementary school with Mr. Phil Barone.

His mom, the treat for us when we had the play was we wanted to do the play, but we really wanted to eat pizza. Mrs. Barone, his mother made homemade pizza. Now, we were used to going to Caruso's on Saturday nights. Later, when you're in high school, one kid had a car and everybody piled in and we would go to Caruso's and get pizza. The kids would talk about, they said, "You know what? This is good pizza, but it's not like Mrs. Barone's." She used to make homemade pizza for us. He would bring those pizzas to us, and after the play, we'd have homemade pizza. Like today, kids order--we order pizza. I order from Gerlanda's for my students here at Rutgers. I was telling Tony and Drew, the owners of Gerlanda's, here at Rutgers, about Mrs. Barone making homemade pizza and I had them laughing. They were like, "What are you trying to say about our pizza here at Rutgers?" [laughter] I said, "They're good, but not like Mrs. Barone's pizza." I mean, homemade pizza, and she made them all. She was an older woman then. She would just make this for us--that was her way because she was a mother and a grandmother.

I go back to the family connections in the City of Newark. There were so many different family connections. My godmother belonged to Paradise Baptist Church in the Ironbound section. Well, that church had everybody, because the Ironbound had Portuguese, Brazilian community, African Americans. It had Latinos, Asians, everybody. That church, Governor Phil Murphy spoke at that church after being elected. It's in the Ironbound section, still a very active church, active in the community in the City of Newark and a very diverse church.

When we didn't go with my mom to church, when my mother started working, she worked twenty-five years for the State of New York, she waited until I was in school all day. When I was younger, she didn't want to leave me. My father wouldn't let her leave me because he was a southern gentleman, believed the wife should stay at home, but my mother said, "No, if I work one year and save my checks, we can buy a home in the Weequahic section." That's how we got to the Weequahic section. My father worked three different jobs and supported the family, and my mother's check, working for the State of New York on Staten Island, they used for their deposit for the home, because my father did not serve in the military, so he couldn't get a GI loan like his brothers for a home. So, that's how they bought the home. When my mother started working, then we would go to Paradise Baptist Church in the Ironbound, later on, when my

mother was working full time and I was a little older, maybe fourth, fifth, sixth grade, and I would go with my godmother, who was also from Alabama. That was Mrs. Brascomb, Clevella Brascomb. When she found Paradise, it was just that--it was paradise because there were people in Newark from everywhere and there were people from New York coming. I guess the people from New York, new immigrants at the time, but we didn't call them immigrants. They were just people coming from the Caribbean. People coming from Italy. People coming from Portugal. Ms. Brascomb travelled to Portugal, and I wish I had gone with her. It was a missed opportunity. After meeting people there, she went to Portugal. She was from Alabama. She had never been out of the country. My mother helped her get a job for the State of New York, and then she wanted to go to Portugal because coming from Alabama and meeting the Portuguese people and the Brazilian people, she said, "Oh, I want to go to Portugal now." So, she went to Portugal and loved it. It's like you get all this education when you live in a city like Newark at the time. This is before the rebellion, as they call it. Some call it the riots. Before the 1967 riots and after the 1967 riots/rebellion, you still have a rich community of people from everywhere, even today.

The Ironbound section, people from New York are coming over now, so it's hard to even find a place to rent. [laughter] You've got, as I mentioned in part one, Shaquille O'Neal and other developers developing there, Goldman Sachs investing over six hundred million, Shaquille O'Neal investing seventy-nine million. Queen Latifah grew up in the Ironbound section. That section is so rich in terms of having a sense of community and a global relationship. Paradise Baptist Church was just that. It was paradise because you'd have people from every country you can imagine coming together there and everybody got along. They had some of the southern people, who were Caucasian and African Americans, who would cook all this food, and then you'd have the Brazilians and the Portuguese people and the Asians, Latinos, the Italian Americans, Polish Americans, German Americans, everybody went to this church. Afterwards, you'd have this big Sunday dinner, and it was wonderful. That was part of my learning about having a sense of community and that we're all the same and we all have a shared interest in family and friends. I made so many family and friends in that church; it was unbelievable. Basically, it's called Paradise Baptist Church, but it was non-denominational. Everybody got along and everybody had their own religious beliefs, but they loved it.

Then, I met people in the City of Newark at the Basilica, the cathedral [Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart]. The cathedral, the pope visited, and it's a beautiful cathedral in the North Ward of Newark. If you go online, this cathedral, the Gothic architecture is fascinating. When you go there, there are people from all over the world who come there and they go to that church. I try to go during Christmas holidays because it's so pretty and there are people from everywhere who travel to be there.

Also, I can't forget in spring, the cherry blossom festivals. There are more cherry blossoms, believe it or not, in Branch Brook Park in Newark, New Jersey than there are in Washington, D.C. It was a gift from Japan. I know that today the Essex County Executive, who was a Barringer [High School] graduate, he's Italian American, he holds this--and I think because he knows the importance of having the rich culture--he has the annual cherry blossom festival. They have Japanese performers, dancers and the Japanese food, and they do that every spring. There are more cherry blossoms, believe it or not, in Branch Brook Park in Newark, New Jersey than there are in Washington, D.C. That's another history lesson about that city.

The city, it's over three hundred years old and founded by Robert Treat. Robert Treat traveling, I guess, from New England, and coming to the City of Newark and establishing this great city. It's so rich in diversity there, and even after everything the city has gone through, I still think it's very important, so much so that they're trying to get Amazon, a big corporation, to come. Amazon has taken a really serious look at the city because you've got Port Newark. You've got the train station, Penn Station, Pennsylvania Station, and you've got the airport, its proximity to New York, and so it's like a gem.

Then, you have the diversity. I know my father loved this about it is that he had, he didn't go on to college, but he said this to me. He learned so much about people and diversity by taking that train to New Jersey and getting off in Newark when he thought he was getting off in New York. [laughter] Most people coming who ended up in Newark from the South, they thought it was New York and so they'd get off and the first stop is Pennsylvania Station, Penn Station-Newark. It's not New York City. They'd get off there. A lot of folks from the South ended up living and working there. Once they got there, they loved it so much that they decided to stay. So, that's a really funny story but true. My father, when he got off there, he had one aunt and one uncle, he thought they were in New York, but they weren't. They were in Newark. Then, he never left, just going back every year. When Apex Gear Company would close in the summer, we'd go back to Alabama, and for holidays, and, sadly, sometimes for funerals--that was important, too--and for weddings.

I think I had the best of both worlds. I think my father had it right and my grandmother had it right, and we needed both. We need Alabama and we need New Jersey. Even to this day, I lived in the Washington Metro area for twenty years, but I always knew I would come back to New Jersey. Once I'm really old and walking with a cane, then it's time to go to Alabama and sit on the porch and have that sweet iced tea. At that point, it wouldn't matter if I had a lot of sugar by then. I'd be too old to be concerned about it. It would give me that sense of coming full circle, and so my plan is to go back because we still have the farm and so my plan is to go back to Alabama and retire and grow all the food and do what my grandmother did. I would give it away. I think that would be a great way to honor her.

As far as the politics, I just don't have the kind of savviness that she has in terms of politics, but I think in retirement I would do more. I think it's important to follow elections and do what you can and volunteer. I think in retirement, if I can, if I'm healthy enough, I'll do the politics and I'll do the community activism and I certainly plan to grow food on that farm and give it away because there's a need for that. We're losing so many of our farmers, and I think it's important. I will have a pension and hopefully some Social Security, so I'll be able to do that in retirement. As far as making a living as a farmer, I think it's a very hard way to live, but it's a rich way to live and a healthy way to live. Hopefully, one day I'll get to experience what my grandparents did for so many. It was great for us, and we're here today.

KR: I am going to pause.

DS: Sure.

[RECORDING PAUSED]

KR: You want to tell us about Military Park in Newark.

DS: Yes.

KR: Specifically, the Wars of America monument.

DS: I remember as a little girl, we went there, and I was fascinated by it. Wars of America monument, that's what it was. The name of the gentleman again, Wars of America monument. [Editor's Note: The Wars of America monument is located in Military Park in Newark, New Jersey. In 1926, Gutzon Borglum (1867-1941) designed the Wars of America monument. In addition to designing other monuments in Newark, Borglum also served as the lead designer and sculptor of Mount Rushmore.]

KR: We will have to look it up.

DS: It should be on there. He designed Mount Rushmore. A lot of people don't realize how important that monument is.

AD: Gutzon Borglum.

DS: That's it.

AD: Gutzon Borglum.

DS: How do you spell his name again?

AD: G-U-T-Z-O-N.

DS: Gutzon.

AD: Gutzon, yes.

DS: I think he was German. [Editor's Note: Gutzon Borglum was born in Idaho, when it was a territory, to Danish immigrants.]

AD: Yes, Gutzon Borglum, B-O-R-G-L-U-M.

DS: That sounds German. Well, remember, Ellis Island, they changed everyone's name, so that might not be the correct spelling. [In] Military Park, [there is the] Wars of America monument and also the Lincoln Statue in front of the courthouse. That statue was designed by him, too. That's one of the few statues of President Lincoln, and it's huge. When I would leave high school, we'd walk down the hill, you'd catch the bus there, you're right in front of Lincoln. We used to say that, we used to make jokes about, "President Lincoln is watching us. We need to go

to school," if we were thinking of playing hooky. [Editor's Note: In 1911, Gutzon Borglum completed Seated Lincoln in Newark, New Jersey.]

You're walking past St. Benedict's [Preparatory School], and President Barchi here at Rutgers attended St. Benedict's. He has a connection to Newark also. His father worked in the Ironbound section, too. At that time, he was in St. Benedict's Prep, which was elementary school for him, before his family moved, I think, to Pennsylvania. He has that connection, too, because he brought that up.

At the Newark Museum, they were doing a thing to honor Dr. Clement Price from the Newark campus. They have a place--that President Barchi had [dedicated and] the Board of Governors approved it--called Clem's Place. Dr. Price was the Newark historian but also a Rutgers professor. He was from Washington, D.C. but fell in love with Newark. You want to talk about Forest Hills section, that's where he lived, and that's where a lot of prominent people lived. The art deco homes from the '20s, it's a fabulous section, not far from Military Park. You can't even afford a house there, and it's in the city of Newark. A lot of people from New York are waiting for someone to sell so they could move there. The whole street, it's got the mature greenery, trees, beautiful landscape and the homes. That's where the wealthy people in Newark at the time, in the '20s and '30s and '40s, that's where they lived, and it's called Forest Hills. [Editor's Note: In 1969, Dr. Clement A. Price (1945-2014) began teaching history at Rutgers-Newark, and in 2002, he became a Board of Governors Distinguished Service Professor.]

KR: Tell us your experiences when you were young going to the race track at Weequahic Park.

DS: You guys are bringing back so many great memories for me because I forgot about that. That was a lot of fun, the harness races. Military Park, the statue, it's funny because when you're a kid, you just want to jump on the statue. You want to slide on it, but my father said, "You can't touch that. That's to honor our military." You know my dad, who always wanted to be in the military, but he loved that statue. It's Wars of America monument and I hope I'm pronouncing the name right, I know you guys are trying to help me. Gutzon Borglum designed the statues, and what the statues represent, you have figures, these statues, these men in the cast bronze, they actually represent all of our wars that we've engaged in, in the U.S., and they're all in uniform and they're representing different branches of the military. It is such an impressive statue, life-size figures. When you look at the way he designed it and they're all together, as if they're in a group hug and when you look at it and you look at the different uniforms representing the different wars, it's the Wars of America and that's what it shows. It's just sitting in Military Park. For years as a kid, I thought it was just something we could jump on and play on. My dad said no. Then, the pigeons would have their droppings on it, and you would see people in Military Park go over and take out tissues or whatever they had to wipe off the droppings from the pigeons because this was sacred ground. Then, the horses were life-sized horses. It's in the middle of this park. A lot of people in their daily travels, they don't realize the importance of this monument. We have this monument in New Jersey, in the City of Newark, in the heart of Newark, downtown Newark in Military Park, and that's why it's called Military Park. Then you had this designer, Mr. Borglum, who designed the monuments in Mount Rushmore. People don't realize, this man, of all the places who could have designed the Wars of America monument, it's in the city of Newark, New Jersey. I guess there's probably a reason for that, I don't know what

it is. Historians and scholars are probably having conversations about it. It's a part of Newark that's been revitalized.

There is a former resident [insert name] of the City of Newark who decided that that monument is great, that park is great, and he wanted to attract tourists to that park. You think about tourists, you think about families and you think about kids and he said--and I can't think of his name; hopefully I'll find it later on--that when he was growing up, they'd have these old-fashioned carousels and the horses were made of wood and they were handcrafted, hand painted. This man must be very, very wealthy because to actually design something like that, you'd have to spend a fortune. I went on to the PBS Archives to watch old footage, and this was a show too, recently, in New York on I think it was WNYW, Channel 21 on my cable system. It shows some of the original carousels in the country. Well, this man said he wanted children today to have that experience of the old-fashioned carousels, and many of them were taken apart probably in the '60s and '70s. I want to say maybe five to eight years ago, this gentleman, who formally lived in Newark, decided to bring it back and he has it in Military Park. If you go to Military Park, there is a line that you wouldn't believe with tourists who go there to view the monument of the Wars of America, to bring their kids there to see the monument, but also to get on a carousel. If the monument is too graphic for the kids, they could always take them on the carousel.

The monument is very important. I didn't appreciate it as a kid. As I said, we just thought it was something--the horses, we wanted to jump on the horses there. There's no horses in the City of Newark except at this monument. I remember we wanted to jump on it, and my dad would always say, "No, you can't do that. This is representing our country." Then, people were cleaning it off, just average citizens. Now, as an adult, I get this sense of pride that we have when you see this monument. I guess the artist, the original artist, Mr. Borglum, he probably felt the same way. This was his way of honoring the service of our military members in every war that we engaged in as a nation. It's a beautiful monument, and Military Park is beautiful now. It's a family park. I remember President Obama and Mrs. Obama were taking their kids to a lot of the National Parks because they're national treasures. I don't think we do enough of that. I think we have these parks and these treasures, and we don't even know they're there. They're National Parks and treasures. They're free and it's a history lesson. You can take your family members and friends there, and you get a slice of Americana, I think, and a slice of life. I think it's important to go there. Military Park certainly does that.

During Memorial Day, I actually went there. They had military families there, and they had a complete ceremony there right in Military Park. I don't know if they've done that every year, but the current mayor and the council members decided to bring that back to the city. I think they wanted to bring back a sense of pride to the city that they lost during 1967. Now, you have this sense of pride, and you have this military service that they do on Memorial Day and Veterans Day and they do it at Military Park, which I think is wonderful. When I was there, they had a lot of chairs there for a lot of tourists, and a lot of tourists--I heard people chatting behind me saying that they didn't realize that the statue, the Wars of America monument, was actually in the City of Newark, which the irony behind that is this is the same city that had the so-called 1967 rebellion or riots, if you will.

In the midst of all that and the destruction on Springfield Avenue and Clinton Avenue where the riots destroyed a lot of the stores, what's standing in the city that was never destroyed is the Wars of America monument. There was a war going on in the City of Newark in the '60s that culminated in the rebellion/riots, of 1967. While that was going on, you had this monument honoring our military servicemen and women, and no one touched it, which I find very fascinating. There was all this destruction and devastation, and there was a war going on between U.S. citizens versus U.S. citizens. The state troopers were there; the National Guard were there. If you look at archival footage from documentaries, such as those on Public Broadcasting System and others, you will see the civil unrest in the city, but I think it will be great to show that footage but also show Military Park, that it's still there and the monument is still there. It's kind of ironic, I think, that you've got a war between citizens and you've got this monument in the middle of the city, and it's still there. Today, it's a peaceful place. In spite of what happened in the past, this monument is there to represent civility, not so much war, to let us know that life goes on and that now in that park you have this monument but then you also have a carousel with children laughing and playing. Children are the future, and I think that's the beauty that lies in that park.

KR: What are your recollections about July 1967?

DS: Well, I'm so glad you said that because we moved across Weequahic Park, from the housing projects that were built after World War II. They were built so that people could move into these housing projects. That was really the affordable housing of that day, and everybody lived there. I remember in the one that we lived in, Dayton Street, which no longer exists, everybody lived there, Polish Americans, Italian Americans, Irish American, Portuguese, Brazilian, African Americans, people from the Caribbean. There were also new immigrants from the continent of Africa, so African-born Africans. We all lived in these affordable housing units that were high-rise apartments. The slang term for that was projects, and if you hear rappers today talk about, "I grew up in the projects." Well, these original projects were built before they were born. They were built after World War II, so that families could save enough money to buy their own home. We were living there.

My dad was working for the Cioccis, an Italian-American family, and they were buying their homes for their families, and they told my dad, "It's time for you to get out of the projects." They said, "We want you to buy a home for your family like our home." My father was working for them, and he gainfully employed with this small family that came from Italy. They came with nothing, and they worked hard and bought homes. They told my dad, "It's time for you to buy a home." My mom said, "We need a down payment." My dad said, "Well, I can't get a GI loan because I didn't serve in the military like my brothers." My mother went to work for the State of New York, and she worked on Staten Island. A lot of women then, a lot of African American women in particular, would leave New Jersey and carpool, before it was popular, and they went to Staten Island, where they were hiring women to work with people with developmental disabilities. This was called Willowbrook, and it was on Staten Island. It was a state institution for people who had developmental disabilities. These women would commute together. My mother did it for twenty-five years. [Editor's Note: Willowbrook State School operated on Staten Island from 1947 to 1987. Children with mental disabilities attended the school. It was known for its many scandals, and in 1972, the reporter Geraldo Rivera

investigated the school. Since its closing, some of its buildings were taken over by the College of Staten Island.]

The first year she did it is so that they could get the down payment for a house, and that was in 1966. She must have gone to work for them in '65. [In] '66, we were crossing Weequahic Park. Now, Weequahic Park, huge, beautiful park, and the landscaping was done by the same brothers who actually did the landscaping for Central Park, the Olmsted brothers, I believe that's their name. They were architects from New York, from Manhattan. I remember the park was so pretty. My father drove through the park, and when you're a kid, you think this park is so large, but today I realize it wasn't such a far drive. We thought it was the longest drive, because we were excited about owning our first home. Now, granted, our grandparents had a home in Alabama, but we didn't have a home in New Jersey--we had a home, but we didn't own it.

My family in Alabama believed in owning your own home, your own land. Initially, you would rent. We had relatives who were sharecroppers, but they were sharecroppers initially and they saved money to buy their land, like my grandfather. My grandparents were very happy when my parents bought their house. We're driving through Weequahic Park, and we're like, "Are we there yet? Are we there yet?" My father drives out of the park, up Chancellor Avenue. Now, Chancellor Avenue was a very wealthy avenue, and there were a lot of doctors and lawyers who lived on Chancellor Avenue. When you exit the park and you come up Chancellor, you see all these beautiful homes, one-family homes, and so we thought we were going to have one of those homes. "We were like, "Is this it? Is this it?" He said, "I'll tell you when we get there." My father drives up Chancellor, past Weequahic High School, past Chancellor Avenue Elementary.

If you take Chancellor Avenue in that direction, you're starting to go towards Irvington and Hillside. In Irvington and Hillside, the homes were more modest. Believe it or not, the homes on Chancellor Avenue in the Weequahic Section were beautiful, where the wealthy people lived in the City of Newark. Other wealthy people lived in Forest Hills in the City of Newark. So, we finally get to our street, and they're not beautiful, wealthy homes. They're modest homes, but they're homes. It was a neighborhood where teachers lived, firemen, police officers and a lot of other workers, office workers.

KR: What street?

DS: It was Schley Street, and that's S-C-H-L-E-Y. Every time I spell it for someone, they're like, "Is it Shelly? Or is it Slipley?" I said, "No, it's Schley." [Editor's Note: Schley is pronounced "Schly," rhyming with fly.] It's funny because I met a woman at Douglass years later, her husband grew up on that street.

We get to this street between Lyons Avenue and Chancellor Avenue, and Lyons comes from the old Lyons Farms, when Newark was a farming community, which was fascinating and a whole other story. My father's driving, and we're like, "Are we there yet? Is this it?" Finally, he pulls up to this house that needed a lot of work, and we're like, "What?" He's like, "This is it?" My father, he was so excited about it. He's like, "This is it? We're home." It was like one of those movies from--what is it? Those vacation movies with ...

AD: Oh, Chevy Chase. [Editor's Note: Chevy Chase is an actor and comedian. He is known for starring in the *National Lampoon* movie series as Clark Griswold.]

DS: Chevy Chase. It's like the Chevy Chase.

KR: *National Lampoon*.

DS: *National Lampoon*. It was like that. We're in this car. [laughter] It's like *National Lampoon* when I think about it now. We didn't know what to say. We were speechless, and my father was so happy. My mother was happy. Of course, she had her picnic basket, all the food and everything. We didn't want to get out of the car because we were expecting--we watched too many Hollywood movies on channel nine and eleven and we watched all these movies and we thought we were going to have this big fabulous house. As kids, you don't realize there's a cost for that. These are expensive houses. We thought we were having something in Bel Air or something like the Fresh Prince of Bel-Air, when he goes to Uncle Phil's house. We thought we were going to have that kind of house. [Editor's Note: *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* was a television series starring Will Smith that aired from 1990 to 1996.]

It was a modest, two-family house. For people who are not from the Tri-state area, they usually call them multi-families, but in New Jersey and New York, we call them two-family houses because you have a family on the first floor and the second floor. We get out of the car, but what really fascinated us and then we had a different point of view was the long driveway and we had a garage and we had a backyard and that's what my father wanted--and a front yard.

We didn't have that in the apartment, in the projects, as the rappers call it, the projects. Well, they were called affordable housing. The rappers today say, "I lived in the projects," like Jay-Z lived in [the Marcy housing project in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn]. We all came from projects. Historically, people don't realize that in this area and probably other parts of the country that everybody came from the projects. Before, most people--and most immigrants--lived in urban communities, especially coming through Ellis Island and you're in New York [or] New Jersey. Well, in New York, they lived in tenements. Suburbs, that was a concept after World War II, and many people didn't move out there until the late '40s, after World War II, and the '50s. Really, the majority of people lived in urban areas because that's where they worked and they could walk to work from their homes. In New York, they lived in tenements and they worked in factories and they went home to the tenements. In New Jersey, you could work in the Ironbound section in the beer factories, and you would walk home to some of the housing that they had there, or you'd take a bus to the projects. The projects were all over the City of Newark, and you'd have the Irish, the German, the Polish, the Italians, and I could go on and on. Everybody worked and lived in the housing, the affordable housing, of that day.

We got to this house. My father said, "This is our house." I remember it was a huge house, because two-family houses are huge. You've got two stories, and then it had an attic and a basement. The outside structure, it needed a paint job, that's why we were disappointed and it wasn't like a mansion from the old black-and-white Hollywood movies and it wasn't palatial. Even from the westerns that we watched, [like] *Bonanza*, it wasn't like the Cartwright's ranch. [laughter] It needed a paint job, and it was grey. It was a dark grey. My father said, "Oh, it'll be

okay." My father always [was] very optimistic. He said, "Oh, it just needs a little paint and a new fence," which he eventually did get and he painted the house green and white. We had a nice fence. When we arrived, we didn't see it that way, but then we saw the backyard and the trees. It reminded us of Alabama--and the rose bushes, the front yard with the azaleas and rose bushes. When you're a kid, you don't really appreciate it, but you love a backyard. My father bought an old-fashioned wooden picnic table, and so we would have barbeques there. That was great, the first year, 1966. It was wonderful, and I was very young then. I was the youngest at the time, of five children. Actually, I was number four. This was before my younger brother was born in '69. This is '66, and the city is thriving. My parents saved enough money to move into this community.

We were the first African American family on the block of Schley Street. This block had, two doors away, there were these school teachers, but nobody was African American. Because we grew up in New Jersey, we didn't know the difference, and I think my mother was like, "What are we doing here?" because maybe she still had this fear about you can't live certain places because they grew up in the segregated South. My father was always optimistic, and he was like the Cioccis. They were like, "We work hard. We buy a home. We support our families. We can go anywhere." So, he, this is what he thought, and my mother always wanted to buy her own home because her relatives, like my dad's relatives, always owned their own homes. They may have been little, modest houses in Alabama, but they owned them. Eventually, they would buy them. She was glad to be a homeowner, but I think my mother was kind of uncomfortable at first because we were the first African Americans. I always thought that she always had, years later I reflect on this, that she always had this fear that we would being mistreated or something would happen, but the neighborhood was great and that was until 1967, until the rebellion, also known as the riots, and that just changed everything.

The people on the block were nice to us when we first moved in. They made us welcome. I remember playing with the kids on the block. There was no racism. Nobody even talked about race, and then we had this rebellion and that was 1967. We had only been there one year. From 1966 to '67, it was great. We could go to school. We went to Chancellor Avenue School, and these were schools that you walked to the schools. All the kids came out at the same time. We'd walk up the street and we went to school together.

Then, the riots changed everything. When the riots happened, we couldn't leave our homes. The city was under siege, for lack of a better term. We had a curfew. I remember this as a little girl. It was frightening. We were told you couldn't come out after dark. Of course, my mother's terrified because now she's thinking, "Oh, this is just like Alabama," which it wasn't. As a child, because I was the youngest at the time, I didn't understand what was going on. I just always followed whatever my parents said, and I knew we couldn't go out after dark. My mother, because she was working in New York, she then had to show her driver's license to get access to come back home. She and some of these women worked in New York. They were working at an institution, so they'd need people twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, like any hospital would. My mother, at the time, started working at night so she could be at home with us in the day. My father worked during the day. He would be home when we came home from school. My mother would have dinner ready. Then, she and these ladies would carpool--when they didn't check your seatbelts--they might have had six or seven people in the car, and they

would go over to New York to work. Well, when the riots happened in '67, when they were trying to come back into the city, they had to show identification. All the kids, we had to stay in. It was frightening. It was really more frightening I think for people who were not African American. Even to this day, I'm trying to understand what happened because we were all getting along in the city, and because I was so young, I didn't understand the politics of the city then. I think there was civil unrest because there were promises made that were not kept.

AD: The Great Society? [Editor's Note: The Great Society was President Lyndon Johnson's plan of social programs in the 1960s.]

DS: Sorry?

AD: The Great Society.

DS: Yes, yes. We were all getting along up until 1967. We lived on that block in '66 and everybody got along. Kids, we all played together. We all went to school together. We didn't see it coming, and then overnight, a year later, we couldn't go out and play together. We couldn't even go out of our homes. My mother, when she came in--it must have been the National Guard. They were all over the city. If you came into the city from either Hillside, which borders on Newark or Irvington, or the Oranges, because there's a movie about the Oranges, all the Oranges in Essex County. If you came in from any of those cities, Elizabeth, they all border on the City of Newark. If you look at Newark historically, all these towns were part of Newark at one point before they became separate townships and municipalities. You could not come from the Oranges, East Orange, West Orange, South Orange, Elizabeth, Irvington or Hillside or Harrison or from New York City and come into the city. They had a curfew, and if you were caught there, you could probably be arrested. I know when my mother and these ladies were coming back from Staten Island, you've got to come from the Goethals's Bridge, through Elizabeth, into Newark. That was fine, but once they got to the border of Elizabeth and Newark, then they had to show identification proving that they lived in the city. My mother, of course, was a homeowner, trying to make sure we could keep our home and working, so she showed her driver's license and she was allowed [to come into Newark]. Then, she had to show her identification from Willowbrook Developmental Center, so they knew that she worked in Staten Island but lived in Newark, New Jersey, and that's how they allowed her to go home. Nothing happened to my mom.

Then I remember--this was the weirdest thing--some people were saying, and this was probably on the news but I was so young, that they were saying something, and I think I was seven, because I know I started second grade there, and they were saying, "You have to put signs in your windows," so that your stores would not be destroyed. They were writing signs and it would say, "Soul Brother," S-O-U-L. "A Soul brother owns this store." I asked my mother, "What does that mean?" Even though we would go to Alabama, it was always black and white in Alabama, and oddly as it is, there was an understanding in the South that goes back to before the Civil War and during Reconstruction, where there's an understanding between black and white people in the South. I remember some older aunts saying, "Everybody knows their place." I didn't know what that meant until I was in college. So, my mother knew what that meant. The civil unrest in 1967 was that people in the city felt they were mistreated. They weren't getting

the jobs they thought they should get. They weren't getting the housing. Of course, we didn't understand that because we had a house. My mother and father bought a house, so we didn't get it. People were putting these signs in the window, and around Springfield Avenue, a major thoroughfare in Newark with all these nice stores, [which] my parents used to shop in those stores and they were allowed to shop in those stores and it wasn't segregated. So, my parents didn't understand why African Americans would riot and burn down these stores, because this was their first time that they're able to shop in any store. My father loved going to Mulberry Street and Springfield Avenue and Clinton Avenue. They were allowed to go in these stores. They weren't segregated stores; anyone could go there. When they were torched and burned down, I don't think my parents understood that because they were coming from a different mindset, of coming from Alabama where you weren't allowed to shop in certain stores because of segregation. Now, you have the opportunity to go to these stores, and what do you do? You burn them down. So, that was my father's thinking. My mother, on the other hand was like, "Well, maybe they were mistreated." I think it comes from her own mistreatment growing up in Alabama. My father never saw it that way; my grandparents and my father didn't see it that way. They saw it as people are destroying their own communities.

KR: What did the sign "Soul Brother" mean?

DS: It meant that you were black and that you owned that store. Some people were putting the signs in the store to protect their property. There was a Chinese restaurant--we loved that restaurant. My father would buy takeout from there, that was another thing, sometimes just to have a take-out meal. It was called China Hall. China Hall was on Chancellor Avenue. It was not far from Philip Roth's house, a few blocks away, and it was right on Chancellor Avenue. The owner of China Hall put "Soul Brother" in his restaurant, and that's the only reason they didn't smash the windows and burn it down.

So, "Soul Brother," it's a '60s term, and, for people today, it meant that you were black and you were soul brother. It goes back to James Brown lyrics and his songs that the rappers now sample. [In] *Soul Power*, there's a James Brown lyric, the lyrics go, "What you need is soul power, what you want is soul power." James Brown song, *I'm Black and I'm Proud*. James Brown, the late R&B singer, would say, "I'm soul brother number one." That was James Brown. He was a great entertainer, artist, rhythm and blues, who grew up in Georgia, very poor, bought his own radio station years later, gave scholarships to college students of all races. He was called a soul brother. African Americans, as a form of camaraderie and fraternity, would call themselves soul brothers, and this is a very '60s term.

Even in the Vietnam War, my Uncle Mac would call the troops, they were the soul brothers. They were soul brothers, too. So, you had the black soul brothers, but then you had the military soul brothers because they were fighting together. See, in Vietnam, everybody is a soul brother. Uncle Mac called them his soul brothers. These were people of all races.

In the riots and the rebellion, a soul brother was just that, a black man, not so much black women, but it was just black men, soul brothers. They didn't say, "Soul Sisters." They said, "Soul Brothers." Merchants were putting this in their window. A lot of the rioters weren't even from Newark. They were troublemakers. I learned years later, from Dr. Clement Price, the late

Dr. Clement Price from the History Department at Rutgers in Newark, told me this when I returned to New Jersey in 2010, that a lot of these people saw on television--see, this is the power of television. Just like with civil rights, you saw in the South, the hoses and the dogs that were set upon civil rights workers. Well, you also saw footage of people rioting in Newark and in cities like Watts and Los Angeles and Detroit. In the '60s, you had all these riots going on, but what they don't tell you is that a lot of the people who would see this on television thought it was a free-for-all and they would come into these cities, so they could steal. The footage that you look at now, you can get this online anywhere, you can Google it. You see people carrying out television sets that they didn't pay for. My father, he said, "You're not going out of the house" to all of us. "You're not going to go to any stores," because my parents paid for everything; my grandparents, too. They never even got credit anywhere, my grandparents. For safety, we had to stay in. Meanwhile, the China Hall restaurant, we were so glad they didn't destroy that because that was my brother's first job. He worked for them washing dishes. These people, we knew the owners of the China Hall Chinese restaurant, very nice people, but this man knew from television that the signs were in the windows that said, "Soul Brother." He put that in his window and that saved his restaurant. A lot of other merchants did the same thing. The Jewish merchants did it. If you have that sign in your window, people thought it was black-owned. Now, anyone with any common sense would know all these stores were not black-owned, but I think it was very clever of the merchants to do that. Only the stores that had those signs in the window, those were the ones that weren't touched. China Wall was one of them, and that was my brother's first job. It was right around the corner. It was maybe two blocks from Philip Roth's house. My brother worked for them. They gave him a job washing dishes when he was a teenager and he wanted to work there. He had to be thirteen.

KR: Do you remember seeing National Guardsmen on your street?

DS: Yes. I'll tell you what they were doing is they were patrolling the streets for safety and checking identification. The more that I think about it now, there's two sides to every story and I know some people would probably say, "You don't know what you're talking about," but I was there. I remember that the National Guard, you could hear the jeeps, and my brother said to me, "That's the same jeeps." He said to us, "You know the sound of that jeep? It sounds like the same jeep that came down our street when they took the neighbor out, the military police." It was the same sound a few years later. My brother, I recalled him mentioning that to me just before he passed away. I remember seeing, because I was always curious--and I knew I shouldn't have done this now but because we weren't supposed to go out--I didn't go out but I did go down. We lived on the second floor of the house, and my parents rented out the first floor to one of my mom's friends, my godmother. She was from Alabama, too. I remember going down, and I kind of opened the front door to the porch. I looked out, and I could see the National Guard on the street. This is terrible, and I think now I should never have done this because it's very dangerous. When they drove down the street, I kind of went out on the porch and to my right is Lyons Avenue and to my left is Chancellor and I looked out towards the right and I could see them at the end of the street patrolling with guns. That frightened me. I ran upstairs, but I never told anyone. I didn't tell anyone until today. I actually ran up the stairs, and I was terrified because I didn't understand. I was seven years old. Everybody was getting along, and I just didn't understand what was happening. I knew I couldn't play with my friends because we couldn't go out of the house. Once it got dark, everyone was in. There was a curfew. When I

think about it, it's very frightening. It's actually like we were having, as an adult, I think it's almost like we were having a war in our own country and it's a civilian war. While that happened, there were a lot of restrictions.

This happy place, this happy home that we had moved in 1966, changed within a year in '67. A lot of my little friends, my childhood friends, the parents--and now I understand why--they started to move out of the city because it wasn't the same city and for safety. Now, you've got these troublemakers coming into the city causing trouble and causing civil unrest, and their safety was at risk.

I was at Homecoming at Rutgers, this had to be last year, so this was 2017. We were over at the football stadium, and I meet a man who was from--it's funny, you talk to Rutgers alumni, the older ones who grew up in the '50s and the '60s in Newark and the '70s, they share these stories with me now--and he told me, he said, "You know, I'm from Newark." He said, "I grew up there." He said, "My parents moved." He said, "But you know what? All of my fondest memories were there." He said, "I grew up there." He said, "I went to school there, kindergarten through twelfth grade." He's a Weequahic grad, and he lived on Goodman Avenue and he named some other streets. This is Cal Schwartz, and Cal Schwartz on Facebook, to this day, he always shows photos from his early years growing up in Newark. We talk once a week, and he's active with the Rutgers Alumni Association. Even on Father's Day, he showed Goodwin Avenue in Newark with his extended family, and then he showed, Father's Day, a photo of himself--and they did the same thing, they'd go down the shore--a picture with Cal and his dad at Belmar Beach. Cal's memories of Newark, like mine, are very fond memories, and Cal's classmates, they all feel the same way. There are a lot of people who grew up in Newark, who no longer live there and were frightened by the riots, but they have annual reunions, like Mr. Barone from Chancellor Avenue. They meet in other parts of New Jersey, but they get together with people that they met in the City of Newark because that's what they knew growing up and lived and worked in the city.

Tony Zecca, who's a graduate from Rutgers also, said to me, he's a Barringer graduate, from Barringer High School. Tony said, "A lot of people are from the City of Newark, but they're afraid to say so because when people mention the city there's always a negative response, for some reason." He said how happy he is to see the city making what we call a comeback now, so that people can go to Military Park and go to Branch Brook Park to the Cherry Blossom Festival and go on the carousel at Military Park and go check out the Wars of America monument and go to the Veterans Courthouse and see that great statue of President Lincoln, all these treasures, and go to the Ballantine House and the Newark Museum, go to Penn Station and look at all these murals. A lot of music videos were shot in Penn Station and the airport and then a lot of movies. We talk about the Wars of America, Tom Cruise filming *War of the Worlds* in the Ironbound section, and Beyoncé filming on Halsey Street. We have to give credit to the New Jersey Film Commission for working with producers and Hollywood studios and bringing them back to the city, so people are getting a whole new perspective of the city now--and the students. [Editor's Note: *War of the Worlds* is a 2005 film starring Tom Cruise and directed by Steven Spielberg. It is based off of the 1898 novel by H.G. Wells.]

Students at Rutgers University in Newark, our campus at Rutgers-Newark is listed in the *US News and World Report* as one of the most diverse campuses in the country. There's something to be said for that. Then, you've got our law school there, and President Obama was there in the fall of 2015 at the Rutgers Newark Law Center. Then, you've got the medical school there, and they're doing great research there, cancer research there, on Bergen Street. Bergen Street suffered during the 1967 riots, and now it's making a comeback, thanks to the University and what Rutgers is doing there with medical treatments, medical research. They're doing it on Bergen Street, and in 1967, Bergen Street was totally destroyed by the rebellion, the riots. Now, it's making a comeback, and people are going there. People are coming from all over to go there for medical treatment. The same city that showed such promise and then showed such devastation, it's now showing promise again and bringing people back. It's really interesting.

For me, the whole year of 1967 was frightening and very sad, because we had only been in our new home for one year. Overnight, it became a very sad place, and so we couldn't wait until the summer, the next summer, to go to Alabama because we wanted to--everything was, the smoldering, the dust, the devastation. A lot of the restaurants were destroyed. A lot of the places that we used to go and shop for clothing, destroyed. The downtown area, a lot of the stores were destroyed. Then, people started going to other towns to shop. If you didn't have a car, you'd have to take the train. I don't know what the cost would have been for families to do that. I know we had one car. It was just sad because a lot of the stores were gone, so where do people go to shop?

Then, I met another [alumnus], Herb Hersh, who graduated from Rutgers, was very active with the alumni, had a store on Springfield Avenue. He had a hat store and I just met him through the alumni association here.

KR: He did an oral history with us.

DS: Oh, did he?

KR: Yes.

DS: Herb told me--I'm so glad you brought up the 1967--Herb said, "Well, you know, Debbie, I had a store on Springfield Avenue." He survived, Herb Hersh survived the 1967 riots, and his store survived until he retired. I think he said it was very recently that I think he closed his store on Springfield Avenue, but he was one of the merchants who decided he was going to stay and stick it out. Herb was one of those merchants. I met him at the alumni association here at Rutgers. I just met him through an event. Again, he had a store on Springfield Avenue in Irvington, and we talked about the riots, too.

It's funny how you meet people years later--Cal Schwartz, who is also retired, he majored in pharmacy. Cal told me that he's a writer now. He writes a lot of books, and he's writing books about Newark, like Philip Roth. He said to me, "You will always have a connection to the City of Newark." I said, "Oh, that's interesting, Cal." He said, "No matter where you go, no matter where you roam, you'll always have that connection." He said, "If you read my Facebook posts and if you watch my program, New Jersey Discover," he said, "You will always have that

connection." He still has that connection, even though he graduated from Weequahic High School, went to elementary school in Newark and high school, his parents, after the riots, moved to Maplewood, but this was after, he was out of high school then. He said, "You will always have that connection." What he does now, he writes about it and he does a TV show on it and he said that he's so happy, like Tony Zecca, they both say they're so happy to see the city making a comeback. It's funny because we all have friends and relatives at some point, who lived in the city. Isn't that true?

AD: Yes.

DS: You said you had an uncle.

AD: An uncle, yes.

DS: Yes.

AD: It's a big city.

DS: It's a big city, yes, and you were just at a hockey game there.

AD: A hockey game.

DS: Yes.

AD: The horse tracks, too.

DS: The horse tracks, I'm glad you brought that up. The race tracks at Weequahic Park, the harness racing, that was a big deal at Weequahic Park. Weequahic Park, my father used to go fishing there with us. In the winter, they had the best hills. It was so well maintained, even after the riots. My brother had this one sled when we lived in the projects, in the affordable housing. From that projects, we could walk from Dayton Street, walk into the park. I mean, Dayton Street faced the park, and it also faced the cemetery, Evergreen Cemetery, which borders on Newark and Hillside. My brother used to scare the dickens out of us when we looked out the window, you would see, from one point of the apartment, you'd see the cemetery and another part you would see Weequahic Park, from a distance. Weequahic Park, we could walk there, and my brother had this one sled--and these were the old-fashioned wooden sleds with the metal on the bottom--all four of us, when we were kids, could fit on that sled and we went down the hill so fast. I wanted to, as I say, hang with the big boys, and I was very little then. I had been five or six, and I remember as a five year old and six year old, I always wanted to go. One year, I went and I fell into the snow, and I was so cold. I was shivering. When my dad arrived, I was so soaking wet, but I wanted to stay and have fun. I got sick after that. I actually got pneumonia. I remember my father actually put me in the car, in his car, and turned up the heat full blast to warm me up. I still have that memory of having fun in the snow at Weequahic Park. That was the winter.

Then, of course, the spring and summer was going fishing. You could go fishing in Weequahic Park. My father loved to do that because he grew up doing that as a boy in Alabama. We'd go fishing with my dad. The horse races, because the only time we would see horses is in the summer on my grandfather's farm, except at Weequahic Park, so thank you for bringing that up. The harness races and the race track, and, oh, it was so exciting. It was fascinating. It was so fast, unlike the horses on my grandfather's farm that were just grazing in the grass. These horses had the speed that it's unbelievable. People were cheering, and it was very exciting. I remember my father would buy these pretzels and these chestnuts and popcorn. It was entertainment. It was just very nice. Weequahic Park was just a fascinating park. The picnics, because before buying our home, we were used to a farm, where we had plenty of land and picnics on my grandparents' land, but when you're in this high-rise apartment in the housing projects, you don't have that luxury, so you have to go to the park. We would go to the park for picnics. Everybody's family would go to the park and have picnics in Weequahic Park. You'd have that sense of community in Weequahic Park. You'd have the racetrack. In the winter, you would go with the sleds, but you had a sense of community. All this was before the rebellion of 1967.

So, 1967, for me, was a very dark time in my childhood, a very sad time. It just kind of, when I think about it now, it breaks my heart because it's like this was such a great city, and just that one summer of rebellion and riots just destroyed everything. I think the city has been trying to recover ever since. Even to this day, when you talk to people, "Oh yes, that's the city with the riots." I don't know when that will die out, but that was a dark time for me in my childhood. I had a wonderful childhood. The only time I remember being frightened was during the Newark riots, only because the restrictions. The only guns I ever saw were hunting rifles that my grandfather had, but he never brought them out. I mean, he had them in the house. They used rifles for hunting in Alabama, but he never used them. I actually saw men with these rifles on our street, in our neighborhood, in our section, the Weequahic section, and so that to me was very frightening. If I thought they were hunting like my grandfather, it would've been different, but what they were doing is they were holding them in a position that they might have to use it against people, if that makes sense. So, to me, as a child, that seemed to be very frightening.

'67, for me, and I don't usually, unlike my Uncle Mac, I don't like to talk about 1967 because that's probably the only time in my childhood that I don't recall being very happy, being very guarded and very concerned. When I think about it now, it's like, "Wow." That's the one blight that I have, but it didn't do anything to harm my childhood. I had a wonderful childhood, but when people mention the riots, it takes me back to 1967 and it's like a jolt in me and something to me is guarded, that, "Oh, please don't ask me. I don't want to talk about it." I think now, when I look at it, it's good to talk about it because it's good to have an understanding of how did that happen? Why? If we learn from that, hopefully it won't happen again because we see now a lot going on in our country and in our nation and we don't want that to happen again. We don't want to destroy our cities because that's where we have our art, our history, and our culture, and so we don't want to destroy that. If we could have people come to the table and sit down and have a conversation, maybe we can avoid that or maybe that's a lesson that I've learned, a lesson that we can learn from 1967. That was a very dark time for me as a child, and I was a young child. For my brother, he's five years older. He was older, and he could probably process more of that than I could at the time. For me now, it was a disappointment because after moving into this home in '66 with the backyard and the trees and rose bushes, and now you've got stores that

were burned down and then the city looks terrible, dirty, dingy, and just the smell of the burning, the fires. You go from smelling trees and flowers to the smell of some of these stores.

Later on, the city just had a stench that I can't even describe, probably almost similar to what I smelled when I lived in Fairfax County and it's funny--I'm so glad you brought that up--because then, [on] 9/11, when I was living in Fairfax County, ten minutes from the Pentagon, and that smell from the burning of the Pentagon was the same smell that I recall smelling from 1967. It was the same smell. It was a very foul, smoldering stench that is hard to describe. The last time I smelled that was 1967 and then the next time I smelled it was 2001, when I lived in Alexandria in Fairfax County, ten minutes from the Pentagon, and that smell, when we would drive on [Interstate] 395 in the Washington, D.C. area, it was the same smell. That's the only time that I started to reflect on 1967 is after 9/11 because of the smell, the stench, the smoldering of smoke. From my condo, watching that smoke reminded me of the smoke and the smell in the City of Newark, because after the riots, when, I guess you would say it was contained, for the lack of a better word, and when my father would drive to Mulberry Street and that's when we passed Springfield Avenue and some of the areas that were burned down, it still had that smell. Then, years later, and even today, you see what we call riot gates, I think that's what they call them now, merchants before 1967, storefront windows [were] beautiful. Then, after the 1967 riots, they would have these gates, these grates, that they pulled down. [Editor's Note: On September 11, 2001, terrorists hijacked and crashed American Airlines Flight 77 into the Pentagon, killing 184 people.]

KR: The metal.

DS: The metal, yes.

KR: The metal gates that come down over the windows.

DS: Kind of like the accordion gates, they come down over the windows.

AD: In Elizabeth too, yes.

DS: In Elizabeth, too? That was a result from the riots. Before that, we remember during the holidays, the store windows were open to everybody, accessible, nicely decorated. After the riots, it's like closing time, they cover the windows. To me, it's like we lost something. We lost a sense of community and security because of 1967, just changed, forever changed everything. Thank goodness Bamberger's Department Store, for some reason, I don't remember that being destroyed or demolished. Bamberger's was later acquired by Macy's Department stores. They had windows, and we loved to watch the windows that were decorated for the holidays, like in Manhattan with--back then there was Macy's and Gimbels and they were in competition in Manhattan. You had these department stores in New York that would, during holiday times, which they still do today, the windows, because you were window shopping. The term "window shopping," even if you didn't have the money, that was another thing we did, we'd window shop at Bamberger's. We didn't really shop there. My parents didn't really shop there. My father shopped on Springfield Avenue, these little mom-and-pop stores, like the one that Herb Hersh had. The women bought their hats there, and Herb shared with me, all these church ladies, that's

where they bought their hats--and the men--before the riots. Even after the riots, Herb stayed, and people, that's where we shopped. If you had money, you would go to Bamberger's, but we did the window shopping there. For some reason, of all the little stores, and a lot of the stores in other, just all the stores on Springfield Avenue, Bergen Street, Clinton Avenue, were destroyed by the riots, but Bamberger's was not. Even when I graduated from high school, some of my high school friends got jobs at Bamberger's.

There was one family, like the Cioccis, there was another family, it was Mr. Simon. Mr. Simon was from Jewish immigrants, another family that came, opened stores, and store number one was in Brooklyn. Mr. Simon had the cheapest shoes you ever imagined. This is before Payless Shoes. Mr. Simon hired my father, and my father would have three jobs. He would work on the weekends selling shoes at Simco Shoes, named after the Simon Family. When I was in high school, when my sister, Sandy, went off to college, she's two years older, before she went to college, they hired us as cashier girls at Simco Shoes. This was on Market Street and Broad Street in Newark, New Jersey. We got some of our first jobs there, and we got it because of my dad. They thought my dad was a southern gentleman, and they decided to hire us. That store no longer exists. There's a Payless Shoes store in the same location, which is funny. Back then, they had these shoes called *peau de soie*, which is French. They're fabric shoes. Later, I learned, I asked one of the French professors here at Rutgers, I said, "What is *peau de soie* actually?" He said, "Where did you learn that?" I said, "I worked for Simco Shoes in Newark, New Jersey, downtown," when people shopped downtown and during prom season, the women would buy the shoes there and they were made of fabric and they were called *peau de soie*. He said, "Oh, they're just fabric shoes," as you said. I said, "Well, my father used to dye those shoes and they would dye the matching handbags." This is something that I think goes back to the '50s and '60s, when women would go to the proms and events, they would have their shoes match the handbags. My father used to do that on weekends, work there and dye shoes and sell shoes for them. So, that was part of growing up in Newark, too. That was my second job.

The first job was a mom and pop store, across the street from Weequahic High School, called Aquarius Dairy Bar, and they sold Italian hot dogs and then they created their own Italian hamburgers, which was similar to the Italian hot dogs but you put the hamburger in there. They had this store right across the street from Weequahic High School, and my two older sisters worked there. When they went off to college, they hired me there. I worked there and it was my first job. Then, from there I went to Simco downtown, because it was closer to my high school. When I was living in the Weequahic Section, I could walk up Chancellor Avenue and work at Aquarius Dairy Bar for Donald and Sister Marie. Sister Marie was a Muslim. They had this family store, and her son, we called him Brother Fred, Brother Fred was working there and he was at the law school at Rutgers at the time. I didn't know it then. He was taking courses at night to become a lawyer, and he worked there, too. This was directly across from Weequahic High School, and that was my first job.

Then, when I started high school, I didn't go to Weequahic, I went to Arts High, which was downtown, and it was off I guess it's University Avenue, which, directly adjacent to Saint Benedict's, right down the street from Rutgers-Newark. At the time, I didn't know I would go to Rutgers. I just went to Arts High because it was a performing arts high school, college prep, and

it was a magnet school. Students from all over the state would take art or music because it was such a great school, and that's where Melba Moore [actress] went.

KR: I am going to interrupt.

DS: Sure.

KR: I am going to pause.

DS: Sure.

[RECORDING PAUSED]

KR: This concludes the oral history interview with Deborah Shuford. We will continue in the near future with a part three.

DS: Thank you.

----------END OF TRANSCRIPT----------

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