

INTERVIEWEE: Oliver Gross

INTERVIEWER: Derrick Holcomb

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Holcomb: Hello, my name is Derrick Holcomb, and I'm at Turner Tech on March 22, 2002 to interview Oliver Gross about his personal history. Can you please tell us your name?

Gross: My name is Oliver Gross.

H: Could you spell it please?

G: O-L-I-V-E-R G-R-O-S-S

H: How did you get that name?

G: My mother when I was born and I guess I got out of the hospital, she said- when I learned it- she said, "Your name is Oliver Gross." That was the name of my grandfather- my father's father- his name was Oliver Aaron Gross.

H: Who are your parents?

G: My parents was (Laura) Gross and (Wilever?) Gross. My mother maiden name was (Laura) Jenkins. She was born in a town in Georgia called Wrens- W-R-E-N-S- Wrens, Georgia and my father was born in Stapleton, Georgia. My mother and my father have passed away.

H: Sorry to hear that. Describe the family you were born into. Your siblings and (birth daughter?), your aunts, uncles, people who helped raise you.

G: Well, my mother's grandmother--my grandmother basic raised me a lot when we lived in Wrens. I lived sometime with her, but basically I've always lived with my mother and my father. Always lived with my mother and my father. We lived a lot of different places. My father was working with a construction company that put up power lines all over the county. Well, there were many homes during that time- the early-30s- who did not have electricity. They used lamps- kerosene lamps- for lighting. They didn't have any electric stoves, they used wood stoves. They didn't have refrigerators, they used ice box. You buy ice and put it in this box. There was no television. I don't think we--my mother must have got a television 1949 [laughs] when we got a television. That was a couple years before I finished high school, and I finished high school at Carver High School [school bell rings] in 1951.

H: Nineteen fifty-one?

G: Fifty years ago, almost fifty-two.

H: How old are you now?

G: I'm now seventy-one years old. I'll be seventy-two August the thirty-first.

H: Are there any stories about your family that you would like to smile about? That you remember?

G: [laughs] Yeah, I want to tell how my father got away from the Ku Klux Klan.

H: Can you tell us about it?

G: We was living in Georgia in a little town called Stapleton and my father was a farmer- we was a sharecroppers. Sharecropper usually share. Sharecroppers in comes time to

settle up--settle up and you had to sign the release papers saying that what information on the papers was correct. It's how much my father would get- money-wise- how much the lady would get and he disagreed with her and said, "It's not right." So, that was in a sense a no-no because you're talking back to the white woman. About two o'clock that morning (for a day?), I heard a noise outside and I got up and I looked and I called my mother and father and outside there about five guys on horseback with the hoods and the torches. The Ku Klux Klan, one of the most dreaded groups that you could ever probably encounter because during that time they was hanging young boys and doing all kinds of things with mens and everybody else, you know? And they called my father and said, "Come out." They knew my father had this shotgun- this double thirty. They know--they know he had it. So we went out the backdoor and went to my grandmothers house and like I said that's one of those kind of things, my grand-- my father stood up against these guys and to me, that in itself was something that I'll never forget because it was a dreaded group that feared by everybody all over the country. In this country, Ku Klux Klansmen, everybody knew about them, the Riders of the Night, and my father stood up to them. I didn't get a chance to see him for about four years but as it turn out they didn't kill him, they didn't get him, they didn't do any harm to him; he got away just like we got away.

H: When did you meet up with him again?

G: In 1939. Met him in 1939, then this was '36, I guess, '39. I (?) met him again, he was living in Biloxi, Mississippi working for this company and that's when my mother and I went to visit him and we left and I came back and then I lived with my grandmother in this town called Wrens, which is about thirty-three miles south of Augusta.

H: Can you describe Wrens?

G: Wrens was-- [laughs]. Wrens was a little town where we lived and my grandmother lived and it has situation there where as a black, you could not go into the front door of any of these businesses. You couldn't go in the front door. They had what they called a 'back alley'. Had a alley where everybody parked their wagons- very few people had cars, my daddy had a A-model Ford- but you would have to come in the back door to shop. You were permitted to go out the front door on your way out, but you couldn't go in to a front door of any building. That was the law. They had a theater there. We sit up in the balcony and the whites sit down in the seats below. You couldn't sit down there, we had to sit upstairs and they wasn't all talking movies, they was picture movies where the writing would go along to the bottom. See that's important by being in school, if you couldn't read you didn't know what was going on; you just sitting there looking at peoples fighting and--and the speaking of words with silent movie and they had the writing, the writing was telling you what it was that they was doing. So that meant you had to go to school. You had to learn how to read the best you could because you went to the movie, you didn't know what was going on, you know what I mean? You would go to church. We had our own church, they had theirs, you know? And there was no using their bathrooms, you couldn't use it, we had to use our own coloreds and whites, you know, you didn't go into the (?) one when it says 'White', you couldn't go in there, you had to go the one that says 'Colored'. Had drinking fountains, that was (practically all?) down south- the water fountains. You had to drink out of the one that said 'Colored' and they drank out the water that said 'White', you know? And that went on--went on for years. I remember in the Orange Bowl out here, we would go to the football games and we would sit in the end zone- the only place you could sit was in the end zone- and they had a rope

in the center of the end zone; we was on one side [chuckles] and some whites was on the other side. They kept it segregated, even at the football game (end?). See, University of Miami (and them?), University of Florida (and them?) and you know, they're nothing like that. As years went on, I went to--after I finished high school, I went to FAMU, a little football and ran track and at that time, FSU was a girl's school, there was no boys there, there was no boys at FSU in '50--'40--'48, '49, '50, '51, '52. It integrated in '53 when they got boys, there was no boys there. The white boys went to school at the University of Florida and white girls went to school at FSU for girls. They segregated themselves. Girls couldn't go to the University of Florida, they had to go FSU.

H: When did you move to Miami?

G: Nineteen--1943. We came from Fort Myers, Florida. I went to school for a while at Dunbar High School in Fort Myers. We came here and we were living in Coconut Grove in '43.

H: [inaudible] Wrens, Georgia?

G: Huh?

H: Was it different from Wrens?

G: Yeah, it was a little different than Wrens and different in such where in here in Coconut Grove they had a lot of Bahamian people- they had a lot of blacks. Blacks lived with blacks then, they didn't live all over. They lived in Coconut Grove, you was in Coconut Grove where blacks lived. Certain parts of Coconut Grove, blacks didn't live. On certain streets now where blacks live now, it was whites. Just like Miami, Overtown was the center for black culture, that was in and everything that you needed. High school was there, restaurants was there, hotels was there, museums, everything that you, a child,

a person wanted: movie theaters, doctors, lawyers, everything, pool rooms, I mean, it was a community within itself. Big, magnificent Mary Elizabeth Hotel, one of the nicer hotels you could ever see with doormens and valets, and stuff and valet your car and all that and barber shops that cut your hair and newspapers, you know what I mean? Down the street was nice restaurants, nightclubs and stuff. See, then, the black entertainers, all the great entertainers then Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, his (?) you name them. Buddy Johnson and his sister Ella Johnson, Arthur Prysock, you name them they would entertain on Miami Beach. But they had to come back Overtown to live. See, they couldn't live in a hotel, Sammy Davis and all those, they couldn't live in a hotel. They entertained at these hotels and had to come back Overtown to live in the hotels.

H: So the blacks had they own little areas?

G: Yeah, had their own. Overtown. Overtown was our own area. That was our area.

H: Do **you** remember anything about the Civil Rights Movement?

G: Well, basically, when I was in--while I was working, but then it started in Selma, Alabama I knew some of the people. I didn't an--well, anticipate they had different riots and marches here. They had some in Tallahassee because Tallahassee was segregated and you couldn't go downtown to McCrory's and stuff and (**here Miami?**) you had to-- Burdines and some places you couldn't go in there and do anything and shop and do-- try on clothes in rich department stores and a lot of the stores they have now was not there then. See? And, like, in Burdines, like I was telling a young fella before, the land that Burdines sits on, you notice that all the Burdines stores in Miami you've been in contact with, they're here, they move someplace else, they move someplace else. But the only

Burdines store that has never moved is the one downtown Miami because that land was owned- where Burdines on- by a black family from Coconut Grove.

H: What do you recall about hearing the bombing at Carver Housing Project in 1961?

G: The bombing?

H: The bombing of Carver Housing Project in 1961?

G: Well, in 1961, you got to think in terms you had a lot of--it--had a lot of veterans, young blacks coming out of the army. They knew warfare, they knew how to fight, they knew how to plant bombs, they knew how to sniper, they knew all these kinds of things. See, before when they had the riots here--riots here it wasn't organized like the one in '61 because they got these young guys on top of roofs, sniping (from?) trees and plan the situation, you know, but that in itself, I guess to some degree it-- it worked to a certain degree but then violence creates violence and then if you don't have all this-- the ammunition stuff that you need, nine times (?) a lot of times you gonna really get hurt or get killed because you gonna have to go some place and get it and the people who got it, has it [chuckles] and they're not going to let you have it. But the fact of it is- now is- the most important thing- the ammunition now- is young men young women needs to stay in school. It's up-most important because if you don't stay in school and you don't get an education and you don't try to improve yourself, no one else is going to do it for you.

H: Did you graduate?

G: Yeah.

H: Did you go to college?

G: Yeah.

H: What college did you go to?

G: Florida A&M. Well, then it was FAMC- Florida A&M College, Florida A&M College- FAMC. Now it's FAMU because it's a university. It became a university same year that University of F-- FSU became a university in '53.

H: In college, were you politically aware?

G: Well, I do but we knew about some things was going on. You had to be political, you living in an atmosphere with segregation. You couldn't go downtown and eat at these McCrory's and all the various eating places in Tallahassee. During that time, we could only go down to the train station. We couldn't go Tennessee Street where FSU is. We couldn't go Tennessee Street. We would leave the campus, go down Adam's one block off, south Monroe another block over and walk south Monroe up past the capital. You ain't--you couldn't go through the capital. You had to go up and (**facing** the capital?) and down into Frenchtown. And I guess the only store that we got any service out of and still do is **Nic's Toggery**- that's where [chuckles] **coach Gaither** would send the fellas to get shirts and a bunch of stuff there. **Nic's Toggery** that was on Monroe.

H: How--how old were you during the Martin Luther King era?

G: Well, during the Martin Luther King era I guess I must have gotten married since-- well, I didn't really (anticipate?) in all them marches they had all over the country but being that they had a lot of activities here that was done in itself that created a situation that betterment blacks, they had a lot of blacks-Dr. Simpson, Miss Range, and a lot of pastors and things, Simpson and peoples that worked here in Miami and are working in Miami who brought about a certain amount of changes here because they had golf courses we couldn't play on. You-- like I say they had a stadium with-- they had a rope in the middle, and then they had the Biltmore Hotel which would have veterans out there,

we couldn't play. And then we played--basically all the football games, activities were centered around Dorsey Park, in Dorsey Park. They played at Dorsey Park- the football games at Dorsey Park. And in Carver we had a little make-shift stadium out there in Coconut Grove--Grove--Coconut Grove Park that Carver High School played. They had a little gym, but we didn't have no air conditioning in school. (Basically?) not really much heat and you didn't have-- like they had all this showers now and all the lockers then and all the fancy clothes they wearing and all the hair do's and stuff and all the boys wearing this pants I guess all right, but the only thing that bother me is that they hanging off their behind. See, that bothers me. See, because you got to create an image for you, see? What someone else does doesn't have anything to do with you. If he- another boy you know- wear his down, why should you do the same thing? It doesn't do anything for your personality. It's how you feel about what you want to do. You say, "Well, my boy, my man, you know, he did it. You know, my man do it." What do he know? Does he do anything that you want you to do? You got to think about, "What's important to me?" And the different kinds of way they express themselves, certain wor--words that you--I remember when I was over there at, (the high school?). That word they use. I didn't--I didn't--I didn't like that word. I didn't like that word. I made sure every child that was in my presence they (?) Okay, where have I saw them. On this side or wherever, that word.

H: What word?

G: That 'N' word.

H: Oh.

G: I didn't allow that word, at all. Kids would come into the classroom and sit down. And I'll make them get up and go outside. And they was, "Why we outside, Mr. Gross?"

Come in, you didn't say good morning. You can't come in this room and not say good morning, come in and (plop?) down on the seat. You want me to be respect you, then I-- you gotta respect me! Miss so-and-so and miss so-and-so, so it's just that simple. If I respect you, you got to respect me. You can't come at me no other kind of way. I ain't gonna hurt nobody with no jive talking you gonna do to me. You know, because I've been out there, I know all these guys, I've been in the street before, I've been to jail. So ain't no big thing about it. Thing about it is if you go to jail one time, you never want to go again. I don't care if there's a holding cell because they get a record for you and they keep it on you and it never--you'll never get rid of it because the people who gonna rid of that record for you is not you. Period.

H: So you're a man of respect?

G: Yeah, give a man respect. I respect you, you respect me. If you can't respect me then you need to be in some other class some place else, not in mine.

H: Did you participate in any demonstrations or registration drives or sit-ins?

G: Well, we had some registration drives because during that time you couldn't vote and, and I was working at Pan Am and I remember peoples trying to vote and register they would say, "Who want's to work overtime?" You never work overtime when you gotta vote. There's no time to work overtime, you go and vote. You registered downtown. You would get a registration card in your pocket. It's something you could be proud of because you had not always done that. I remember when we worked at-- I worked at Pan Am, I started out there in 1963 and [chuckles] they had the 'Coloreds' and the 'Whites' signs and the whites sit on one end of the restaurant in the building down the hall and the blacks sat on the other side. You clean both toilets, you could use this one and you

couldn't use the other. And as time went on, it changed some to where they took all this signs down. Taking signs down has its presence but it doesn't do any good if the person doesn't change. See, if you and a white guy have been at odd all along about those signs, it won't mean anything until the two of you reach a point where y'all agree and you become acquaintances- not friends- acquaintances where he can respect you and you respect him be it Puerto Rican, Cuban, I don't care don't make no difference. See, because when I was in school over here, I didn't believe in that boy or that girl. I don't believe in that. Either I need a name, because somebody slap you, knock you down, and beat you up, you come tell me, "Mr. Gross, that boy hit me, that bright skin boy with curls in his hair, that white boy with this and that, Puerto Rican boy", that ain't--that's not telling me anything. I don't know what you talking about. You got to give me a name. I got to know your name. And like I said I'll let a kid-- I took a kid out my room because he told me he wasn't gonna read. He said, "Mr. Gross, I'm not gonna read." I said, "What?" He said, "I'm not gonna read." Class full of students, wrote a referral, sit him on their side, let them do something with him because he can't come back over there again. He brought his mother back and the mother said, "Well, you put my son out and he this and he that." I said, "What did he tell you? He's a man tell him what he told me." "He told me you said he gonna put him out he room." I said, "Well, ask--ask the kids what did he say yesterday or before yesterday, he said 'Mr. Gross, you're not gonna read.' " Because I treat everybody the same, make no difference, black, white, Puerto Rican, Cuban. We had all kinds of kids from France and Netherland, we had horses on the other side, they had riding academies they had all kinds of things over there. That's where they got to be. You go to class, you learn for yourself, you can't expect nothing special. You can't expect

more from some teacher than another person to get it. You only cheating yourself, and you don't want to be cheated in life.

H: So you was a teacher?

G: Yeah, at that tech school over there. I was there for half-- ten-and-a-half years. I retired in '98. Mr. (Parker?), Mr. (Miller?), Mr. (Collins?), I know everybody here. A lot of these peoples here when Dr. (Kenny?) brought them here. I know them all. I come back here all the time. Go in the cafeteria and eat, come and talk to the lady, talk to the assistant principle, Mr. (Bircho?) when he was here, he's gone. Dr. (Kenny?), Mr. (Louis?) and all that, Ms. (McMann?) and all those (?). And I visited a lot of other schools and talked to kids at Brownsville and places, and we adopted my alumni chapter- the Gold Coast chapter- we adopted North Dade Middle and periodically we go over there and talk to the kids- the eighth graders who are gonna come here. And I try to- very hard- to make the kids understand that you needs to go to school someplace. You don't necessarily have to go to FAMU which is my first preference but you must go someplace. You must go someplace and get you a piece of paper. See, when you get that piece of paper, it keeps you out the room with the guys who taking the test. You got a resume, you just turn in a resume and that's it. Someone struggling taking a test. You'll be in the interview down there some place and you gonna get a job because you got that resume. When you leave here, you'll get that certificate. You needs to use that certificate. If you're not gonna go away to school someplace, go apply for a job; that certificate will help you get a job. But a lot of kids, "I--I didn't show the man (why?) I work my certificate." Son, (what?) you've been four years in school and you done got a certificate, you didn't let anybody know? See, that's looking out for yourself. You gotta look out for

self. Start to stay out of jail. Stop putting yourself in a position where you gonna get beat up, you're gonna get knocked around, you're gonna get mistreated, kicked around, no jobs, people laying in the street. We never in my time had peoples lying and sleeping in the street. We had a little jail Overtown on Eleventh Terrace. They would put you in jail and you was out on Mondays. Unless someone create a mass-murder or something or kill a lot of people or rob somebody, they would go downtown to that jail there on Flagler, big tall building. People working on chain gangs was somebody other than us. See, the thing what happened [chuckles] when they said that inhumane treating to prisoners was wrong and we must change it. So they changed it. So now, what happened? All the peoples in jail now are black. You go downtown it's full, some Puerto Ricans, some Cuban, but they go down there shuffling through the hallway, and they (life?) going down with them, and they get out of jail and they ain't got no place to go. The parents don't want to be bothered with them, grandmother won't be bothered with them, daddy won't be bothered with them. And they say (?) and 'Where your dad?' (I ain't-- he ain't got a daddy?). Everybody got a daddy. They ain't cloning nobody yet, everybody got a daddy, somewhere. And like I always said, I try to treat every child I know whoever he or she is with respect. Miss so-and-so, mister so-and-so and so when I see you see me and you ain't first naming me, because I'm not gonna first name you. That's respect for one another, it's just that simple, you got to have respect for one another. If you trying to be impressive to someone and whatever you doing than you live with it. If it's good it's good, if it's bad it's bad. When it turns bad, don't expect me be a champion of your cause when you done all these kinds of things and now you up against-- you laying out there

somewhere in the streets, somebody done shot you up and--you a--what you want me to say about you? I can't say anything, I can only--you--life--your life is yourself.

H: Back in the Civil Rights Movement Era, ministers and college students would work with farm workers. There was mending of the races. Why do you think that such di--a diversity is not possible in today's society?

G: In our times now, the new technology that they have now we don't--we're not using it as well. See, back after the Civil--after Civil--after--after Civil War, blacks owned, oh maybe two-thirds or more of this land in this country. They had it. The reconstruction area had more people than congress and government anytime ever. But we didn't know how- I say 'we': black- didn't know how to use the land, and he sitting there looking, ain't no- ain't nothing happening. Ain't nothing happen. He just kept looking, so he said, "Okay, I'll tell you what I'll do: Y'all don't know how to manage this land or far--you farmers don't know how make a business out of it. I'll be the person that'll show you how to do it." And it turned right back. See, like, when I talk to kids and we talk about the ag. school, they say farming. That's the farthest thing from farming. See, without agriculture there is no life. Everything in this whole building, everything you got on your clothes, the jewelry you got on, it's all agriculture. Everything is agriculture. All the plants, all the airplanes, all the buildings, all the floor tiles, the clothes, stove, frigerator, bus, automobile, gas fuel, everything is agriculture, the by-product. [accidentally knocks microphone off] Here, with that certificate it's telling someone that you have learned something for the last four years and how you apply yourself with that certificate is what your life is gonna be. If you get it and throw it in a drawer someplace and forget about it, you got nothing coming. Because the (civic?) says the county and the school have agreed

that the people who leave here with a certificate will be given a job. I remember one time here they had a (diesel?) school here. They had thirty-six students here in (diesel?), half girls half boys. When the class was over at the end of the time, there was no boys and all girls. And now they work for the county making that eighteen and twenty dollars an hour, working on those buses and trains, you understand what I'm saying? All the boys want to do is they want to play football. What? Wh---you--you maybe never going to be a football player. You know, some other guy might be a football player, but everybody can't be football players. Somebody's got to own the team, somebody gotta buy the tickets, somebody gotta have the concessions, some gonna have to parking it. He said, "Well, when I finish, I'm going to have me a dealership, I'm gonna be selling cars. I'm going to have me some ten or fifteen service stations." Tell me how many football players, basketball players, stars own anything. Tell me what they own. Nothing. Michael Jordan, all these guys for the Heat, they don't own nothing. They got big old cars- Mercedes Benz driving around. They don't own nothing. They don't own no hotels, no big restaurants, they out spending the money on Miami Beach but they don't own the place where they visit. They pay two, three billion dollars or five million dollars for a house and they sell to somebody for half of what they paid for it? That don't make sense. Does that make sense? [school bell rings] But they don't do that. But see we go--we as a race of people, we gotta learn how to take care of one another and look out for one another. Gotta stop being evil to one another, we gotta help one another, we gotta--we all gotta help each other just like that World Trade Center. That was our World Trade Center like everybody else. See, but like, when I went to FAMU and I got out I went to Korea and got shot at and everything else. I came back here and I couldn't go to the University

of Miami. I couldn't go to FSU, University of Florida. I had to go back to FAMU, not that I didn't want to go back there, but during that time. Now you got a chance, an opportunity to go to these schools and meet different peoples and enhance your life and learn about other people's culture and get as much up here as you can get and use it wisely and stop being abusive to the people that you going to be living with and going--them young girls. See, them young girls, see young girls now [chuckles] young girls now look nine times better than young girls th--ten years, fifteen years ago. They dress nice, they grow their hair, they wear different clothes, they don't eat as much, they slimmed down, they wear shoes and--they looks good. So you got to keep them that way. You got to be out there looking for you for someone who going to live the rest of your life with you. Dip-and-dap and dip-and-dap and then you find out one day there ain't nobody out there for you, you out there by yourself running around with a bunch of boys and then you get yourself (downtown?) to hug and kiss you, see? Then you got a problem in the jails down there because ain't nobody else but boys in jail. You get on that floor, you ain't never been on that floor with all the boys that hug and kiss you, you ain't been there yet but don't go down that course there. And they'll do it to you, take your shoes, take your clothes off of you, do everything else to you. You want to make your life as good as you can for you and your surrounding in your community. You want to work and get you some money and build some homes, build some apartments, get some service stations. See, that's-- that's (?). You want that. Some guy need four or five service stations. Some guy needs to join a (?) business, some need doctors, lawyers, and everything. See, I much rather buy a ticket and take my girl to a football game than be out there playing. [chuckles] Man, getting beat up, get (?) all on you, and scarred up. You want to get some nice suits and

clothes and dress yourself up, take her to the restaurant so she can eat and have a good time? Girls are sometimes seasonal girls, and football season and basketball season and baseball season. You need you one who's gonna be with you through the whole year and you're not playing anything, you just working and, you know what I mean, going to the restaurants and going to dancing and going to the theater and going to resorts and just living man. It's that good life, going to New York City, going to Paris, because you know, it's that good life that you work for and you can appreciate it. Don't be, you know--you do that for yourself. Your life will be much better. Have respect for peoples in the neighborhood, make peoples have their (respect?) Teach your little brother, your little cousin they got to respect people. If you don't give it, you're not gonna get it. And you say, "Well, he's bad." There's always somebody badder than you. You out there selling drugs and think you gonna get away? You either one of two things: you're going to jail for the rest of your life or somebody's gonna kill you. That's a sure thing. Them drugs, they get killed and they bring them in here and they sell drugs and they catch them and everything and the drug band takes the money, police, every--everybody gets them the money. Ja--you go to jail and you got to spend all the money and try to get out of jail. What good is it doing? But, like always said to kids, if you got enough nerve to sell drugs and take a chance at getting killed and going to jail for the rest of your life, you could be one of the best businessman in this world in this--in this town, you could own almost anything, you understand what I'm saying? Because you willing to take a chance on life, getting killed or going to jail for the rest of your life. If you use it, you turn it around, you get two or three service stations, some apartment buildings, landscaping stuff, somebody's landscaping business and stuff, building homes, putting in appliances, see all

these big business they sell all these TVs, you know what I mean, with these shows and things. You selling TVs, CDRs, and all that other kind of stuff, you've got a business going, everybody working for you. Oh, there gonna be some people who gonna be envious of the fact, but you got--you work--you working peoples and you provide a means for them to get something. And you get a satisfaction out of it. Young man the other day, I read the paper, that boy he gave Florida Memorial a million dollars. They gave-- gave him a chance--gave him a chance, Cuban kid, gave him a chance. University of Miami didn't. And for the chance they took on him to help him, he didn't finish. Florida Memorial gave him a chance. University of Miami, huh, went out there, come back yesterday he gave them a million dollars, one of the biggest businessmen in New York City, he gave them a million dollars to do whatever it is they want to do with it. See? That's--that's--that's the recognition you'll get. When you leave here [school bell rings], you want some of the teachers to say something good about you, because if they don't say anything good about you, I don't care how many questionnaires you send in about getting a job, they say, "Well, he's no good, he's disrespectful" and you'll never know and that's the end of you. You always want somebody to say something about good about you. (In order for them to?) say something good about you, you got to carry yourself that way.

H: Okay, thank you for coming.

G: Alright, sir.

H: I hope that you [inaudible]

G: Oh, yes! It's--I like to come in and talk to young peoples. I get a--I get a pleasure out of talking to young people because young people to me is the future of this time. For me,

I'm gonna get a lot of stuff--I'm seventy--almost seventy-two years old. In another ten years from now, if you doing something out there good, I can benefit by it, but I can't help you right now, I'm not in the position. You need to be grasping on to your peers. You need to be grasping on to someone that five or ten years older than you, the kids who's in college who gonna come out. When you go to college, you gonna come out, if you don't come--go to college, get your trade. There's a lot of people, telephone companies, different CD companies, see--computers and every--it's ways and means to make tremendous amount of money. Boy, you don't have to be ducking at the police at night, knocking on your door. You afraid to open the door, your buddy done got killed down the street somewhere. He trying to sell some drugs and using soda and stuff and mixing it up and trying to get away, they'll kill you, man. Now you got--you can't go to airports. You got to go to airports to check in for two hours ahead a time to fly a plane. They never done that before. I lived in New York City for fifteen years and my wife lived here and taught school. I would come down here every week, I'd come here every Friday and leave every Monday to be with my wife and my child because she was teaching school here, had a continuous contract. I did that fifteen years. Don't talk about what you can't do, "Yeah I got a girl, man, and she this and she that." Hey, some guys don't have girls. There's acquaintances. You never been to her house, you never ate dinner, you never been on a picnic, never been on vacation with her, her daddy don't know you, the mother's never seen you, and it's just a girl you know, right? You don't--ain't no girlfriend of yours, it's somebody you know. So you gotta-- your perspective--you gotta know just who you are, what you want to do, or at least give it a chance. Give yourself a chance in life to really accomplish something. You owe it to yourself. You owe it to you, your

parents, your neighborhood, everybody, all these kids in this school, you owe them something. You are trying to do the very best with your life that you know how. You don't want to get out the street, get shot up with a pocketful of drugs and running cars and they'll kill you and it's, "What happened to him? He didn't seem that way." See, because some guys sell drugs for ten, fifteen years and nothing going to happen because they got a godfather or somebody watching out for them but you ain't gonna have nobody. They ain't going to let you come out your cell (drunk?) and take all the money from them. But, you a doctor, I gotta come see you. You a dentist, they gotta come see you. You own service stations, they got to buy gas, they got to buy that service, home repair, TVs, you know what I mean? They got to come to you. You--you get all that money, going to the bank with it, going to the bank with it. Put it in the bank, put it in the bank. You got somebody working for you making plenty of money, utilizing your talent, you don't need to play. Like I said, Michael Jordan, what he own? Nothing. All these basketball players, tell me something they own. Big hotels? Big restaurants? Nah. They don't own none of that. (Conglomerate?) big auto dealerships and all that? Selling cars, Rolls Royce, Mercedes Benz and all that? They making a hundred million dollars, where the money goes? Thirty-three percent more goes to the agents and they buying all these cars, all these watches and paying seven, eight hundred dollars for the suits and a good suits ain't no good to anyone but them. They can't take it to a pawn shop and get eight hundred for it. They buy a house for four million dollars and they sell it for two million. What? Where's the math? You got to be aware of your surroundings and the things that you do that's gonna make you successful in life.

H: I appreciate it. Thank you.

G: Okay, my pleasure. Yes, sir.

END OF INTERVIEW