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One Too Many: An Exploration Of the Roots of Literacy Of Older African Americans In South Carolina Before Brown Versus The Board Of Education

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Dedication

To my husband and daughters; Jimmy, Morgan, and Cheryl and in memory of all of my angels; grandmother Anita, Father and mother Rodger and Doris, and my brothers Alan and Raymond. This work is also dedicated to six Young and vibrant students of the former Pine Grove Rosenwald School

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Abstract

Drawing from 1992 data, *The National Adult Literacy Survey* (Kirsch, 1993) recently indicated that a large portion of the US population lacks the literacy skills typically required to complete complex tasks and take advantage of a wide range of employment opportunities. This report also indicated that the reading proficiency of African Americans was substantially lower than that of the White population, particularly within the elder population. A similar picture emerges in the more recent report, *Literacy in Everyday Life: Results from the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy.* As a group, African American adults ages 65 and older had the lowest average prose, document, and quantitative literacy (Kutner, et al., 2007).

In the State of South Carolina, over half the population is estimated to be reading at levels 1 or 2. Less than half of the African American students achieve test scores that indicate that they are proficient or above on state reading assessments. Adult illiteracy, especially among older residents in the southeastern states, remains high, (2007) and although there is considerable research that links these levels to political conditions and educational attainment, there is little scholarship that explores the relationships that lay the inter-generational foundation for this situation in terms of the availability of reading materials. This study addresses this topic using data from annual reports submitted by the South Carolina State Superintendent of Education between 1945 and 1952 that describe the slow progression of public school library service to Blacks in South

Carolina, including the number of schools that Blacks could attend, the number of books per pupil in these schools, representative monetary expenditures, the presence of professional staff, and other related issues. Through interviews of six older African Americans, between the ages of 69 to 96, who attended a segregated elementary school with no school library; this study explores the impact of these situations and the role these situations have played in their lives and the lives of their families.

Keywords: Reading, Literacy, Blacks, Whites, African Americans,[1] *Plessy v. Ferguson*, Scaffolding

[1] "Racial/ethnic groups are designated by proper nouns and are capitalized. When names of colors are used to refer to human groups, they are capitalized (e.g., *Blacks* instead of *Blacks*; *Whites* instead of *Whites*). Hyphens are not used in multiword labels (e.g., *Mexican Americans* instead of *Mexican-Americans*). Authors are encouraged to write in accordance with the principles of cultural relativism, that is, perceiving, understanding, and writing about individuals **in their own terms**. Thus, indigenous self-designations are as important as designations by others, although authors must be cognizant of the fact that members of different groups may disagree about their appropriate group designation and that these designations may change over time." (From the "Guidelines for Avoiding Racial/Ethnic Bias in Language," published in 2005 by the *Board of Ethnic Minority Affairs and Publications and Communications Board of the American Psychological Association)*

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Chapter One: Introduction

Reading opens many doors. Those who read well are able to progress in school. They are able to find employment in a wide number of situations. They are able to read the detailed instructions on medicine bottles, order meals from menus that do not have pictures, read public notices, and share the pleasure of reading adult novels and stories with family members. Those who do not read well are able to do many things, but not these; and according to the most recent data available from (Kutner et al. 2003). Twenty-two percent (22%) of adults in the United States appear to be reading at the below basic level, indicating that they possess no more than the most simple and concrete literacy skills. They may be able to find a straightforward piece of information in a very simple pamphlet. The adults at the bottom of the below basic level can't even do that. A total of 11 million adults in the United States are thought to be non-literate, indicating that they do not read at all (Wild, 2005).

Those who do read well typically begin formal reading education in the classroom, and their reading skills develop as they progress from grade to grade through a process of scaffolding experiences. The body of research that focuses on this process suggests that particular contexts and activities are needed for children to become readers (Clay, 1991; Clark, 1976; Hall, 1987; Heath, 1982; Sulzby & Teale, 1991) including the following factors that foster early reading:

- Hearing stories read aloud by a parent or another caring adult;
- Having opportunities to do emergent story readings ("reading" on one's own);
- Having ready access to reading materials at home, at school, or through a public library;
- Having free choice of reading materials so that stories are enjoyed and the experience is pleasurable;
- Having both the space and time for shared and individual reading;
- Being part of a "readerly" family in which parents, siblings, and extended family act as role models;
- Having opportunities to talk about reading both while being read to and in other contexts such as the family dinner table;
- Having a sense that reading is a valuable activity;
- Having access to an enabling adult (Ross, McKechnie & Rothbauer, 2006, p.75).

While the absence of these experiences and the resources required to support them does not completely explain the low literacy rates found in today's society, it is reasonable to suggest that their absence has contributed to the persistence of poor reading skills among several groups of children and adults since adult literacy is often an inter-generational problem, following a parent-child pattern. Current research suggests that poor school achievement and high dropout rates are commonplace among children of illiterate parents (Wild, 2005). The reasons for these problems vary. The parent non-

reader may have left school early, may have suffered from a physical or emotional disability, may have had ineffectual teachers, or simply may have been unready to learn at the time reading instruction began (p. 2). However, without books and other reading materials in the home and a parent who reads to serve as a role model, children are likely to grow up with severe literacy deficiencies. Research also suggests that the devastating effects of illiteracy are exacerbated throughout adult life, at times resulting in significant disadvantage for older adults (Roman, 2004).

Research Problem

Although literacy rates among African Americans were remarkably high in the decades just after the civil war, narratives and research suggest a sharp decline in the educational opportunities available to Black children during the beginning of the 20th century (Anderson, 1988). For a variety of social and economic reasons, the schools that Black children attended were typically small and dilapidated (Lee, 1991). Despite the efforts of Blacks who clearly recognized the value of education and philanthropic organizations who wished to advance education (Lee, 1991; Perkins, 2003), instruction in these schools was often inadequate. Additionally, the library collections that might have played a pivotal role in the lives of both Black adults and children were housed in small spaces in segregated school houses (Lee, 1991). To date, little is known about these collections and services or how they compared to those found in White schools in rural states where Black children depended on school library collections for their initial introduction to books and reading. Even less is known about the manner in which the *Plessey v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision came to be construed in terms of Black

school libraries or the manner in which these situations might figure in discussions of modern literacy problems.

Research Questions

In the state of South Carolina, less than half of the African American students achieve test scores that indicate that they are proficient or above on state reading assessments. Allyson Floyd of WPDE News, Channel 15 (Florence, SC) stated that the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS) scores for African-American students remain lower than overall students' scoring percentages (South Carolina State Department of Education, 2011). Adult illiteracy, especially among older residents in South Carolina, remains high and Lyman (1977) stated that one of seven American adults is functionally illiterate (Lyman, 1977, p. xi). However, there is little scholarship that explores the relationships that lay the inter-generational foundation for this situation in terms of the availability of reading materials. This exploratory study begins to address this topic from two perspectives. The first is an examination of data from South Carolina State Superintendent of Education annual reports that describe public school library service to Blacks in South Carolina between 1945 and 1952, including the number of schools that African Americans could attend the number of books per pupil in these schools and representative monetary expenditures. The second takes a more granular view, approaching its participants through the experiences of six individuals who attended a rural elementary school prior to school desegregation.

RQ1 How was the *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) expectation of separate but equal interpreted in terms of the school library reading materials provided to Blacks in South Carolina before *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)?

RQ2. What were the reading experiences of those who relied on these collections of reading materials during the era of segregated schools?

RQ3. How have these experiences figured in their development as readers and the reading habits of their children?

Conceptual Framework

I approach these questions using a conceptual framework that draws from two lines of inquiry. The first is an historical perspective that uses public data and narratives to develop a critical and detailed perspective on the availability of school and public library materials to Black children coming of age prior to school integration legislation. This perspective also uses critical race theory to explain and explore these situations. The second is an educational perspective that allows me to explore and reflect upon the impact of barriers encountered by students coming of age during this period in terms of their development as readers. This second perspective draws from the literature that indicates the importance of scaffolding experiences in reading development and the likelihood of intergenerational problems arising when parents are unable to develop strong reading habits.

Potential Significance

The significance of this study lies in its potential to illuminate the experiences of older African Americans who attended segregated Black schools where books and other resources were less than adequate. This issue has been little explored, and it bears directly upon efforts to develop a sound understanding of the roots and persistence of literacy problems within the African American community and the strategies that may be needed to break the cycle of family illiteracy.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In 1896, When the U. S. Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (163 U.S. 537 (1896)) that separate facilities for Black and White citizens did not violate the U. S. Constitution, they envisioned a system in which segregated schools would provide equal access to educational resources and materials. Continually underfunded Black schools were typically dilapidated and overcrowded (Lee, 1991). Contemporary reports also linked the slow growth of public libraries in southern communities (Anderson, 1988) to racial divisions. In the case of South Carolina, the Charleston Library Society regretfully turned down assistance from the Carnegie Foundation because concerns related to providing services to Black Charlestonians (Lee, 1998). Because the exclusionary practices of powerful Whites, education and library services to Blacks were often slow or nonexistent. So literacy has been a slowly developing process for African Americans as the reviewed literature will reveal.

Related Literature and Narrative Evidence

The reading experience: literacy development.

Writers who are interested in reading development often use the metaphor of a scaffold to describe the particular contexts and activities needed for children to become readers (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2004). More than 30 years of writing and thinking from experts like Jerome Bruner; Courtney Cazden; Marie Clay; John Dewey; Lev Vygotsky; and David Wood have contributed to the development of instructional models and

techniques on this topic (2004). These include the availability of reading materials, opportunities to talk about reading, and experiences that motivate reading. These activities typically require easy access to reading materials and individuals who are readers and can motivate reading behavior as the *Reading Skills Pyramid* in Figure 2.1 from Time4Learning.com suggested. It took a partnership of administrators, librarians, teachers, parents, and community to build reading programs that would make a difference with kids. Good reading programs and libraries can also help improve reading test scores (Valenza, 2003).

Classroom learning.

In the United States, reading instruction usually begins in the classroom. Reading materials are made available. Teachers with an interest in reading and training in teaching reading skills work with students individually and in groups where they can discuss what they read and receive assistance. In a literature-based classroom it is suggested that students be allowed to read silently for 15 minutes per day, be read aloud to at least 30 minutes per day, and that teachers allow each student to have an opportunity for one on one, individual, oral reading weekly (Anderson, 2010; Galda, Cullinan, & Sipe, 2010; Temple, Martinez, & Yokota , 2011; Tunnell & Jacobs, 2008).

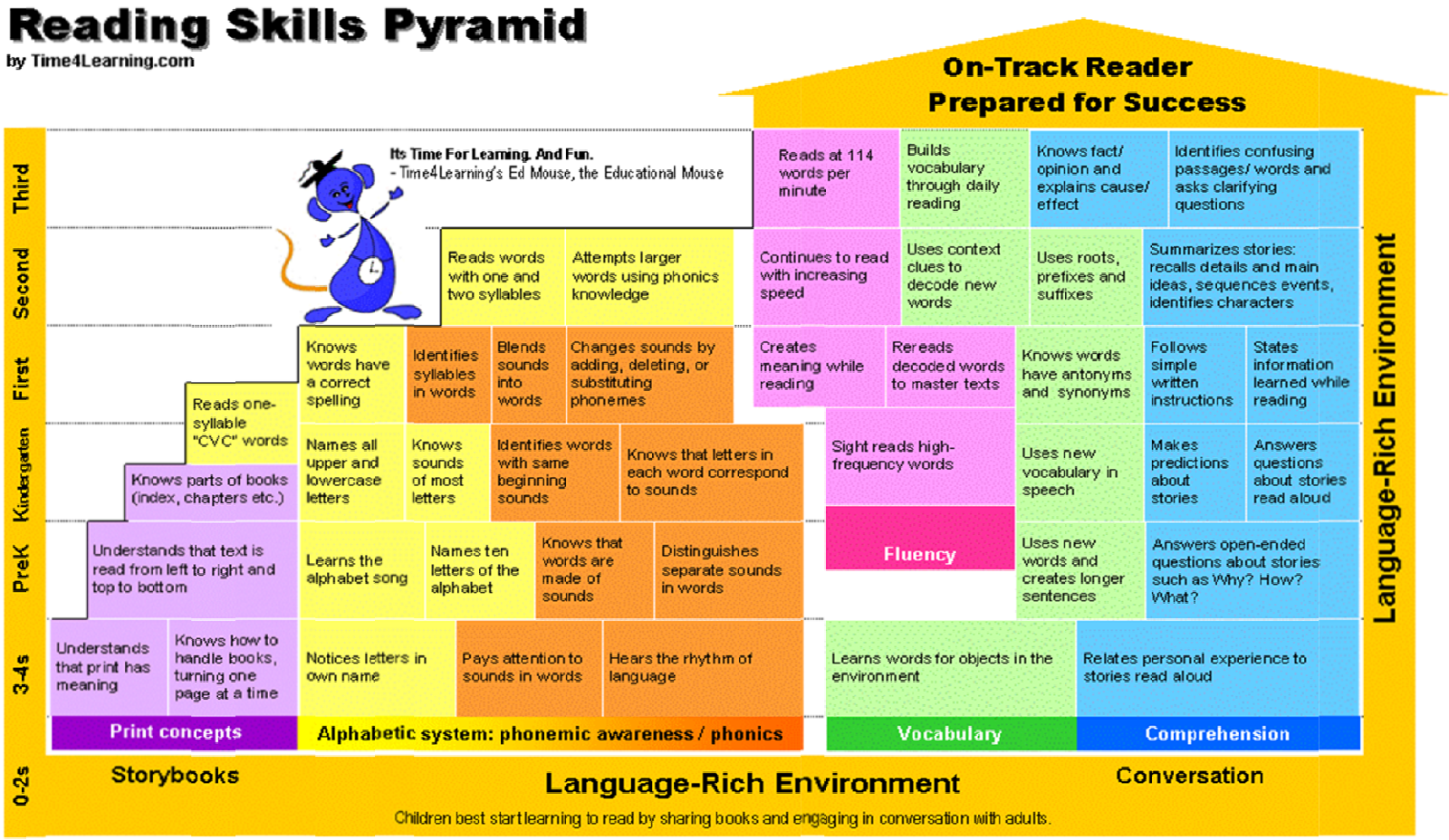


Figure 2.1: Reading Skills Pyramid

Parental Influence.

Parental influence also plays an important role in the reading literacy of children. Parents are encouraged to read aloud to their children at least 30 minutes each evening until children request to read on their own or to read aloud to parents (Trelease,1992; Anderson, 2010). Parents are also strongly encouraged to have a variety of age appropriate reading materials available in the home and seek out opportunities to utilize the public library (Anderson, 2010). However, there are many other ways in which to encourage a love of reading in children. Literacy strategies such as games, puzzles, songs, and videos or DVDs can also be used. Literacy games include old favorites like word searches and Hangman, and new ones like Typing Monster and Letter Blocks (http://www.kids-and-books.com/importance-of-literacy.html). It is also advisable for parents to allow their children to see them reading for this signals to children that reading is important. If parents do these things prior to pre-school, students are better equipped to transition into reading on their own (Trelease,p1992; Anderson, 2010; Galda, Cullinan, & Sipe, 2010; Temple, Martinez, & Yokota, 2011; Tunnell & Jacobs, 2008).

Libraries and Literacy.

Libraries provide another opportunity for reading development and self-directed learning to those who are not encouraged to read at home and are unable to develop reading skills in the classroom environment. The diagram below, developed by Durrance, Fisher, and Hinton (2005) illustrates the benefits of this process. The outcomes experienced by learners in the Washtenaw Literacy program (2005) were numerous and broad in range, extending beyond basic literacy and impacting just about every aspect of learners lives. Ripples of the program touched not only the lives of learners but reached

into the lives of those around them—in their families, at their workplaces, and in the larger community (2005, p.29).

Figure 2.2: Ripples of Impact. Ripples of Impact of a Basic Literacy Program (Durrance, Fisher, and Hinton 2005, p.29)

This project from the Durrance, Fisher and Hinton book is just one of the many ways libraries have made efforts to increase literacy for all people. Since 1924 when the ALA commission on Library and Adult Education was formed libraries have been creating literacy programs for people of all ages and ethnicities (Lyman, 1977). The programs include, for example, family literacy storytimes, which are described as "storytimes suitable for the whole family, designed to build literacy for children and their families" (Totten, 2009, p. ix). Family literacy storytimes give parents the tools to be their child's first teacher; these invaluable resources are available to parents for free at the public library (Totten, 2009).

Library Services to Blacks: An Historic Perspective

In most cases, the "scaffolding" experiences and the resources needed to establish successful reading patterns were not available to Blacks through public schools and

libraries for many decades because of a number of cultural factors that characterized southern society before and after the Civil War (Anderson, 1988; Lee, 1998; & McPheeters, 1988).

Library services prior to *Plessy v. Ferguson*.

In some areas of the United States it was considered illegal to teach Blacks to read or write. Economic considerations expressed in the phrase "give a Negro a book and you spoil a good plow hand," also inhibited the development of reading for enslaved Blacks. In contrast, slaves and free men in northern states had a variety of ways of learning to read, often supported by law. A New York state law required that a slave be taught to read the Bible by the age of 18 or be set free; as a result, church-related and Sunday (Sabbath) schools became very popular. Blacks emerged from slavery with a strong belief in the desirability of learning to read and write. This belief was expressed in the pride with which they talked of other ex-slaves who learned to read or write in slavery and in the esteem in which they held literate Blacks. "There is one sin that slavery committed against me," professed one ex-slave, "which I will never forgive. It robbed me of my education" (Anderson, 1988, p. 5). Schools of any type were a priority and needed to be built so Blacks could learn to read and write. Consequently, the African American push for public library service was neither so pivotal nor so pronounced as had been the drive for schools in the aftermath of the Civil War, and, indeed, there was about a thirty- to fifty-year lag between the commencement of public schooling for African Americans in the South and the inception of public library service (Fultz, 2006, p. 338). Speaking to this point, Lumumba & Branton (2002) also reported that by most documented accounts, there was no mention of public school libraries or library services

provided to Black students until late in the nineteenth century (Lumumba & Branton, 2002, p. 38).

Theoretical and contextual elements.

My reading to date suggests that two contextual factors need to be considered when exploring the roots of literacy for African Americans in South Carolina. The first is the question of intentionality. This topic falls within the boundaries of Critical Race Theory, as summarized by Brooks and Newborn (1994):

> Embraced by the Supreme Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson,* the separate-but-equal policy allowed separation of the races, as long as they were treated equally once separated. With more than a wink and a nod, the federal and state governments authorized racial segregation and discrimination in public schools, libraries, restrooms, public accommodations, places of employment, and other areas of American life (p. 793). Florida even went so far as to enact a law that required school textbooks used by one race . . . to be stored separately from those used by the other race. In short, under the separate-but-equal policy, African Americans were legally locked out of mainstream society by a system of apartheid that controlled all aspects of life in the South and by a looser but still prominent form of racial segregation in the North.

(p. 793). From this viewpoint, when inequalities are central to an education system, they are not accidental phenomena, but fundamental characteristics of the system pursuing educational "policies intended to promote White supremacy" (Gillborn, 2005, p. 487). Indeed racism and its intersections with other forms of subordination shape the

experiences of people of color differently from those of Whites (Zinn, 1989; Bell, 1986, 1998; Essed, 1991). While it is not the intention of this dissertation to support or refute this assertion, it needs to be kept in mind as a contextual element that informed both the provision of the services that will be considered and the behavior of those who received these services. Critical race theory also suggests that in some situations racism becomes a norm, which tacitly influences decisions and values. South Carolina Governor Cole L. Blease provided a remarkable example of an individual who functioned within these norms and actively opposed Black education, indicating that he saw, "no good in the education of Black children. . . . You are ruining a good plow hand and making a half-trained fool. Educate a nigger and you'll be training a candidate for the penitentiary" (Reid, 2008). The question of how this cultural norm figured in the provision of materials tends to be apparent. How it figured in the lives of those who might have benefitted from better library services is uncertain, but will become clearer during the interviews I recorded. Also the tenets of CRT, listed below, spell out the unsettling disenfranchisement of Blacks in the wake of a superior White environment.

1. CRT asserts that Racism is a permanent component of American Life.

2. CRT challenges claims of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy in society.

3. Critical Race Theory asserts that the experiential knowledge of people of color is appropriate, legitimate, and an integral part to analyzing and understanding racial inequality.

4. CRT challenges a historicism and the undisciplinary focuses of most-analyses and insists that race and racism be placed in both a contemporary and historical context using interdisciplinary methods.

5. The Commitment to Social Justice; CRT is a framework that is committed to a social justice agenda to eliminate all forms of subordination of people (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Critical Race Theory allowed people of color to tell their stories in their voices in their own way. CRT aimed to open discussion, shine a light and allow others opportunities to think and do more inclusively for all people.

Chatman's (1996) insider/outsider model provides a narrower focus for these contextual elements as they pertain to accessibility and knowledge acquisition. Within this model, insiders strive to maintain privileged access to certain types of information because people use information to reshape, redefine, and reclaim their social reality (p. 195). From this perspective, it is reasonable to suggest that literacy had both symbolic and functional meaning for both Blacks and Whites during the period of school segregation. It is also reasonable to suggest that these attitudes played a central role in the reading experiences of Blacks who came of age at that time. Information poverty and segregation appear to have been linked to one another. Secrecy seems to have figured in the behavior of both groups, and these attitudes were also likely to figure in the pace and direction of the reading habits that characterized the experiences of African Americans.

The broader impact of these behaviors becomes clearer in discussions of the role of knowledge and information in civic participation. Burnett and Jaeger (2008) made this point:

> Open communication is vital to the public sphere, as are both information access: the ability to reach information one is searching for and information exchange: the ability to share information with others. All three elements are essential: the ability of people to interact freely with each other; accessible, authoritative and reliable information resources; and the ability of people to exchange information between and among each other openly, as part of their interactions independent of more official channels of information distribution (such as the mass media and governmental information services). In a functional public sphere, 'there is sufficient access to information so that rational discourse and the pursuit of beneficial norms is made more likely' and 'the conclusions reached... actually have a limiting impact on the state' (Price, 1995, 25). The connections between communication and democratic participation can be seen as comprising three primary relationships: access to substantive information about rights and how to use them in the public sphere; access to substantive information about social and political issues for forming opinions; and channels of communication to articulate and exchange these opinions (Burnett and Jaeger, 2008, p. 5).

Civic participation is critical for many reasons. It allows citizens in a democracy to control who will hold public office and influence what government does. Moreover, “Since democracy implies not only governmental responsiveness to citizen interests but also equal consideration of the interests of each citizen, democratic participation must be equal” (Famighetti, 1995, p. 430). However, in the Era of Jim Crow, Negroes were not treated as equals to Whites in the South. Workman (1960), a mid-twentieth century Southern journalist, likened Southern segregation to communism and had this to say:

> What Communism has been to the rest of the nation, so integration is to the South----something so undesirable, so foreign to the domestic way of life, so fraught with danger to present and future generations that it is fought on every front, including the educational (Workman, 1960, p. 245).

The feelings and fears of Whites, at this time, were strongly adverse to a democratic society where all men were free to pursue equal opportunities in education, housing, employment, and politics. This had more to do with economics than anything else. Africans were brought here to be workers and to increase the wealth of their owners. When this way of life was destroyed Whites sought other ways to keep Blacks from positions of power and wealth. Education would always be the greatest bargaining chip to opportunity.

Another issue along this vein relates to secrecy and the way African American slaves began their journey into information seeking and the dangers learning and reading presented to them if they were discovered. “For instance, an element in the literature is the notion of localized integration. That is, insiders’ lived-experiences are shaped by the fact that they share a common cultural, social, and religious, etc., perspective” (Chatman, 1996, p. 194). Blacks after slavery were trying to do two things: find their missing family members and learn to read and write. The literature shows that obstacles were placed in the way of Blacks by the White establishment to prevent education, in general, and library service, in particular, from being made available to them (Anderson, 1988; Lee, 1998; McPheeters, 1988).

Ironically, secret information also includes the element of control (Chatman, 1996). Chatman established four key concepts for her theory of information seeking: secrecy, deception, risk-taking, and situational relevance, each of which may be invoked as self-protective behaviors during the information-seeking process (Fisher, 2005). The purpose of secrecy appears to be to protect ourselves from unwanted intrusion from whatever source (Chatman, 1996). Deception is a process meant to hide our true condition by giving false and misleading information. It shrinks our possibility of receiving useful information (Chatman, 1996). The concept of situational relevance[2] was also instrumental in explaining information need and use (Chatman, 1996). Although there was much debate about the definition of relevance, one key component appeared to be utility. There was a need for information to have a purpose. Ultimately, a discussion of situational relevance pertains to the notion of sense-making. Borrowing from Dervin's model (1977), the idea is that things that make sense are relevant (1996, p. 202). More importantly, sources of information must make sense to an individual who is engaged in some problematic situation (1996, p. 202). The purpose of secrecy and deception is to protect someone at risk or someone who perceives that revealing information about oneself is potentially dangerous (Chatman, 1996). Chatman credits her thinking to Bok's definition of secrecy as "intentional concealment . . . the overall intent of secret information is the idea that it will protect a person from unwanted intrusion into private space. Fisher (2005, p. 78) went on to say that Chatman's theory of Information Poverty may prove useful in future LIS studies, particularly those investigating information seeking by individuals who hold memberships in various marginalized groups (p. 78).

[2] For background material that led to Chatman's use of this concept, she suggests, see Patrick Wilson's essay, "Situational Relevance," *Information Storage and Retrieval* (August 1973), 9, 457-471.

Summary

Reading research indicates that a particular set of resources and activities are typically needed for children to become readers (Clay,1991; Clark, 1976; Hall, 1987; Heath, 1982; Sulzby & Teale, 1991). These activities usually occur in the home or in the classroom. Reading materials may also be found in these environments, as well as school and public library collections, but without these, reading success becomes substantially less likely. In the case of South Carolina, these resources were often purposefully absent (McPheeters,1988; Anderson,1988; Richards,1988; Moore1973; Weigand & Davis; Winant,2000) in the lives of African Americans who came of age during the years of school segregation. This situation corresponds with the low Black literacy rates that characterized this period, despite the meaningful efforts of individuals such as Carnegie, Rosenwald, and Buffet and the efforts of concerned Black parents. It also could explain the persistence of literacy problems among these Blacks and among those who were the children of these individuals; but to date there appears to be little research that explores this relationship or the feelings of those who experienced the absence of reading materials. At this point, I am charting new ground, which I hope will lead to further research and discussion of this topic.

Chapter Three: Methodology

RQ1. How was the *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) expectation of separate but equal interpreted in terms of the school library reading materials provided to Blacks in South Carolina before *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)?

Four types of metrics were initially used to explore and compare the reading resources available to African American and White children during this period. The first was the number of schools that had school libraries. The second was the number of volumes in these libraries. The third was the number of books per enrolled school child. The fourth was expenditures. The data used for these comparisons were reported by the SC State Department of Education at the county level, and this aggregate level is consequently used in these analyses. As a group, these metrics are not considered to be totally inclusive, as they are not informative concerning the condition of the materials, their content, or reading level; however as collection size is a commonly used assessment measure, it was thought to be indicative in this instance. Descriptive statistics were used to compare the collections.

RQ2. What were the reading experiences of the African American children who relied on these reading materials during the era of segregated schools?

RQ3. How have these experiences figured in their development as readers and the reading habits of their kids?

This exploratory study was undertaken in order to contribute to a better understanding of the reading experiences of African American children who attended segregated schools in South Carolina prior to the implementation of Brown v. the Board of Education. I approached this subject through the experiences of six individuals who attended the Pine Grove Rosenwald School from 1923 to 1950. Their stories are developed from the ethnographic perspective using the techniques associated with educational biography. Each provides a personal narrative that addresses my research questions.

Biographical Research

The biographical method, also spoken of as life-history methodology, is a generic term for a variety of approaches to qualitative study that focus on the generation, analysis, and presentation of the data of a life history (the unfolding of an individual's experiences over time), life story, personal experience narrative, autobiography, and biography. Data can be generated from interviews as well as from personal documents (letters, journals, diaries, etc). Schwandt (2007) described it as the act of composing an account of an individual's life. As such, it requires a set of procedures for generating and interpreting stories or narratives. Biographies, life histories, and the biographical method are often used in qualitative research, especially given the growing interest in narrative methodologies.

Oates (1986) mentioned three approaches to biography: the scholarly chronicle, the critical study, and the narrative biography. He suggested that all three have their merits, and aspects of each may appear within one work (1986). The first of these, the scholarly chronicle approach reflects the biographer's quest for objectivity and consists

primarily of a "recitation of facts" (p. x). According to Oates, this type of biography is characterized by detached, informative and comprehensive writing. The biographer maintains an objective stance in relation to his/her participants. An example of this approach is *The Life and Mind of John Dewey* by George Dykhuizen (1973).

A critical study, or what could be construed as an author's analysis of the participant, is often called an "intellectual biography." Within Oates' discussion, this type of biographer "analyzes his participant with appropriate detachment and skepticism, comparing his participant with similar lives in other eras, offering judgments about significance and consequence,…perhaps dazzling the audience with his erudition and argumentative force" (Oates, 1986, p. x). An example of this approach is Robert Westbrook's *John Dewey and American Democracy* (1991).

The narrative biography seeks to wed a scholarly, critical perspective with a story in narrative form. According to Oates, this approach elicits "from the coldness of paper the warmth of a life being lived" (p. 11). An example is *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* by Alan Ryan (1995). The research undertaken to answer this question is intended to fit into this category, using interviews to develop rich descriptions that bring the participants to life on the page.

Biographical research is also sometimes called life history research which is at times referred to as life story or biographical interpretative research (Glesne, 2006). In this instance, the researcher does a series of interviews to collect data for creating a narrative of a life. This life is sometimes used as a way of representing a whole culture or group. For example, Oscar Lewis's work in Mexico was intended to produce cultural

portrayals through focusing on lives of members of one family (Tedlock, 2000). Sometimes, the life story is used more to illustrate perceptions and effects of particular historical events as Linden (1993) did in her work with women reflecting the Holocaust. The project can also be more biographic, with researchers seeking some foci for interpretations such as inquiring into key incidents that shaped the creative life of an artist or that contributed to identity formation of an activist (2006, p. 11). In all of these cases, this approach requires the collection of dense contextual data that gives meaning to the biographical subject of interest.

Educational Biography

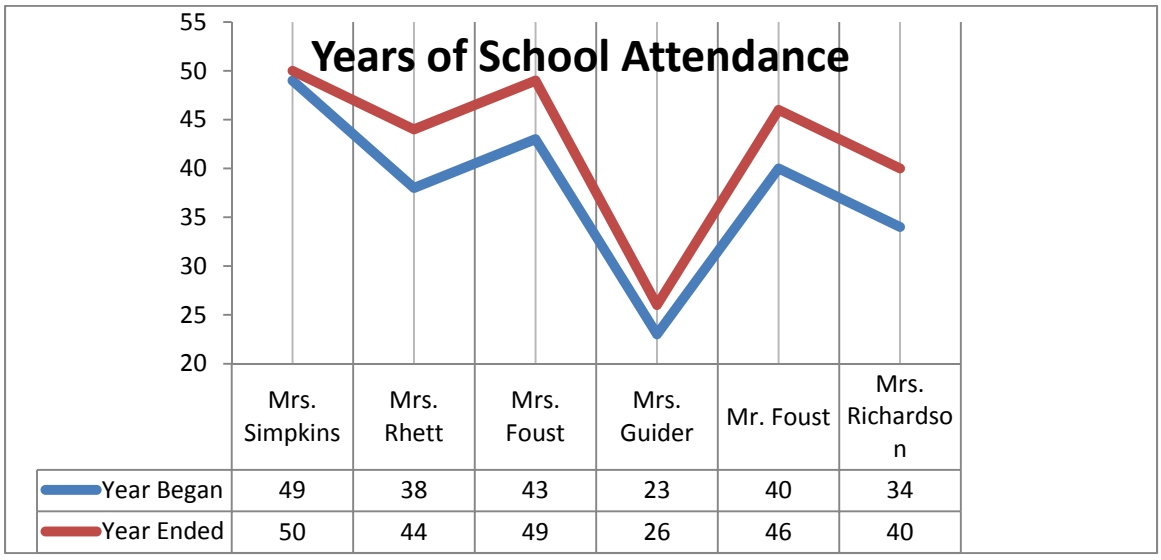
Kridel (1998) described "educational biography" as biographical research that examines the lives of those individuals who were involved or work in the field of education (1998, p. xi). The writing of educational biography grew out of conversations and presentations of the Archival and Biographical Research Special interest Group (SIG) of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). Vandiver (1983) stated, "Good biographies deal with the ways people faced living—tell how they met problems, how they coped with big and little crises, how they loved, competed, did the things we all do daily---and hence these studies touch familiar chords in readers" (p.16).

Finkelstein (1998) wrote that "biographical studies of less-privileged groups have provided lucid views of life at the margins of social and political possibility---when they have been told from the learner's point of view" (p. 52). Much of the current writing in the field of education however, draws upon the important work in the social sciences and attends primarily to matters of narrative, life-history, storytelling, voice and autobiography (Kridel, 1998). Kridel stated, "…*Writing Educational Biography [the*

book] serves as a beginning, as a micro logos, little knowledge---for those who wish to explore the possibilities of biographical research in education (1998, p.7).

Participant Selection

RQ2 and RQ3 data collection began with consideration of a purposive sample of individuals who attended segregated elementary schools in South Carolina. However, serendipity stepped in one evening when I was watching the evening news. There was a feature story about a museum opening. The only remaining Rosenwald School in Richland County, SC had been renovated and turned into a museum. There were also former students who formed a group which meets every Tuesday from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Pine Grove Community Center. I contacted the director of the center to inquire about the possibility of the former Rosenwald student group participating in my research. They were very excited and five individuals consented to participate in the study. The time periods that they attended Pine Grove School are summarized below.



	Mrs. Simpkins	Mrs. Rhett	Mrs. Foust	Mrs. Guider	Mr. Foust	Mrs. Richardson
Year Began	49	38	43	23	40	34
Year Ended	50	44	49	26	46	40

Figure 3.1: Participants' periods of attendance at the PGRS
The length of time each participant attended is also summarized below.

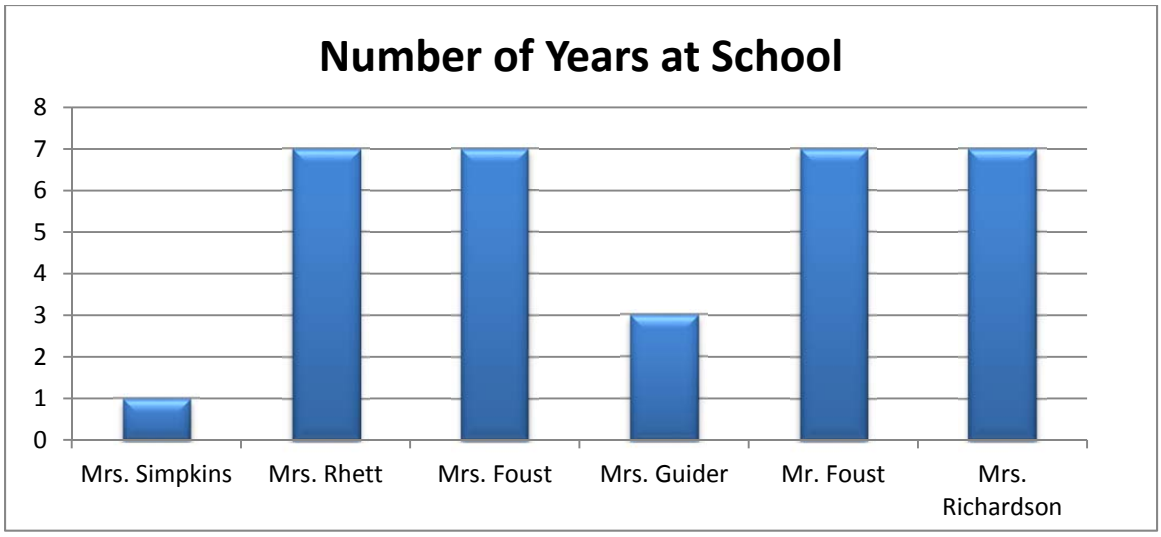


Figure 3.2: Participants' number of years at the PGRS

Contextual Information

Once I had encountered this group, I needed to develop a better understanding of the history of the Pine Grove Rosenwald School and the community around it. I did this using a number of artifacts and secondary sources, including pictures, church program booklets, old school books, other items that shed light on the reading history of people of this era. The record I created from these was used to enrich and solidify the authenticity of the participants' verbal stories.

Interviews.

In explaining the interview process Schawndt (2007) asserted that the interview is a behavioral event---that is, verbal behavior, a verbal exchange, or pattern of verbal interaction (Schawndt). What transpires in the interview is the dynamic, purposeful shaping of stories and experiences of the interviewee, as described by Gubrium & Holstein (2003, p. 14):

> The active responsibility can hardly 'spoil' what he or she is, in effect, subjectively constructing in the interview process. Rather, the active participant pieces experiences together before, during and after occupying the respondent role. The participant is always making meaning, regardless of whether he or she is actually being interviewed.

My purpose was to learn what education and library service were like for my participants. I hoped that they would paint visually explicit pictures with their stories: how it looked, who was there, what a day was like, what favorite books were read and stories told. I conducted one sixty minute in-depth semi-structured videotaped interview with each one. The length of the interviews was influenced by the stamina of the participants, and as most of them were quite elderly, these took place at a time and place of their choosing. In each case an interview protocol was used in order to test for commonalities in the participants' experiences, but they were also encouraged to tell their stories in their own words and mention additional topics and experiences that they considered relevant. The Interview protocol is located in Appendix 1I.

This tactic drew from two approaches described by Leedy & Ormrod (2005) in their discussion of qualitative research methods. The first, the phenomenological approach, attempts to "understand people's perceptions, perspective, and understanding of a particular situation" (p. 141). As these authors noted, this approach "depends almost exclusively on interviews (perhaps 1 to 2 hours in length) with a carefully selected sample of participants" (p141) that usually number from 5 to 25. The second, grounded theory emphasizes the importance of the voices of the people being studied.

Coding.

Once the interviews were completed, they were examined in order to bring order, structure, and meaning (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 111) to the stories told by the participants and coded to identify similarities, differences, and key words. I compared these transcriptions to my personal journal entries to add further insight and coded the transcribed audio interviews to establish a pattern for the whole by relating the codes or categories to one another using constant comparisons and a bulletin board with colored coded entries. From these I was able to construct narratives that capture the sentiments of these African Americans, their impressions of the library services available to them, and the way that these circumstances seem to have figured in their early reading experiences and their reading habits and experiences as adults. Table 3.1 provides an example of my coding process.

Table 3.1: *Sample of Emerging Themes with Codes and Data*

Thematic Category	Related Codes	Supporting Data
Reading at home	Bible in the home	"The Holy Bible, uh-huh."
	Other reading materials	"...Not much reading material except the newspaper. There was a cartoon in there and it was called Hambone. Everyday precisely, I would read Hambone,"
	Parents could read	"So she-mother-read to us before we went to bed."
	Reading memory at home	"Mother Hubbard and Mother Goose and all that."

This is an example of how data was pulled from the interviews of participants and how codes were created for coder reliability to emerge.

In order to assure the reliability and consistency of my coding, I also recruited four educators who were willing to review and code the transcripts in order to test the reliability of my coding. No new coding categories emerged from their analysis and the four coders' results were close to my findings as evidenced in Table 3.2. The four categories in table 3.2 show the emerging themes that led to the categories to be coded.

Table 3.2: *Results of Inter-Coder Reliability Review*

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6
Educational Setting	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd
School Experience	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd
Resourcefulness	cd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd	abcd
Reading at Home		abcd	abcd	abc	abcd	bcd

Note: This table shows consensus of the four coders' (abcd) findings.

Focus groups.

Schwandt (2007) stated that focus groups bring together a group of people to discuss a particular topic or range of issues and are commonly found in communication studies, evaluation research, and organizational research. Focus groups are used both as a stand-alone method of generating data and in combination with other methods. Their successful use requires careful planning (including strategies for recruiting participants, logistics for recording data, and so on), thoroughly prepared questions (with special attention paid to phrasing and sequencing), skillful moderation of the discussion, and thorough analysis of the data (Schwandt, 2007).

In this instance, the two focus groups were held at the Pine Grove Community Center. In each case, the participants were encouraged to reflect upon their earlier remarks, compare and contrast their experiences, and consider my initial understanding of our conversations. The transcripts were coded and used to strengthen and review the interpretive framework developed during the coding of the interviews.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba, (1985) defined trustworthiness as that quality of an investigation (and its findings). They developed four criteria that served as the naturalistic inquirer's equivalents to conventional criteria. First, credibility means that the inquirer provides assurances of the fit between respondents' views of their life ways and their inquirer's reconstruction of representation of same. Second, transferability concerns the inquirer's responsibility for providing readers with sufficient information on the case studied and the case to which findings might be transferred. Third, dependability focuses on the process of the inquiry and the inquirer's responsibility for ensuring that the process was logical, traceable, and documented. Fourth, confirmability is concerned with establishing the fact that the data and interpretations of an inquiry were not merely figments of the inquirer's imagination. For each of these criteria, Lincoln and Guba (1985) specified a set of procedures useful in meeting these criteria. For example, auditing was highlighted as a procedure useful for establishing both dependability and confirmability, and member check and peer debriefing, among other procedures, were defined as most appropriate for addressing credibility (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

The researcher is the primary instrument in qualitative research and has a number of procedures and tools that he/she must utilize to ensure the trustworthiness and

credibility of data, etc. With the three data sources listed above I methodically triangulated my research, which provided an opportunity for validation of my facts by examining them through data collected via the different approaches. I kept a personal journal, which enabled me to keep track of my thoughts, the lenses that I viewed my research participants with and any biases that I may need to work on throughout the interview process Schwandt (2007) defined the collection of data as the careful detailed factual description of people, objects, and actions and it is said to be the empirical basis or foundation of research and qualitative inquiry.

Ethical Consideration

It is important to say here that in the widest sense, the subject matter of ethics is the justification of human actions, especially as those actions affect others (Schwandt, 2007). It was difficult but imperative that I remained unbiased throughout this study. To do this I adhered to all Internal Review board (IRB) requirements, including informed consent. Participants were informed that they had the right to withdraw at any time. I performed member checks continually and consistently as the data was transcribed. My participants signed consent forms before beginning this research and were given opportunities to review their interview transcription tapes to see if I shared their stories accurately. Participants and sites were not kept anonymous since this research did not harm the lives of my participants; and they also chose to use their real names; however every measure and opportunity to be in compliance was carried out. Video-taped interviews were transcribed by the week-end of each taped interview. A file was kept for each individual participant, with all interview and observation notes and transcriptions in it. Notes from the focus groups were kept in a separate file. Focus group notes were

transcribed immediately after the groups met. All artifacts were photographed, labeled, and kept in a separate file. I kept a journal of my thoughts and personal perceptions from the beginning of this research to completion. All notes from interviews and the focus group were kept in a secure location.

Role of the Researcher

In 1977, while working at the circulation desk in the children's room of a large urban South Carolina main library, I noticed an older African American gentleman waiting around. He did not make me nervous but I could tell that he wanted to talk to me in private. Sure enough when the room was clear of other patrons he walked up to me and handed me a note which read, "I cannot read and I need directions to-[destination not remembered]-for a job interview." Once I got over my shock and sadness I gave him directions, he thanked me and went on his way. That encounter has stayed with me throughout my years as a librarian and shapes my interest in this research.

I have shared this anecdote to explain why this research is so very important to me. I have always felt that institutions such as libraries and schools cater to those who are in a position to ask for what they need and want from these institutions. For those who do not feel that they have the wherewithal to articulate their needs this can be a great disadvantage. I also grew up with a father who, because of his eighth grade education, never felt adequate enough to come to functions held at my schools for fear of maybe having to interact with persons with more education than he had.

As a researcher it was my job to listen and learn. I cannot approach my participants as an expert and expect them to be forthcoming with me. To perform this role I have to be very cognizant of my nonverbal cues. My body language must always

be open and welcoming, showing that I am willing to accept what my participants have to offer. I have to remember that I am a guest in my research participants' environment. I must also use subjectivity to my advantage; by this I mean at times when I feel certain emotions during interviews and focus groups I must explore these feelings to learn what they are telling me about who I am in relationship to what I am learning and what may be keeping me from learning (Glesne, 2006, p. 120). I also brought to this research my role as a participant observer. Glesne (2006) stated, the notion of 'being there,' of witnessing social action first hand, emerged as a professional scientific norm in the early twentieth century. As an ethnographic method, participant observation is a procedure for generating understanding of the ways of life of others, requiring the researcher to engage in some relatively prolonged period of engagement in a setting (p. 219). I immediately immersed myself in the group. I was a perfect fit because I too am an older African American female and also affiliated with the same church denomination as my participants. I was a comfortable and trusted fit to do this research. I established rapport when I walked into the room for my first meeting with the group. I explained that I needed their help to complete my work for a doctoral degree. The pride in knowing that someone like them was engaged in such a lofty undertaking left no doubt in their minds that they would be honored to help.

The subjective lenses with which we view our participants play a big role in how we react to what we are learning throughout the information gathering process. These lenses teach us things that have roots in our growing up years that force us to evaluate ourselves. For this research I perceive traveling with the following Subjective "I's":

The Social Justice I – This I surely dates back to my childhood when I read about and watch the news observing the unjust way people were treated in the South during the Jim Crow Era. The same I that I carried with me to my first position in a public library, in the South, that was integrated less than ten years before I was employed their.

Personal I – This I has much to do with my dad and others who made it through life with less than adequate reading skills and less than a twelfth grade education.

Teacher/Librarian I – This I stems from a place that has no acceptance for mediocrity or discrimination of any group that is not allowed an opportunity to receive a quality education, which should include adequate library service and materials.

Chapter Four: Results

Research Question 1

RQ 1. *How was the* Plessy v. Ferguson *expectation of separate but equal interpreted in terms of the school library reading materials provided to Blacks in South Carolina before Brown v. Board of Education (1954)?*

Library services to Blacks during the period of segregation.

Although the U. S. Supreme Court ruling in *Plessey v. Ferguson* (163 U.S. 537 (1869)) envisioned a system in which segregated schools and other public institutions would provide equal access to educational resources and materials, the sources consulted for this dissertation agree that this ruling produced these results rarely, if ever. In reality, the economic resources required to support and foster a separate program for both races were unavailable, and leadership before and during the early days of the regional, state, and local library associations had not taken the time to adopt a basic philosophy or a set of standards that would have provided purpose and direction (Lee, 1998; Lumumba and Branton, 2002; McPheeters, 1988; Nosakhere & Robinson, 1998).

Most of the sources and narratives I reviewed agreed that service to the Black population travelled a long hard road, "from no library service," before 1900, to "separate and unequal service," to "equal service" (McPheeters, 1988, p. 1). Atlanta University, a private African American Institution, was one of the first to provide public library service to its Black community in 1903 (Nosakhere & Robinson, 1998). Information about the

establishment of public library service for African American citizens in Louisiana is unorganized and meager (Spooner, 2010). However, records indicate that the first public library building constructed to serve an African American population was the Carnegie financed Dryades Branch of the New Orleans Public Library, which opened October 23, 1915 (Battles, 2009).

John Hope Franklin provided a more granular picture of this situation when he alluded to the difficulties he had gaining access to archives throughout the South in 1939, as he pursued materials for his early doctoral research. "Over time I would come to realize that nothing illustrated the absurdities of racial segregation better than Southern archives and libraries" (Franklin, 2005, p. 84). He shared a story about his attempt to use the State Department of Archives and History in Raleigh, North Carolina. The Director told him that in planning the building the architects had never anticipated that an African American would ever do research there. The Director made arrangements for him to use a private room and gave him keys to the stacks so that the librarians would not have to serve him. When the other researchers saw him going in and out of the stacks they too wanted their own keys. Eventually the director allowed him to do his research along with the Caucasian researchers and to be served by the staff (p. 83).

Richard Wright and the Library Card by William Miller (1997) is a children's book that gives a fictional account of how Wright had to use a White co-worker's library card and pretend he was checking books out for the co-worker in order to read books from the segregated library in Memphis, Tennessee. Although this book is a piece of fiction, this incident is a true account from his autobiography, *Black Boy* (1945).

Adding to this picture, a 1954 Southern Regional Council report on the progress of public library coverage for Blacks indicated that Negroes had free use of the public library in only 59 cities and towns. Twenty-four communities gave limited services to Negroes at the main public library. In 11 localities in the South, one or more branches gave services to all regardless of race, and three library systems had Negro representation on their boards (McPheeters, 1988, p. 3). It was also difficult to separate public library service and public school library service for Blacks in this era since they were often the same. This was attested to by Emily Copeland, a well-regarded Black librarian, in a 1946 library survey of community library service to Blacks. She discovered that of the 27 counties served by county and regional libraries, 123 stations were maintained in Negro schools, which served both school and adult populations (Copeland, 1946). While the libraries served both adult and school populations, she noted that they rarely received additional funding to provide these extended services. As time passed, the first opportunities that most Blacks had to use a library were probably at a public high school or a Black college that allowed the community access to its collection. These sentiments are attested to by others (Lee, 1998; McPheeters, 1988; and Wheeler & Johnson-Houston, 2004).

South Carolina schools during the period of segregation.

In many cases, when these opportunities were available, they resulted from the committed efforts of donors, teachers, and specialized agencies. Working closely with Booker T. Washington, Julius Rosenwald funded the building of 5,000 schools that were intended to include book collections and eleven public county libraries located in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas

(Battles, 2009, p. 61-62). Welcome assistance also came from Willie Lee Buffington, whose work was encouraged by the African American Saluda school teacher Euriah Simpkins. His interest resulted in the building of 26 Faith Cabin Libraries and the distribution of hundreds of thousands of books to Black schools in rural areas of South Carolina during the period 1931 to about 1955. Buffington, an ordained Methodist minister and faculty member of the predominantly Black college, Paine College, in Augusta, GA believed in the role of religious faith in the work he was doing. It has been said that, "Faith has been the guiding spirit and the essential companion of South Carolina's Black citizens during their long and painful struggle for equal access to library facilities and services."(http://www.libsci.sc.edu/histories/aif/aif01.html)

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) of the federal government also made considerable contributions to library services throughout the United States. In South Carolina there was an active WPA office and staff promoting libraries, cataloging and distributing books, and operating library services for both public libraries and school libraries. While the majority of the services and books went to Whites, Blacks were not ignored. A report for 1938-39, from the WPA Statewide Library Projects office reported that, "At this time there are 29 Negro units within the state. Of this number 24 are run entirely by Negro Library Aides. Seven new libraries were established during this fiscal year." (Crawford, 1939, p. 26) This report also notes that these libraries have a book stock of 32,238 volumes, 20,022 borrowers and an annual circulation of 157,110. Most of the book distribution was taking place via schools and deposit stations, particularly through the work of the Jeanes teachers in the state.

Although the WPA report cited above shows that some South Carolina county public library systems cooperated in providing deposit stations, most services were completely closed off to Blacks; and the schools were the best alternative for access to books for Blacks in the state. A 1934-35 survey report on school libraries by the federal government showed that there were 165 centralized elementary school libraries and 120 served by classroom collections in South Carolina, with 11 full-time and 43 part-time librarians. Total elementary school enrollment served was 37,965 (Foster and Lathrop, 1938, Tables 1-8). A similar 1947-48 report by the federal government on centralized school libraries includes comparisons for the 1941-42 and 1947-48 periods (Beust & Willhoite, 1951). However, for both of these reporting periods only four South Carolina cities/counties reported data (Columbia, Sumter, Gaffney, and Williamston).

For 1941-42, there were 18 elementary school libraries with 85,448 books. (Columbia had the largest number with 14 libraries and 76,469 books.) For 1947-48 the number of libraries had declined to 11 with a book stock of 47,613, again with Columbia having 5 libraries and 43,298 books. The statistics for all three periods do not separately report on White and Black schools.

One of the problems with the federal statistical data on school libraries during these periods is the lack of a supervisor of school libraries for South Carolina. However, Nancy Jane Day was appointed to this work in 1946 and began reporting to the State Superintendent of Education later that year—but not in time for the 1946-47 federal survey. Her report in the 1946 annual report of the Superintendent of Education contains data (broken down by county) that show there were 648 White elementary school libraries and 562 Negro elementary school libraries for the entire state. The book stock

for each was: 283,032 for White schools and 103,984 for Negro schools. A second table in the 1946 report shows data for circulating libraries in the state: number of White elementary school libraries visited by the circulating libraries was 585; for Negro schools 333 were visited. Book stock for the White circulating elementary school libraries was 141,460 and 18,021 for Negro elementary school libraries. Total enrollment for elementary schools for the state for this year was: 177,871 for Whites and 176,026 for Negroes. (South Carolina State Superintendent of Education, 1946, Tables 3, 16, 17)

By the time of her 1947 report, Ms. Day had begun to develop workshops for school librarians, including some at South Carolina State University for Negro librarians, and she began to urge the adoption of school library standards. Her report also described the poor financial support received by school libraries: 31 cents per pupil but only 13 cents per pupil for elementary school. Statistics for this year had also decreased. Now, there were only 555 White elementary school libraries with 296,909 volumes and 517 Negro school libraries with 90,863 volumes. (South Carolina Superintendent of Education, 1947, Tables 17, 17). Circulating library visits had declined but book stock for both White and Negro schools had increased, though with the same degree of disproportion as in 1946.

Ms. Day continued her job for many more years, retiring in 1970. She was partially supported by the state of South Carolina and partially by the Rockefeller Foundation's General Education Board. She was an effective advocate for school libraries and particularly worked hard to help, at least in the period before the end of segregation, equalize library services for Whites and Blacks. In her oral history interview in 1986 (Day, 1986) she said the following about this early period:

> NJD: I worked with the Blacks just like I worked with Whites. In fact, I was introduced that way once. They said, "This is Miss Day and she works with us just like she works with the White people." So there was no distinction. I worked across the board. And the supervisors for Negro education were very definitely trying to get something done because they just had nothing, really. So many of them, even in the best situation, were [in a terrible situation].

Obviously, she did not literally mean these Black librarians had nothing because she had compiled the statistics on their libraries, collections, and efforts over the years. However, it probably does express very well the tremendous chasm between the two races in library development and in what they had to work with in trying to create a literate population.

County library service.

The *Plessy v. Fergusson* case of 1896 offered the legal basis for segregation in a wide range of services and institutions, including education. South Carolina led other states; by 1895 the state's constitution had been changed to initiate a dual education system mandating exclusive schools for White and Black Carolinians (Clay, 1991). The state funds for the education of Black and White students were divided among the counties. Each county was at liberty to distribute the funds as it saw fit. Often this meant that Black schools received little to no funding. The lack of funding was detrimental to the training and hiring of teachers and the physical conditions of the schoolhouses. Schools were overcrowded and supplies, including desks and books, were usually second hand castoffs from White schools, if they were even available. When book counts began to be reported yearly in the State Superintendent's Report, rural schools that did not have a teacher or

librarian responsible for the library, if there was one, were not included in the statistical report.

The difficulties that Black South Carolina school children were likely to encounter in the schools that did report during this period are reflected in the annual data collected by the State Superintendent. Table 4.1 compares the number of elementary schools that provided library services to White and Black children. Although the number of volumes per child in the White schools does not seem high, it is three times the number that characterizes the Black Schools. It is also important to remember that book counts were not reported by rural schools that did not have a teacher or librarian responsible for the library, as it is likely that many of these schools were the small rural schools that many Negro children attended.

Table 4.1: *Volumes Held in South Carolina 1945*

		Elementary Schools				High Schools	
	White		Black		White		Black
Number of Schools	1,420		2,158		315		173
Number of Students	180,443		178,334		67,452		23,999
Number of Schools with Libraries	672		787		262		86
Number of Library Volumes	300,479		100,996		375,244		82,868
Volumes per Child	1.67		0.57		5.56		3.45

Volumes Held in South Carolina 1945 (based on average attendance) Reports and Resolutions of South Carolina to the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina, 1946.

Approximately 75% of the total volumes were held in White elementary schools, despite the fact that enrollment was nearly equal. State level expenditure data for the year 1946 suggests a smaller, but notable level of disparity in expenditures at both the High School and Elementary School Level.

Table 4.2: *Per Capita Library Expenditure of South Carolina State Funds 1945*

	Elementary School	High School	Average
White Schools	$82	$140	$111
Black Schools	$36	$52	$44

Per capita Library Expenditure of South Carolina State Funds 1945 (based on average attendance) Reports and Resolutions of South Carolina to the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina, 1946.

Calculations using 1946 and 1951 data also point to widespread disparity in the number of volumes per enrolled White and Negro child available in elementary schools located in South Carolina Counties. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 provide a detailed illustration of these differences. Further comparison shows no clear pattern of improvement during this five year period, supporting the suggestion that there was little organized or standardized collection development activity.

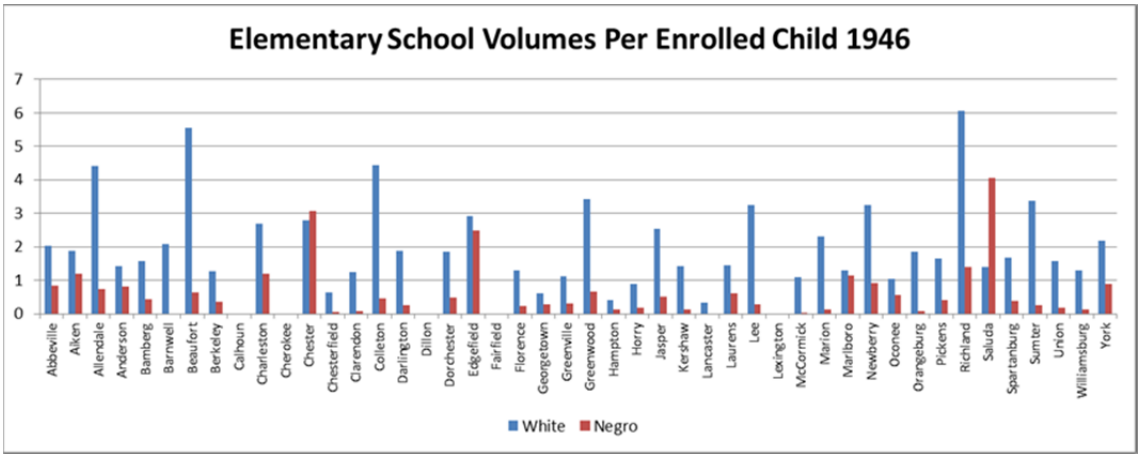


Figure 4.1: 1946 volumes per enrolled elementary child by county Source: Seventy-Eighth Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education of the State of South Carolina 1946

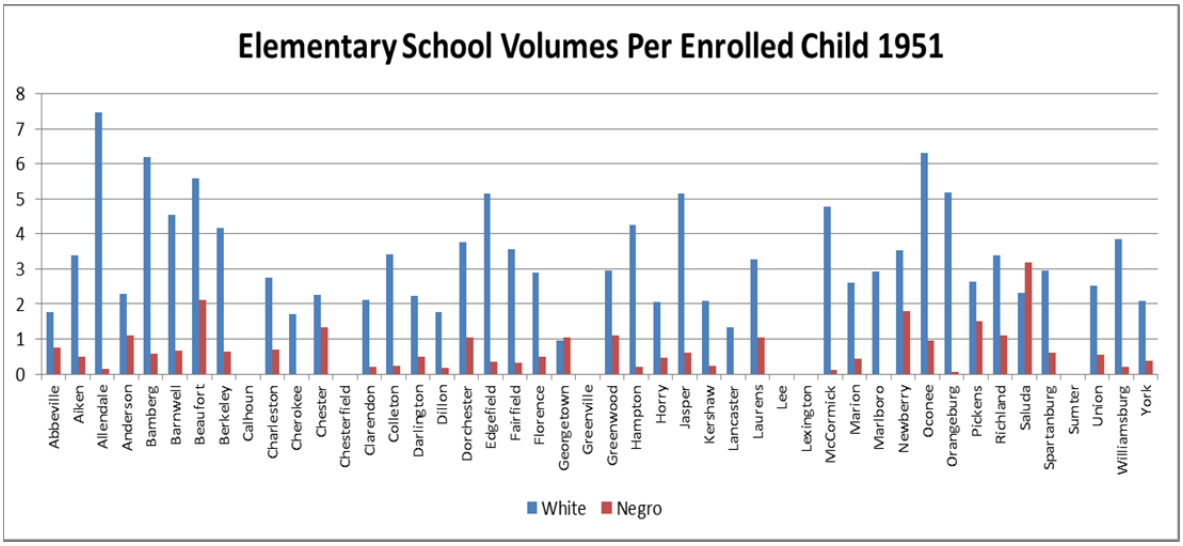


Figure 4.2: 1951 volumes per enrolled elementary school child by county
Source: Eighty-Third Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education of the State of South Carolina.1951

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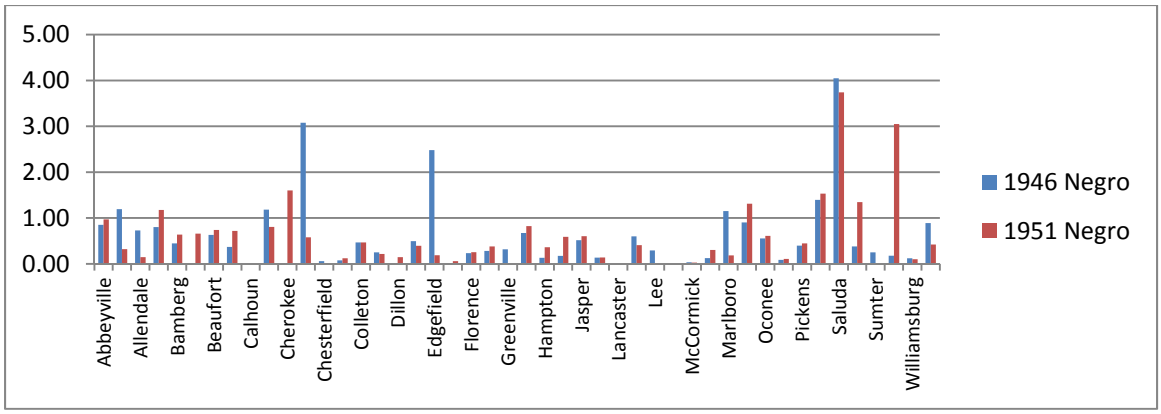

Figure 4.3: Elementary school volumes per negro enrollee 1946 and 1951.Sources: Eighty-Third Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education of the State of South Carolina. 1950. Eighty-Third Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Education of the State of South Carolina. 1951.

In February of 1904, $5,000 was provided through the "Act to Encourage the Establishment of Libraries in the Public Schools of the Rural Districts" (Teuber, 2000), which stated that when a school raised $10 to establish a library, the county and state boards would each provide $10 for the same purpose. After 1905, the funding was increased so that a district that raised $10 had $40 to spend (2000, p. 1). State matching funds were provided annually until 1927. The total expenditure for school library books in 1925-26 was $26,982.89 for White schools and only $205.32 for Black schools (p.1). I found no written evidence that the PGRS had information of these funds or if these funds were available to them.

Research Question 2

RQ2*. What were the reading experiences of those who relied on these collections of reading materials during the era of segregated schools?*

The Pine Grove community.

My review of the contextual materials and artifacts that I collected suggests that the Pine Grove community and its School followed a pathway that was not unusual in South Carolina during this period; it was a community of faith, family, farming and fortitude (Able, 1990, p. 25). It came into being around 1875 and was first made up of recently freed Blacks. The former slaves and non-slaves who constituted this community were house servants and field servants from the Swygert and Huffman quarters. As early as 1872, Blacks were purchasing property in the Pine Grove area. They owned farms, a school, a church and other Black owned businesses, which were developed in and around the Irmo and Dutch Fork area. Approximately 200 acres of land was bought exclusively by Blacks greatly extending the Pine Grove community. Some of the visionaries who invested in this area were Albert Foust, Frank Hyler, Willis Stewart, Frank Ludiway, John Belton, and Fenton and Samuel Faust. These gentlemen and their families met in the "bush harbors" to organize and worship. Freedom presented many challenges to this new community responsible for themselves for the first time. Many in the community learned how to read, some because of the White population and some in spite of it. Their first needs, they felt, during these reconstruction years would be schools, churches, cemeteries and jobs. Some of the first contributors had interesting jobs and skills that helped to solidify the community. James Faust was a syrup maker and animal caretaker; Haskell Bouknight, a farmer better known for his culinary skills and the barbeque he would take to community baseball games and sell; Henry Redmond, a minister; S. H. Rhett, brick mason; Benjamin Schumpert, who sawed every 2 by 4 for both Allen University and Benedict College; James Washington the mill owner; Annie Davis, owned and operated a general store.

Henry Corley was considered to be among the most affluent of this Black community. He was given seeds, equipment and fertilizer as a start and told, "You gotta make it from here"(Able, 1990, p. 25). He owned a carpenter and blacksmith shop and raised livestock so fine he was the only Black member of an all-White beef club. A group called the Home Benevolent Society was formed, whose purpose was to help community members during times of death and illness. Able (1990) added that in 1990 the Home Benevolent Society was still in existence with 51 members. This society started out with dues of ten cents a month and 30 cents payable to a grieving family upon a member's death (p. 25-26).

On October 25, 1897, two and a half acres were deeded to construct the Pine Grove AME church. This information does not coincide with the church history, which states the church was built in 1872 because the first church building was destroyed by fire. After land was purchased for a cemetery, the next order of business was a school to teach the children. Two buildings were constructed adjacent to the church; Richland county students used one room and Lexington county students used the other.

This is where the students of the community attended school until the deterioration of the church school building forced the community to look for other options to house their children. A local campaign was initiated to begin construction of the Pine Grove Rosenwald School (PGRS); this initiative raised $2,500 for the school's construction. Together the African American families raised $265 and the White community raised $315. Along with public funds totaling $1,200 for construction and operation and a Rosenwald grant of $700 for architectural assistance and construction costs the PGRS was approved. The school was built on 3.77 acres of land sold to the

Richland County Trustees of School District 27 for $160 by Adam Metz on April 23, 1923. The construction of the PGRS was completed in the middle of 1923. According to the Historical marker (Figure4.3) the PGRS housed grades one through seven with two teachers managing the school. The marker also states that there were 40 to 50 students per year. Figure 4.4, an early photograph of the 1923-1924 class, portrays a of similar size.

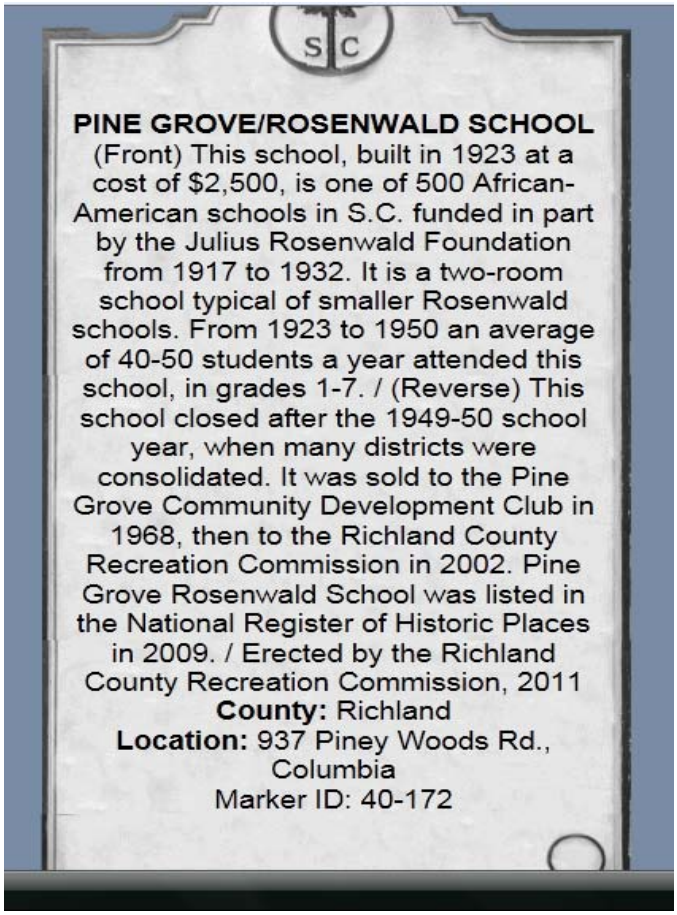

Figure 4.4: Pine Grove Rosenwald School historical marker
http://www.richlandcountyrecreation.com/rosenwald/gallery/gallery.html

Figure 4.5: The first Pine Grove Rosenwald School class 1923-1924
http://www.richlandcountyrecreation.com/rosenwald/gallery/gallery.html

Library development.

At the time when the Pine Grove Rosenwald School was built the state of public school library service in South Carolina was very dismal. In 1933, James H. Hope state superintendent of schools began a campaign to request and improve funding for libraries in public schools. Hope stated, "if this State is to be made up of reading people, it certainly must make it possible for schools and counties to operate traveling libraries . . . A non-reading people are such because thousands have been deprived of good books of any kind" (Hope, 1933). In interview after interview of research participants I heard repeatedly that there was no library available to the children attending the PGRS. By 1934, Hope asked the General Assembly for an appropriation of $10,000. He said, “We need the nucleus of a good library, well selected, for every country school throughout the land with a “shelf of books” for a one-room school as a minimum.” The PGRS never

received the minimum one shelf of books in all the years that it served the students of the Piney Grove community.

I never expected to learn about such a strong close knit Black community willing to do whatever it took to build, grow, thrive and survive. They were like phoenixes rising from the ashes of slavery. They built a community with trades and businesses, a school and a church. They and their children learned to read and be productive. They found ways to obtain reading materials in spite of a lack of library service to their school. My interviews of the six descendants of these former slaves show how this legacy still prevails. There are some who still live on the very land bought two centuries ago. They still take pride in their community and their collective and individual accomplishments. As Vandiver (1983) stated, "Good biographies deal with the ways people faced living—tell how they met problems, how they coped with big and little crises, how they loved, competed, did the things we all do daily—and hence these studies touch familiar chords in readers" (Kridel, 1998, p.16) and Finkelstein (1979) also wrote that "biographical studies of less-privileged groups have provided lucid views of life at the margins of social and political possibility—when they have been told from the learner's point of view" ((Finkelstein, 1979, p. 52). It is my honor and privilege to share the stories of six former students of the Pine Grove Rosenwald School of Richland county, Columbia, SC.

Student experiences.

The information used to answer research questions RQ2 and RQ3 was gathered using semi-structured interviews and two focus groups that examined the experiences of this small group of elderly African Americans who attended the Pine Grove Rosenwald School between the years of 1923 and 1950. The initial interviews focused on the

participants' reading background and the experiences that contributed to or impeded their progress as readers. A second group of interviews were conducted in order to clarify issues that arose during transcription, and a final focus group was conducted on February 19, 2013 to allow the participants to review the points they expressed in their interviews and interact with each other in a manner that might stimulate additional recollections.

Each of the six interviewees supplied a different perspective based on a differing set of personal experiences. Mrs. Mable Guider, 97, is the oldest contributor; she attended the PGRS when it first opened in 1923. She is a high school graduate, widowed with one married son who has one daughter; both the son and granddaughter are college graduates. She retired from S&M Wholesale Company. Mrs. Pauline Richardson is 88; she is married, she and her husband have no children and she worked for the State Department of Corrections as a clerical worker. Mrs. Cleonice Rhett is 84; although she is a retired beautician, she still continues to do hair in her home. Mrs. Rhett, a widow, shared that because she was the teacher's "pet" when she attended PGRS she was 'socially promoted', which she says, "Was not a good thing." Mr. Matthew Foust, 81, my one male contributor, retired from General Electric in 1984. He is also the husband of Mrs. Georgella Foust, 76, a retired clerical worker since 2000 from the Department of Mental Health. The Fousts have three children who all have done post high school work. Mrs. Iris Simpkins, 70, is the final interviewee and only college graduate. She graduated from Allen University. She was in the final class at PGRS. The school closed before she completed elementary school. She worked eighteen years in North Carolina and she taught school for twelve years in South Carolina. She is a widow with two grown sons. One son is college educated but the other son is mentally challenged and lives with her.

They all add very interesting perspectives to this research and I am very grateful to have met them.

Thematic analysis.

Review and analysis of the accounts of these participants suggest that the amount and type of reading resources and the materials provided to them failed to meet the separate but equal expectation prescribed in *Plessy v. Ferguson.* Although their experiences vary to some degree, they highlight the following commonalities which I have divided into four thematic categories to tell their stories.

Educational setting.

The former students agreed that there was no library in the PGRS, the textbooks they used were used and worn hand-me-downs from the White schools.

> Mrs. Foust: There was no library. We were able to carry our books home…to take our books home with us every afternoon

When I asked what texts they took home Mrs. Foust replied:

> "Dick and Jane," perhaps a math book and maybe a spelling book... that was the farthest, I think, reading, mathematics….arithmetic"

Mr. Foust and others shared the following on the subject of school reading materials:

> Mr. Foust: Yeah. We had what they called secondhand books.

> Mr. Foust: Right. We used what the White folks passed down to us.

> Mrs. Guider: We didn't have no library at school. But, they said we were using the White peoples books.

Mrs. Rhett: No. We, we got books, or very seldom we got new books…what the White children rejected, we got their old books. They were in pretty good shape. But, I was talking to one girl, another girl and her mother, and she said theirs were ragged. Ours wasn't ragged. But there was some writing in them. You could tell they had been used but we very seldom got a new book. But, that is all we had, so we went along with it, you know? No library. You were doing good to have a book to use in the classroom.

Mrs. Rhett shared the inequity of the Black education experience.

> Mrs. Rhett: "No, it is not equal. During those days, we had good teachers. Teachers that were dedicated, teaching children how to learn but the pay was not equal. And, and, before my time, students only went to school a short period of time….just a few months out of the year because of the farming. So, no, it was not equal."

School experience: interaction.

Although resources were few students were proud of their two room school house as attested to by the following statements.

> Mrs. Richardson: My very first school experience that I had to walk a very long ways to school. And, um, I guess, we walked farther than anybody in the community because this is the community and we lived outside the community. And we had to walk in to go to school. And it would be cold and I remember, uh, we would learn so much from the older students…they had the grades, 1-7, or whatever, and if you would sit here and be quiet, you would learn a lot from the other grades. Like seasons of the year, most windiest month of the year, and all

of that. And that was very encouraging. Because, some of those things I learned from other classes is what I remember today.

She also shared how proud she was to attend a two room school.

> Uh, well, I felt, um, I kind of elevated myself because a lot of the schools just had one room and one teacher. But, I was in a school with two rooms and two teachers. And also, they had, and you know what really is a part of me today is the devotions they had. The first thing in the morning when we got to school, everyone was in their classroom and they had a Blackboard that partitioned the room. And the boys would push the Blackboard up into the ceiling and you would have your devotion and that was together. After that, they would let it down and you would go into your classroom.

Mrs. Simpkins expressed the pleasure of being selected by the teacher to help other students in her class.

> Mrs. Simpkins: At Pine Grove, we had two rooms and the rooms were divided by chalk boards that you could push up to move it, you know, when you pushed it up, there were stops in it so the chalkboard did not come back down. And, the room was set up with the 1st graders, 2nd graders, 3rd graders. Ms. Bellinger would get them started or she would get the 3rd grade started and move, you know, one day she moved up and one day she moved back with getting people started. And, if someone in 3rd grade was a good reader, good speller, math person, then someone in the 2nd or 1st grade class was having problems, then she would assign you to them to help out. And that was a big honor because everyone

did not get selected. You always did the best you could so you would get selected to help the others. Sometimes, Ms. McGuiver, who taught 4th, 5th and 6th grade, would have some of her students to come over to help us, the littlest ones.

Resourcefulness.

Parents and teachers did their best to provide books, heat, and other resources to keep the PGRS functioning. They did everything from bake sales to loaning out their personal books to the students as the students confirm in their statements. Mrs. Guider sharing about the dances they had to raise funds.

> Mrs. Guider: We were sort of a close community anyway, and they would have, and I'll tell you what, they boys, the boys, uh, there's a man who used to, now at that time they didn't have a pan to beat, they had some kind of drum, something to beat on and they would dance and there'd be a dancin' session and you had to pay to get in, about 5 cents.

Mrs. Foust sharing how the teacher had the respect of her students and control of her class:

> Mrs. Foust: She was my first grade teacher and she had, and this particular setting, room setting, she had three classes, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th. 4 classes and she kept that class organized. She taught that class. She was so still with us. Of course, it wasn't like 20 or 30 children in each class. It was probably not that many kids in the entire school. But, she was able to teach her class. She had those first graders busy with something while she taught the second graders. She was just a skilled,

wonderful teacher. And she let you, let you enjoy school so much that you was looking forward to coming back the next day….

Reading in the home.

Mrs. Simpkins: "We were always readers. My mother worked three jobs and one of her jobs was working at the Jefferson Hotel as a maid. She always brought home magazines and books that were left over, books people gave her. So, we were always surrounded by reading material and she insisted that we read if we had spare time.

You were grateful to have spare time so you sat down and you read.

Mrs. Simpkins is the youngest participant and a retired educator. There were accounts of older siblings reading to their younger siblings because parents were busy earning a living and how other community members shared resources:

Mrs. Simpkins: Now, there was one lady in the community, and I can't remember her name, that had a set of encyclopedias that, you know, if you needed. Of course, we did not need them at the time but children in the 4^{th}, 5^{th}, and 6^{th}, if they needed to look up something, I think she made the available to them.

Everyone had different home reading experiences; from no reading them at home to siblings reading to them and grandmothers encouraging them to read. Mr. Foust noted that they did not have electricity and reading in the evening would waste good candles. Reading [to him] was something you did for school because it was a part of the educational process. My favorite at home reading experience came from Mrs. Simpkins:

> Humm. [Pause] The first one that I can think of was the, I can't remember the title of the book, it is about the little train that says, “I think I can, I think I can, I think I can. I know I can, I know I can, I know I can”
>
> Me: “The Little Engine that Could”
>
> Mrs. Simpkins: “That’s it. That’s it, yeah. Because my mother drilled into us, you can do anything that you want to do; you can be anything that you want to be. You can do anything you want to do. So that always, that was like our motivation.

What a wonderful first reading experience to have. It is obvious that this message stayed with her and her sisters. They all completed college. Though most of the students could not recall a reading memory as vivid as Mrs. Simpkins they all remember the Bible being read out loud on a regular basis. Some recall a newspaper, an almanac, and the catechism. A few others remember a book of fairytales and nursery rhymes.

The reading experiences of the interviewees varied in some ways and were similar in others. While the paths they followed were somewhat different, they all overcame the lack of materials provided by the school system. However, there are some indications that the learning process may have been slower than might have been expected if they had had access to a fuller range of educational reading materials. The main text for these six participants for their six to seven years stay at PGRS was a well-used set of Dick and Jane readers,[3] however most participants learned to read in spite of the dismal resources available to them.

[2] Dick and Jane played the lead roles in a series of books for teaching reading published between 1930 and 1965. You may remember them as the story characters who coined such enduring expressions as, "See Spot run! Run, Spot, run!" and "Look, look. Look up." The language in books created by piecing together one or two syllable words into simple

When I asked the participants what would have been different about their lives if the PGRS had a library full of books, this is what they shared:

> Ms. Foust: My vocabulary probably would have been broader with words, annunciation of words and how to communicate better. Uh, if I could have just read and read about places where I probably would have wanted to go travel and to, uh, see. Then other things open the pavement that leads to being knowledgeable, more knowledgeable about things. A library would have meant a lot to me because I do like to read and I enjoy reading.
>
> Ms. Guider: I believe [my life] would have been much better, you know, at that time, because I enjoyed going to school. I really did.
>
> Mrs. Simpkins: my vision would have been broader because I would have known there were more states in the union than the southern states and that, you know, Washington, there was a difference between Washington state and Washington D.C., which I was in high school…well, I knew it but I was in high school before I knew the full importance and how important Washington D.C. was to the nation. And, because, you know, that's where your government and all that stuff. But, I would have had an opportunity to, I mean, I probably would have heard about Russia and Czechoslovakia, you know all that kind of stuff before I got to high

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sentences lacks the natural flow and vibrancy of the language that children hear around them in everyday life and read in children's literature. Many contemporary reading theorists argue that reading is driven by a desire to make sense of print, illustrations and other visuals. When children read books designed to fit within reading level formulas, figuring out the words becomes the goal -- rather than reading for meaning. Leveled books are intended to support students as they begin to read and for specific instructional purposes (e.g. when teachers work with small groups of children who are struggling with reading). They were never meant to be the only books that children read in and beyond the classroom. Outside formal reading instruction, every child should be given a wide choice of reading materials. Students' interests and personal motivations for reading should be primary when they select books to read independently or for reading to family members. Like adults, children should be able to choose books to read for *a multitude of self-determined purposes (Shelley Stagg Peterson, 2008).

school, if I'd had [a library] in elementary school. Other participants shared concerns about the materials they were given and made these comments about them.

Ms. Richardson: And you know what, I always wondered after I got home, uh, where those books came from and were [the books] chosen just for? us or what. I always had that in the back of my mind after I got grown. I said, "I wonder, did they pick out these books and send them to us and we had to read what they wanted us to read?" you know, that's always been…I don't know whether that's a good thought or a bad thought but that's…

Ms. Rhett: It's a good thought because we are centralized in a lot of ways that we do not realize. We are. And just to make someone else's status greater than you. They have a structured plan for you and me and our children.

Ms. Rhett: Just to make them, um, superior to us. So far, we can go, so much in our lives to know, but you know, a mind is a wonderful thing. It's a wonderful thing. You could not get a person from learning if he wants to learn…he or she wants to learn.

Ms. Foust: That's true. It's a good thing that man cannot read your mind.

These observations show a sense of determination to succeed on the part of parents, teachers, and the community in spite of the resources (books), which were not available in the PGRS. They share pictures of how Blacks were brought up and made to feel like outsiders in an educational structure of hegemony. The also add another dimension to Chatman's theory of insider behavior because unlike Chatman's

participants these students, their parents, and teachers generously shared their resources. I think this may point to the importance of geographic location and local cultural. My research s come from a close knit southern community that depended on each other for survival. Chatman's participants were from Northern areas where most Blacks learn early to distrust and keep secrets. However these interviews do show the racial divide that was evidenced by the Jim Crow system of separate but unequal at play in the south.

Research Question 3

RQ3. *How have these experiences figured in their development as readers and the reading habits of their children?*

The interviewees were less clear on this question in part because some did not have children. However, when the question was expanded to include children they cared for several themes emerged. When parents talk about their children, pride is always a primary theme. Several participants shared their pride in the development of their children who had libraries in their elementary schools and opportunities to go further in their education. Here is what they shared:

> Mrs. Guider's only son went to college and he teaches now in a local school district.

> Mr. and Mrs. Foust; Mr. Foust: Two of them (their three children) finished college and one didn't. The baby girl, she was going to Benedict but she didn't like it so she flunked, she dropped out but she's still doing well. Mrs. Simpkins the third participant who had children has two sons.

> Mrs. Simpkins: "He did. The community College, he has, well they call it a certificate in Spanish. Because this one has learning, undiagnosed…well, they diagnosed it but they did not have a name…learning disability. The younger one that lives in North Carolina, he went for a semester and decided college was not for him and I decided college was not for him because he was wasting my money. [chuckles] He has worked but he keeps telling me he is going back. I said, "That's up to you, You know." "Yeah."

Mrs. Rhett and Mrs. Richardson did not have children, but Mrs. Rhett said she always encourages her nieces and nephews to read.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

While the findings described in the previous sections are informative and suggest the need for further consideration, it is important to remember that much of the material collected for this study relies on recollection and is consequently subject to the possibility of distortion typically associated with autobiographical recall and the somewhat weakened validity and reliability associated with these data. Although this was not the viewpoint expressed by the participants during the interviews, it remains a possibility. It must also be kept in mind that I brought to these interviews the experiences and viewpoint of a mature African American woman. Although this fact may have put my participants at ease, it may also have influenced our conversations.

Although this research is exploratory and not subject to generalization, it is suggestive, and its topic merits further consideration. Future research could focus on different schools, states, and a different set of individuals. I would personally like to examine the impact inadequate library service had on generational literacy in other

settings, especially in the South Carolina corridor of shame.[4] I would also like to replicate this study in Rosenwald school communities in other southern states to see if similar sharing patterns are found in these communities. I would like to see the data from this study used in building a case for legislation on immigration rights and setting policy for national, equal funding for all public schools. The data bears witness to the fact that separate is never equal.

[4] "Corridor of shame: the neglect of South Carolina's rural schools" is a 58 minute documentary that tells the story of the challenges faced in funding an adequate education in South Carolina rural school districts. http://www.corridor ofshame.com/

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The booklet entitled *the History of South Carolina Schools*: began with this statement: “Much of the 300 year-history of public schools is a tragic tale of fits and starts, marked at times by inspired leadership, but too often marred by problems of class, race, war, poverty and geography (Bartels, p. 33).” The research agenda shared within these pages calls to mind Bartels’s sentiment. Class, race and poverty played an enormous role in the disparities of resources in the South Carolina schools of the early 20th century.

Nancy Jane Day, director of libraries, reported in the 1946 annual report of the Superintendent of Education on the disparity of school libraries. At this time there were 672 White and 787 Black elementary schools with enrollment totaling 177,871 and 176,026 students respectively. These numbers suggest that on average White schools supported 264.6 learners per school to Black schools 223.6 learners – 41 more students or close to 2 extra class rooms by today’s standards. However, although white schools enrolled more students, the data related to library services and book stock reveal that there was a disproportion in the availability of resources confirming that separate was indeed not equal.

While there were more than 100 Black elementary schools than white elementary schools, there were close to 100 fewer libraries at Black schools. School libraries were present at 96% (648) of white elementary schools while only 71% (562) Black

elementary schools had them. Furthermore, the report's data showed that circulating library service was available at 585 white elementary schools and 333 black elementary schools – less than 50% of Black schools. There is no information to determine which schools were visited by circulating libraries or how often a school was visited, but the data did suggest that a majority of white schools were serviced by both on site and circulating libraries. The black elementary schools were not so fortunate.

The book stock for onsite libraries was 283,032 volumes for White schools and 103,984 volumes for Negro schools. With over 50% fewer volumes than their white counter part Black schools averaged 185 volumes per school to Whites 437 volumes. For circulating libraries, the book stock for White and Negro elementary schools was 141,460 volumes and 18,021volumes respectively, and averaged 242 volumes for whites and 54 volumes for Blacks per school. Keeping in mind average enrollment numbers per school, there were more than 25,000 white students serviced by circulating libraries than Black students being serviced by onsite libraries. Separate was not equal (South Carolina State Superintendent of Education, 1946, Tables 3, 16, 17).

The 1947 library report also described the poor financial support received by school libraries: 31 cents per pupil but only 13 cents per pupil for elementary school. Statistics for this year had also decreased. Now, there were only 555 White elementary school libraries with 296,909 volumes and 517 Negro school libraries with 90,863 volumes (South Carolina Superintendent of Education, 1947, Tables 17, 17). Circulating library visits had declined but book stock for both White and Negro schools had increased, though with the same degree of disproportion as in 1946.

Table 5.1: *1950 Schools, Elementary and High with Book Volumes and Student Count Separated by Race*

		Elementary Schools 1950		
	Total no. of schools	Total no. of students	No. of schools with libraries	Volumes of books in libraries
White	1,192	190,565	540	259,487
Black	2,046	186,891	506	72,408
		High Schools 1950		
	Total no. of schools	Total no. of students	No. of schools with libraries	Volumes of books in libraries
White	304	81,840	215	410,949
Black	163	34,989	97	85,870

Note: This table shows the disproportion of resources. Students in Black elementary schools shared 1 book per 3 students, while White elementary students had almost 3 books per student.

The data in Table 5.1 suggest a bleak disparity in the allocation of public funding during the period that many of those who are now our oldest African American citizens came of age. It also suggests that many of these individuals had little opportunity to develop the ability, much less the inclination, to read to children and others in their family. By 1951 things were not much better as Figure 4.3 shows; the volumes of books in Negro schools in 1946 were greater in some cases than they were by 1951 (see chapter 4, p. 45).

This research weighs heavily on my heart because I too am an older Black woman who did not have a library in my elementary school. What I did have was resourceful parents and grandparents. My grandmother and my mother brought home books from whatever Jewish home they were working in at the time. My siblings and I stood in the long line every two weeks to checkout our two books from the book mobile. My dad bought home a daily newspaper every evening. There was a set of encyclopedia I know now that my mom bought on credit and paid for with interest for $2.00 per month. I was blessed, there was no money, but there was no question that I would attend college. I

know how important books and libraries are and now I feel I know more about what happens when they are in short supply.

What does all of this say about this research? That the results of this study have taught me that despite the efforts of a variety of individuals and organizations, the reading materials available to other children and adults, including others who moved through the elementary schools of this period, were likely to be of poor quality and inadequate for instructional purposes. However, it is also apparent that this situation could be surmounted through personal determination, the determination of parents, strong Religious devotion, the work of dedicated teachers, and sometimes ingenious means. Although all of the individuals who participated in the study faced significant obstacles, each became a reader; and although it is difficult to determine whether the improved reading interests and capabilities of the children they cared for were the result of improved access to educational and reading materials, the experiences of the study participants suggest that the same values propelled their determination to improve the experiences of the next generation.

My research also suggests that reading skills can be developed even under difficult circumstances when individuals move through at least some of the scaffolding experiences mentioned below:

- Hearing stories read aloud by a parent or another caring adult;
- Having opportunities to do emergent story readings ("reading" on one's own);
- Having ready access to reading materials at home, at school, or through a public library;

- Having free choice of reading materials so that stories are enjoyed and the experience is pleasurable;
- Having both the space and time for shared and individual reading;
- Being part of a "readerly" family in which parents, siblings, and extended family act as role models;
- Having opportunities to talk about reading both while being read to and in other contexts such as the family dinner table;
- Having a sense that reading is a valuable activity;
- Having access to an enabling adult (Ross, McKechnie & Rothbauer, 2006, p. 75)

All of the participants in this study were privy to some of these experiences, although the one venue which could have picked up the slack, the school library, was not available for them to fall back on.

In 2003 several school districts, including Allendale, Dillon 2, Florence 4, Hampton 2, Jasper, Lee, Marion 7, and Orangeburg 3, filed a suit against the state of South Carolina, saying that they are entitled to equitable funding. A documentary entitled the *Corridor of Shame* revealed that there are still pockets of disparity in the state were teachers and students contend with inferior, and sometimes dangerous, building situations. It appears that the more things change the more they stay the same, listen to what my participants said when I asked them what would have been different about their lives if the PGRS had a library full of books, this is what they shared:

> Ms. Foust: My vocabulary probably would have been broader with words, annunciation of words and how to communicate better. Uh, if I could have just

read and read about places where I probably would have wanted to go travel and to, uh, see. Then other things open the pavement that leads to being knowledgeable, more knowledgeable about things. A library would have meant a lot to me because I do like to read and I enjoy reading.

Ms. Guider: I believe [my life] would have been much better, you know, at that time, because I enjoyed going to school. I really did.

Mrs. Simpkins: my vision would have been broader because I would have known there were more states in the union than the southern states and that, you know, Washington, there was a difference between Washington state and Washington D.C., which I was in high school…well, I knew it but I was in high school before I knew the full importance and how important Washington D.C. was to the nation. And, because, you know, that's where your government and all that stuff. But, I would have had an opportunity to, I mean, I probably would have heard about Russia and Czechoslovakia, you know all that kind of stuff before I got to high school, if I'd had [a library] in elementary school. Other participants shared concerns about the materials they were given and made these comments about them.

Ms. Richardson: And you know what, I always wondered after I got home, uh, where those books came from and were [the books] chosen just for? us or what. I always had that in the back of my mind after I got grown. I said, "I wonder, did they pick out these books and send them to us and we had to read what they

wanted us to read?" you know, that's always been…I don't know whether that's a good thought or a bad thought but that's…

Ms. Rhett: It's a good thought because we are centralized in a lot of ways that we do not realize. We are. And just to make someone else's status greater than you. They have a structured plan for you and me and our children.

Ms. Rhett: Just to make them, um, superior to us. So far, we can go, so much in our lives to know, but you know, a mind is a wonderful thing. It's a wonderful thing. You could not get a person from learning if he wants to learn…he or she wants to learn.

Ms. Foust: That's true. It's a good thing that man cannot read your mind.

Vargas, (2003) indicates that quantitative research methods capture the frequency and magnitude of the impacts of various kinds of discriminations, such as stereotyping and how a dominant group may engage in preferential in-group behavior. Qualitative studies complete the picture as they capture how race operates. I have heard from the voices of my participants about how they were disenfranchised[5] by the education system that oversaw the PGRS. The accounts of all six participants resonate with Chatman's insider/outsider model[6] and the idea that "one is considered a nonfunctioning member of a democratic society incapable of performing the simplest reading and writing tasks without literacy" (Famighetti, 1995, p. 483). I have also seen the differences that

[5] to deprive a person or organization of a privilege, immunity, or legal right, especially the right to vote.(Encarta Dictionary: English (North American).

5Within this model, insiders strive to maintain privileged access to certain types of information because people use information to reshape, redefine, and reclaim their social reality (p. 195). From this perspective, it is reasonable to suggest that literacy had both symbolic and functional meaning for both Blacks and Whites during the period of school segregation.

characterize the expenditures for the students at the White schools and Black schools. All of these observances imply that the tenets of critical race theory (CRT) frame this research initiative.

In 1995, Gloria Ladson-Billings and William F. Tate introduced CRT to the field of education, and Ladson-Billings later asserted that CRT "can be a powerful explanatory tool for the sustained inequity that people of color experience" (1998, p. 18). Then and today, one of the goals of CRT is the elimination of racism, and this is seen as a step towards the eradication of all forms of oppression (Lawrence, Matsuda, Delgado, & Crenshaw, 1993). I do not think the findings of my research were a surprise from this perspective, but I do think they add another dimension to the conversation about the literacy of older African Americans, immigrants and the poor.

I feel that my research adds to the body of research about Rosenwald schools giving voice to those who attended such schools. I hope that this study will be looked at by policy makers who have the important job of equalizing South Carolina public schools. I would like for it be a cautionary tale of how not to repeat history. There is much work to be done in leveling the playing field for policy in education. Look at the numbers shared in the tables and figures. Consider the possibilities for debate for education funding. Allow this study to be a part of the discussion and solution for eradicating areas like the corridor of shame, in South Carolina, and aiding in the equalization of funding for the Nation's public schools.

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Appendix A: Materials for Participants

Description of the Study

Dear Prospective Participant:

My name is Barbara Montgomery, and I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina, where I am conducting research for my Doctoral Dissertation. The path I have chosen focuses on the historic factors that contribute to current literacy patterns in South Carolina. The significance of this study lies in its potential to use the narratives of older African Americans who attended schools where books and other resources were less than adequate and to develop a better understanding of the impact of these scarce conditions on the lives and families of those who were faced with similar disparities. Your participation in this case study is being requested because of your experience attending a segregated, South Carolina school at a time when reading resources were difficult to come by and in some cases hardly adequate.

You will be one of six participants asked to join this study. The study will require your participation in one sixty minute interview and two sixty minute focus groups. I would like to conduct the one sixty minute interview at a time and place of your choosing. The two sixty minute focus groups will be conducted at the Pine Grove Community Center. All interviews will, with your permission, be video-taped and transcribed.

During the focus group, no questions will be directed to you as an individual, but instead will be posed to the group. You may choose to respond or not respond at any point

during the discussion. The focus group discussion will also be video-taped so I can capture comments in a transcript for analysis. Participation in the study is completely voluntary. You may decide not to participate at any time or may elect not to answer specific questions posed to you. Should you have any questions or desire further information, please call me at (803) 788-3955 or email me at mont9898@bellsouth.net. You may also contact Dr. Jennifer Arns, faculty advisor to this study via email at jarns@mailbox.sc.edu.

All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. The Institutional Review Board at the University of South Carolina has approved this study. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant you may contact, anonymously if you wish, Thomas Coggins, Director, Office of Research Compliance, University of South Carolina, (803)-777-4456 or e-mail – tcoggins@mailbox.sc.edu.

Thank you very much for considering my study. If you are interested and willing, please respond to this invitation at your earliest convenience. I await your response.

Sincerely,

Barbara J. Montgomery

Introduction

You are being asked to take part in a research study. To join this study is voluntary. You may refuse to join, or withdraw your consent to be in the study, for any reason. Your decision to participate will be kept private and will not affect your status or standing in your community.

Details are discussed below. It is important that you understand this information so that you can make an informed choice about being in this study. You will be given a copy of this consent form. You should ask the investigator named above any questions you have about this study at any time.

Purpose of Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to illuminate the narratives of older African Americans who attended segregated, South Carolina schools where books and other resources were less than adequate. Through these narratives it is the intent of this research to tease out first hand, lived experiences of six persons who were impacted by a "separate but equal" education. I will be looking specifically at how the lack of quality library materials impacted literacy.

Description of Study Procedures

You will be one of six participants asked to join this study. The study will require of you; participation in one sixty minute interview and two sixty minute focus groups. I would like to do the interviews in a selected place of your convenience. The focus group

will be take place at the Pine Grove Community Center. All interviews will, with your permission, be video-taped and transcribed.

You have the right to skip any questions that you may be asked for any reason. You also have the right to ask that the tape recorder be turned off at any time for any reason.

During the focus group no questions will be directed to you as an individual, but instead will be posed to the group. You may choose to respond or not respond at any point during the discussion. The focus group discussion will also be video-taped so I can capture comments in a transcript for analysis. Prior to the start of the focus group session, each participant will be asked to sign a separate consent form.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. You may decide not to participate at any time or may elect not to answer specific questions posed to you. Sample questions might include the following:

1. Can you recall your very first school experience, where it took place, key persons and events?
2. How would you describe the physical building and grounds?
3. Did you complete your formal education there? (If no answer #4)
4. Where and what was the name of the school where you completed your formal education?

Benefits for Participants

Research is designed to benefit society by creating new knowledge. This study will provide you, the participant the understanding that you are helping to create information useful for further research. The knowledge and understanding gained from this study will be useful to the library community and a broad educational audience.

Risks for Participants

You may feel discomfort in being asked to reveal, honestly, your perceptions about your formal education if you are still living in the same community.

Number of Participants

There will be six older African Americans participating in this study.

Confidentiality of Records

In an effort to maintain confidentiality, you will not be identified by name if this is your desire. I will be transcribing the tapes and they will be kept in a locked box in my home office. I will also replace the names of any school, organization and/or community you mention with different names to protect your identity. During the focus group, you will be asked to choose your own pseudonym. At the conclusion of the study, all notes and records that contain your name or the names of any school, organization or community you may mention will be destroyed.

Contact Person

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact:

Thomas Coggins, Director
Office of Research Compliance
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208

Phone – (803) 777-4456 Fax – (803) 576-5589 E-Mail – tcoggins@mailbox.sc.edu

Participant's Agreement

I have been informed about this study, and I have asked all the questions that I have at this time. I agree to be a participant in this research study. I want to use my real name and not a pseudonym.

___ I give the researcher permission to video-tape the interviews and use my real name

___ I do not give the researcher permission to video-tape the interviews and use my real name.

Signature of the participant

_____ _____

Signature of the person obtaining consent Date

_____

Printed name of person obtaining consent

Questions for Participants

Reading in the Home Context

1. Think back to when you were a child. What do you recall about your reading life inside your home? What were those home reading experiences like for you as you grew up?

Potential Probes:

a. Were your parents able to read (and/or write)? If so, who read to you? Can you recall how often they read to you? What other family members to you recall reading to you/with you?

b. Do you recall what kinds of reading materials could be found in home as you were growing up? Any books? Do you remember any of the titles?

2. Can you share with me one particular childhood memory you have of reading at home?

Educational Setting

3. Now, I want you to continue thinking back to your childhood, except this time I want you to think about your schooling experiences. What do your recall about your very first school experience?

Potential Probes:

a) Where did you attend school?

b) Did you complete your formal education there? If not, where and what was the name of the school where you completed your formal education?

c) Tell me about some of the folks you recall being at the school (e.g. students, teachers, administrators, support staff, etc.)? Why do you think you

remember those individuals?

d) What do you recall most about your experiences there?

4. What do you recall about the physical building that housed the school? Describe it for me. What about the grounds surrounding the school? The neighborhood surrounding the school?

Potential Probe:

a) Was your school a one room school house?

Reading in the School Context

5. Okay, let's stay with your memories about your schooling experiences except now I want to shift the focus a bit and talk specifically about your reading experiences in school. The questions I'm going to ask are very similar to the ones I asked about your reading experience at home, except they will focus on your reading experiences in school. So, I want you to think back again and tell me what you can recall about your reading life at school? What were those experiences like for you as you grew up?

Potential Probes:

a) Do you recall who read to you at school? Can you recall how often they read to you?

b) Do you have any memories of reading with/to other students?

c. Do you recall what kinds of reading materials you had at school?

What do you recall about your books? Other books?

6. Do you recall whether or not the school had a library? If so, what do you recall about the library?

Potential Probes:

a) Who had access to the library? Who do you recall using it most?

b) Can you recall what the library looked like? If so, tell me what you remember

Current Reading Contexts and Impact on Family

7) Okay. I want to end today's interview by talking a some about your reading life today as well as about your children and grandchildren's reading habits.

Probes about Family:

a) Do you have children? (If no, skip to next section.)

b) When your children were growing up, what kind of reading materials could be found in your home?

c) Did you read to your children? Why or why not?

d) Did your children enjoy reading? Why or why not?

e) Do you have grandchildren? (If no, skip to next section) If you do, do your children read to their children?

f) Do you think your grandchildren like to read? Why or why not?

Probes about You:

g) What kinds of things do you like to read today? Why?

h) Who do you currently read to? *Follow up.*

i) Who do you currently read with/to?

Final Focus Group Protocol

Second Focus Group

Purpose of the discussion:

To bring all my case study participants together in the space where they began their formal education and to tease out any forgotten memories about books, reading and libraries.

My role:

To inform the group that I am here to hear about their experiences and to elicit their wisdom, and to let them know that there are no right or wrong answers.

Expectations:

That everyone will fully participate to the best of their ability.

Engagement Questions

1. Will each of you please share your name and if you are retired what your former field of work was? If you are still working tell us what you do.

2. Now share what it feels like to be back here at the Pine Grove Rosenwald School.

What memories come to mind being in this building again?

Exploration Questions

1. Explain to us what a reading experience was like, for you, at the PGR School.

2. Describe what you think your life would have been like if there was a library full of books in this school.

Exit Questions

1. Do you feel segregation deprived you of a good education at the Pine Grove School?

2. Finally, how did not having a library in elementary school affect the way you raised your children? Was it determination, resourcefulness, religion, or personal influence of dedicated teachers that was the greatest influence?

Appendix B: Example of Interview Transcript Coding

Barbara Montgomery

Interview #2

Barbara: Well, good afternoon to you.

Interviewee: Good afternoon to you.

Barbara: Mrs. Foust. I have some questions for you today. The first thing I would like to know, do you mind telling me your age?

Interviewee: I am 75. A young 75

Barbara: Okay. Most of these questions are going to be centered on your reading, your habits of reading when you were a child in school and, um, what you read now. So, here is what I want you to do for me. Think back to when you were a child. What do you recall about your reading life inside your home?

Interviewee: Well, the, back in the 30's when I was born, I would say in the 40's, until the 40's when I began reading, there was not much reading material except for the newspaper. And, of course, I was not interested in reading news. There was a cartoon in there and it was called **Hambone**. Everyday precisely, I would read Hambone **(Rding @home)**

Barbara: Alright. Um, do you recall anyone else reading to you?

Interviewee: Uh, yes. Uh, my older sisters would read to me. **(Who read to you @ home)**

Barbara: Can you think of anything they read to you that sticks out in your memory?

Interviewee: Uh-huh. They read to me like, they usually, what they would read to me about was people such as George Washington Carver and at the time one of my sisters was attending school at Booker T. Washington. And she read to me, well, she told us about the history of Booker T. Washington and where the school got its name from…things like that. It may be good for you to know that I am the ninth child out of

twelve. And I had older sisters and brothers who read to me. And, **(siblings read @home)**

Barbara: Did any of them attend the Piney Grove Elementary school.

Interviewee: Yes. Most all of them. The one that was here, the oldest of the 12. You spoke with her on Tuesday when you were here.

Barbara: And what was her name?

Interviewee: Pauline.

Barbara: Pauline.

Interviewee: uh-huh.

Barbara: what was her last name.

Interviewee: She is the elderly one amongst us.

Barbara: I have an interview with her tomorrow. Great! Do you have any other siblings that still live in the community?

Interviewee: I have 2 brothers.

Barbara: Did they attend the school?

Interviewee: Yes.

Barbara: Do you think they might let me interview them?

Interviewee: Hopefully.

Barbara: Wonderful. Okay. That is great. I need 12.

[Laughing]

Barbara: Um, so tell me this, were your parents able to read and write?

Interviewee: Yes, my mother, um, my father was an elementary educated person. Um, my mother, she went farther because she was a student at Benedict college, I think, during the time, if I can recall what she told us, it was a high school. And she attended high school at Benedict College. My father probably completed the fourth or the fifth grade, if he went that far. **(parents could read)**

Barbara: Sounds like my dad. Um, other than your sisters and older siblings, do you recall anyone else reading to you at home?

Interviewee: I really don't.

Barbara: Um, do you recall any kind of reading material that could be found in the home while growing up?

Interviewee: A Bible **(books in the home).**

Barbara: A Bible.

Interviewee: The Holy Bible. uh-huh.

Barbara: Okay, so other than the newspaper, you had a Bible. Okay. Do you remember any titles of children's books?

Interviewee: Yes. Yes, um, Mother Goose Tales.

Barbara: Did you have that in your home?

Interviewee: Not until I was a teenager.

Barbara: Okay.

Interviewee: that is when I was introduced to all the, those characters, you know. And the storytelling time. But, I had a chance to read these stories. These kind of stories. I don't know if I was in the sixth or seventh grade or how those materials, materials were introduced to me. Maybe, I could have, received a book for Christmas.

Barbara: Okay. Okay. Can you, you know, just kind of sit back and think for a minute of a particular childhood memory you have of reading at home. Something that really sticks out in your mind and you have never forgotten it.

Interviewee: I, um, read the story, I don't know how I acquired this book, but it was about the 100 dresses. it was a girl who went to school and she always told her classmates about the 100 dresses that she had. Well, she was shabbily dressed and none of her classmates believed her. And, if I can recall, I don't know how it happened…how they discovered those 100 dresses but when they came upon the 100 dresses…I don't know if they were hanging on the wall or made out of paper. Do you remember the story? (**Reading Memory)(favorite book)**

Barbara: I do. [Laughs]

Interviewee: I loved that story. Now, I am trying to think how I got a hold of the book. I don't know if that book was given to me through a relative or I read it in the library at Booker T Washington High School. You know, I started at Booker Washington when I was in Junior High.

Barbara: Okay.
Interviewee: But, I loved that story. Now please don't ask me the author.

Barbara: That's alright. That's alright. Because I am sitting here trying to search my

mind to see if I remember.

Interviewee: That is one story that always stuck in my mind. And, uh, sometimes I

related to everyday life.

Barbara: Stories will make us do that. Uh-huh.

Interviewee: We imagine.

Barbara: So, tell me this, uh, I want you to continue thinking back to your childhood except this time I want you to think about your schooling experience. What do you recall about your very first school experience? Very first.

Interviewee: Well, I was excited about going to school because I would be going there with my older sisters and brothers. And the children I would normally see at Sunday School, they would be attending school too and I would get a chance to see them everyday instead of just on Sunday's.

Barbara: So, where did you attend school?

Interviewee: Pine Grove Elementary.

Barbara: Okay. So, did you complete your formal education there? I believe the school

went up to…

Interviewee: The seventh grade.

Barbara: ...the seventh grade.

Interviewee: Yes I did.

Barbara: Alright. So, tell me about some of the folks you recall being at school.

Interviewee: Uh, my classmates are Charles and Glenna. She was really my good buddy. Uh, she and I was about the same age and were in the same grade. We really was good friends until her death. Although she left and went away, she lived for many, many years in New Jersey and when she died they brought her back home and I was happy about that…bringing her body back home. But that was my real good friend. My other buddy, I call him a "buddy." He was the one that would fight me every day. [Laughing]

Barbara: Trying to keep you straight…

Interviewee: His name was Charles. He picked on me. We were about the same age and Charles is still alive and he lives somewhere in Columbia. But whenever we meet each other, we be glad to see each other. And sometimes we will, you know, reminisce and talk about…

Barbara: So, why do you think you remember those two people?

Interviewee: Because, Glenna was my good friend. Charles was the one that teased me. He was the little bully on the grounds. And not only did he bully me, he bullied a lot of the other students too.

Barbara: Oh, okay.

Interviewee: It is hard to forget…

Barbara: So, its nothing new is it…bullying.

Interviewee: Nothing new. Nothing new but I think they did it more decently. They would just tease you or…but now they.

Barbara: I agree with you. It was gentle teasing. Tell me this, do you recall any of the teachers…

Interviewee: Yes!

Barbara: Does anyone stick out in your mind?

Interviewee: Yes. Thelma T. Bellinger **(Teacher.)**

Barbara: Thelma….?

Interviewee: Thelma, her middle initial was T. And her last name was Bellinger.

Barbara: And why do you think you remember her?

Interviewee: She was my first grade teacher and she had, and this particular setting, room setting, she had three classes, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th. 4 classes and she kept that class organized. She taught that class. She was so still with us. Of course, it wasn't like 20 or 30 children in each class. It was probably not that many kids in the entire school. But, she was able to teach her class. She had those first graders busy with something while she taught the second graders. She was just a skilled, wonderful teacher. And she let you, let you enjoy school so much that you was looking forward to coming back the next day….

Barbara: ….coming back the next day.

Interviewee: And she taught me and you had to learn. But, of course, children, I believe, was different then.

Barbara: Do you recall her reading out loud to you?

Interviewee: Oh yes. She would read out loud and she would have us read out loud to her.

Barbara: Can you think of anything that sticks out in your mind?

Interviewee: Dick and Jane. Dick and Jane. Dick and Jane. Spot. Sally. Run Sally run. Run Jane run. Jump Sally jump. Spot can jump too **(school reading material)**

Barbara: I remember Dick and Jane.

Interviewee: Oh yes. That was the book that stuck out in my mind. That was my first reading material. (**first reading memory from school)**

Barbara: Okay. Um, so tell me this. What do you recall about the physical building. What did the school look like to you then?

Interviewee: Okay. We had, just like I said, the setting of the building, the interior of the building, we had a pot belly stove set in the corner of the classroom. That was our heat. And, there was the teachers desk set near the stove. And then there were rows or maybe about…I don't know what type of desks we had…I don't think we had single desks, we had something like a long table. And we had each child had something like a little slot underneath where he would sit, just kind of like what this was. And they would have a

little slot where they put their books and things there. And you had a child sitting next to you. I would say about three children could sit to one table.

Barbara: Okay.

Interviewee: And that was the physical outlook of it. Of course, we had a closet, which we called the coatroom where we would hang our coats and things when we went in to school that particular morning. And the other corner, we had something like a little, a corner, we had switches tied together and when we misbehaved, that is what the teacher would spank us with…the switches. We had a blackboard. The blackboard divided the two rooms. When we had assembled programs, we pushed the blackboards up in the ceiling and we would have one open wide space for two of the rooms…they would be all in one.

Barbara: So, did the blackboard go from floor to ceiling.

Interviewee: Yes. It did. As a matter of fact, it is that way now.

Barbara: Wow. I can't wait to see it. So, what was the outside like?

Interviewee: Well, on the outside, the boys played on this side, usually, but we were free to play on either side. But on this side, the boys would play and the boys outhouse was located on this end. Now, the reason why the boys played was there was something like a baseball field. And they played sports. On the opposite side of the school bulging was usually where the girls would assemble. What we would do, we would take the pines and make furniture. We would make a bed, then we would shape it round…we got our idea from the type of furniture we had in our house, you know, our homes. And that would be our chair. We would take, um, maybe some old pine and shape it into square for the table. And we played playhouse. And sometimes we would get a child, the smallest child in our group, to be the baby.

Barbara: The baby! [Laughs] I probably would have been the baby all the time!

Interviewee: yeah, it was a lot of fun.

Barbara: So, what was the neighborhood like?

Interviewee: The neighborhood was a very close knitted community. They shared with one another but most of all, they cared about one another. And, um, children, your child was your neighbor child. You know, that book that Hilary Clinton wrote, which is the old African Proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child." We was raised by all the elderly people in this community.

Barbara: So, tell me this, now we are going to kind of look at reading in the school in the school context. We may have covered some of this but lets just make suer we get it all

covered. So, say, um, stay with your memories about schooling experiences, except now, I want you to shift the focus a bit and talk specifically about your reading experiences in school. The questions I am going to ask you are questions that are very similar to the ones I asked you already about your reading at home except they will focus on your reading experiences in school. So, I want you to think back, again, and tell me what you can recall about reading life at school. What were those experiences like as you grew up? Now I know you talked about "Dick and Jane" but I am wondering if you can recall any specific titles. What kinds of books did you get in school? Were you given books to take home? Was there a library?

Interviewee: Okay, are we still with the Piney Grove, the school here?

Barbara: Yes.

Interviewee: There was no library. We were able to carry our books home…to take our books home with us every afternoon.**(No Library)**

Barbara: And what books were those?

Interviewee: Well, in the elementary part, it was "Dick and Jane," perhaps a math book and maybe a spelling book. Uhh, that was the farthest, I think, reading, mathematics….arithmetic, they called it arithmetic, and spelling. **(What books they used in school)**

Barbara: Do you have any memories of reading with other children? Say for example, were you placed in groups?

Interviewee: No. I don't recall any of that.

Barbara: Did you have to read out loud?

Interviewee: Sometimes.

Barbara: Okay.

Interviewee: It depends on what the teacher requested.

Barbara: Okay. So when you would read out loud, would you read from…

Interviewee: …the textbook that was provided.

Barbara: That was the "Dick and Jane"?

Interviewee: Uh-huh.

Barbara: Okay. Alright. Um, do you recall whether or not the school had a library? We have already talked about that and you said "no." Um, so, lets see….so tell me about your reading now. Do you have children?

Interviewee: Grown children?

Barbara: Yeah…I figured…

Interviewee: Uh-huh.

Barbara: And you have, what?

Interviewee: I have three children. Two daughters, two sons…I mean, one son…and two granddaughters.

Barbara: Do they come visit?

Interviewee: Yes.

Barbara: Do you read to them?

Interviewee: No I do not because they are adults. But, when they were young, I read to them. (**she read to her children)**

Barbara: Okay, can you tell me what you read to them?

Interviewee: Oh, I read them all the Mother Goose stories. I read to the, um, most of them were Mother Goose stories that I read to them. "Jack and the Ladder" and "Jack and the Beanstalks" and things like that I read to them. As a matter of fact, I have a book with all those stories in it and that is what I read from.

Barbara: Let me ask you this just out of curiosity…is it from the World Book Encyclopedia Set?

Interviewee: It is not from that, no. Just ordinary books that you buy out of the store

Barbara: I know that growing up….

Interviewee: What they are, the illustrations are large.

Barbara: Okay. We had a set of World Book Encyclopedias and with them came a set of literature books. And one of them, we had a book that had different stories. And one of

my favorite stories that I recall, that my mother read to me was, "No Daddy Yet." It was about a little child that was sent home…set on the steps…and would wait for their daddy to come home. And everyone else would go by but no daddy yet. The train would go by. The fire engine would go by. A cab would go by, but no daddy yet. And so, you know, that is what I think about…

Interviewee: Yeah. Right.

Barbara: Just what were those…what reading experience did you bring to your grandchildren. So, okay. Now, just out of curiosity, did you go to high school?

Interviewee: Yes I did.

Barbara: So, what was your, um, highest level of education?

Interviewee: I graduated from high school and I had one-year experience in college.

Barbara: Okay. Alright. Um, do you think your grandchildren love to read?

Interviewee: Oh yes ma'am, they do. They do. Now, my grandchildren, my oldest is 29 years old. And the youngest one is 20.

Barbara: Okay. So, did your children go to college?

Interviewee: Yes ma'am.

Barbara: All three of them.

Interviewee: Uh-huh.

Barbara: Wonderful.

Interviewee: My youngest went to Tech, Midland, Tech. And the two oldest ones graduated from college. The boy, the oldest child, which is a boy and the girl, the oldest girl

Barbara: Where did they go to school?

Interviewee: My daughter graduated from South Carolina State and my son graduated from Benedict

Barbara: And what are they doing now?

Interviewee: Steve, he works, they all are working. One works with something like a counseling with the recreation department and, um, my son, works for __23:33[lots of background noise]_____. He taught school for some time. Then, he went into the military and then when he came back from the military, he did not want to go back to the classroom, he found another job.

Barbara: and your other daughter?

Interviewee: My other daughter, she is at the bank. She works at the bank. She is a teller at the bank.

Barbara: And they read to their children? Do all three of them have children?

Interviewee: No, just only two. My oldest daughter and my oldest son. My youngest daughter, shes not married.

Barbara: She's just 20?

Interviewee: No, no. My youngest daughter is 48.

Barbara: Okay, it is your youngest grandchild that is 20.

Interviewee: Yes, my youngest grandchild is 20.

Barbara: Yeah. I remember 20.

Interviewee: I have two grandchildren.

Barbara: 29 and 20. Do they have children? Does the 29-year-old have children?

Interviewee: Neither one has children.

Barbara: So, what kinds of things do you like to read today?

Interviewee: Well, my eyes have deteriorated some, especially this eye. I had a stroke in this eye.

Barbara: Okay.

Interviewee: **But, my reading materials is like social events, the newspaper, political. Anything that I feel that I need to know. I am a very curious person about the news of the nation. And so, uh, I read a little of everything. Biographies are my favorite.**

Barbara: What biographies have you read? (What she reads)

Interviewee: I, well, I have read several. Martin Luther King, this movie star, but I don't know his name but his wife…I can't think of her name…she wrote a book, "All by myself." Oh my gosh, that was a good book. Can you help me out? He died with cancer and I think she is still alive. Um, what was her name? Lauren Bacall

Barbara: Lauren Bacall

Interviewee: Yeah. I read her book.

Barbara: And what's his name?

Interviewee: She was married to Humpy..hump…

Barbara: Humphrey Bogart?

Interviewee: I think that was him?

Barbara: She married him?

Interviewee: I think…was it Humphry Bogart

Barbara: I don't know. I knew she was in love with him.

Interviewee: I think his name was Humphry Bogart, who she married. And I have read Eartha Kitt, Josephine Baker, uh, oh, I have read so many. I am just curious about how people live. I read, um, Condalisa Rice…let me see who else. I read Malcolm X. Oh, there are so many. But, I read. I read (past tense) a lot. Not only did I read social science, um, I also read, um, fictions and non-fiction. I mean, these are the type of books…

Barbara: Now, let me ask you this…do you feel that not having a library and not having access to many reading materials when you were younger, do you think that hindered you in any way?

Interviewee: No, it didn't hinder me because I learned everyday of my life. My daily life with my family and my surroundings is where I got my learning from. Matter of fact, that was my first initial learning, was from my family.

Barbara: Now, was the Bible read daily in your home?

Interviewee: Oh yes. My grandmother lived with us and she read the Bible and she had us to read the Bible. It was almost…well, it was a must in our house. And I learned a lot from her because she told of her past experience. And somehow or another, she told me so much about her past experience because she was home at all the time because the rest of them was in the field working. We, being younger children, she kept us. And, um, it gave me the desire to learn more about what she told me about. Her experiences….

Barbara: So, what did she say?

Interviewee: She told me about when she was a child and her brother was a slave. And, um, she told me about all that experience. And that is one reason why I wanted to read history. I wanted to study….

Barbara: Was he a slave here in South Carolina?

Interviewee: Yes. Originated from Edgefield and Greenwood County, all up round there. That is where she came to us from. That is where my parents came from. So, I guess she was there because they were sold from place to place. So, I don't know where it originated from, you know, but it was right here in South Carolina.

Barbara: That's interesting.

Interviewee: So, I had an interest in that and I always wanted to read and she would tell us, "Read, you know how to read. You read everything you can get your hands on." She said, "That's how you learn." This is what this 80-year-old woman, who could not read or write herself, but she could read the Bible. Now, you may not believe that….it is hard to believe. She could read the Bible. (**Illiterate but able to read the bible)**

Barbara: No, I believe it. I believe it.

Interviewee: And she encouraged us to read too. And, I think that is the reason why, that helped to instill reading in me. I tried to instill it in my children. And, I baby set most of the time for my working children's children…my grandchildren, and I tired to instill in them, and they went on and they did quite well. My youngest granddaughter, the 20-year-old, she will be graduating next year, if all goes well. She will be a rising senior. And the oldest one, she lives and works in Washington D.C.

Barbara: Wonderful.

Interviewee: She has her masters too from Carolina.

Barbara: Wonderful.

Interviewee: And she works in health. That is her field.

Barbara: Mrs. Foust, you have been wonderful. I have enjoyed every moment of this.

Interviewee: Oh, I know I am so dull. I thought I had to wake you up a couple times.

[Laughing]

Barbara: Thank you so much, I truly enjoyed this.

Interviewee: Well, thank you so much for asking me to take part in this. Now, I'm going to contact my brother Sam. He talks more than I do.

Barbara: Well, tell Sam to come on!

END RECORDING