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Bryant, Joseph

Joseph Bryant

Debbie Frost

Malik Austin

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Carolina Connections

Interviewee: Joseph Bryant

Interviewer: Debbie Frost

July 16th, 2013, St. Helena, S. Carolina.

Debbie Frost (DF): Good Morning today is July 17th, 16th, and we're with Reverend Joseph Bryant on St. Helena Island, and Reverend we'd like to thank you this interview, and you can tell us a little bit about where you were born and how you came to live on St. Helena Island.

Joseph Bryant (JB): Once again, once again My name is Reverend Joseph, my middle initial is P. and Bryant with a T at the end. I am native of Beaufort County, born and raised in Beaufort County, I was born in a town called Port Royal on the other side of the Beaufort river, now it's now known as the Beaufort Port Royal area because it's kinda tied up the boundaries have pretty much intertwined with each other at this time. They now prefer to say the Beaufort-Port Royal area, some people from the town of Port Royal say you pass this one stoplight and you're in the city of Beaufort, but I say the Beaufort-Port Royal area because the street I was living on is where they are pretty intermingled with each other. And I was raised by two Gullah Geechee parents, and what that means is that they are both breeds at the same time, both Gullah and Geechee and they raised me, in the Beaufort Port Royal area, from a small baby,. I was a product of a young lady by the name of Emily Williams, but I was raised by two people, Mr. Joseph who we affectionately called B, and Lula Bryant, they took me in there under their wings shortly after I was born to a young girl by the name of Emily Williams, who when she gave birth to me was only 12 years old, I was the product of a 12 year old girl who got pregnant when she was 11, she turned 12 in July and I was born in December a few months later, and she being a little girl, giving birth to a little piece of nothing like me, they say when I was born I came out I was so small and so immature so puny they didn't think I would make it, I could fit in one hand, the palm of one hand, that's how small I was. But from then to now, I'm still here, and I said thank god for allowing me to live from that time to now, I am now at the good old age of 59, getting ready to become the threescore that God promised or maybe he'll give me the additional 10, or a 4 score of years. Thank god, but I was raised in Gullah Geechee culture, I was raised going to school with at an early age predominantly Geechee people, and as the years went on, during the elementary years it was mostly Geechee culture that I was raised with but as time went on and I got into the middle school ages and the high school ages I found myself mingle with parts of the Gullah culture as well. At one time in history they used to refer to everyone around here as Geechee and everyone around here was Geechee, nobody knew anything about Gullah or Geechee but everyone used to say old Geech listen to the geech, the way we spoke our language, look at that old geechee, and when I went in the military the guys used to ridicule me sometimes and ask me questions like "why do you talk like that." My first station was in Charleston, South Carolina in the US navy the guys from the other part of the country would say to me, "you sound

like the people who live around here, why you talk like that” I could not understand why they were asking that because to me, and to all our people it appears that we are speaking regular English. But when we come into contact with other people they can tell the difference, immediately, there’s a difference, and I used to take it offensively, at first, when they would ask me this question, but as time went on, I moved away and when I finally came back home I heard there was such, there was a thing called Gullah, and wow where did that come from, and then they had a Gullah festival, here in Beaufort, and I could not understand, when they talk about the Gullah, who is the Gullah. And as time went on I was educated by older members of the community and those who are well versed in the new Gullah culture at the time as to why we were called that particular name. Some of us referred to as Gullah. Some referred to us as Geechee. Now that we have a queen, by the name of Marquette Goodwine, it seems like there has been a unification of the two cultures, so now they say Gullah slash Geechee, Gullah/Geechee, Gullah/Geechee, so now it is like they’re trying to make the cultures one instead of two, however, some of our people still prefer to call themselves Gullah, distinctively, and the other one if you say are you Gullah, they; say “I’m Geechee,” and they’ll make that distinction so that you know there should be no mix-up between the two. But that's who I am, I’m Joseph P. Bryant, I’m married to a beautiful young lady by the name of Cherry and we have a handsome grown son, named after his grandfather by the name of Samuel, and we’re happy to be here with you today.

DF: Very good, now you mentioned some distinctions just in the language itself, can you give of some comparisons just of the language?

JB: Well, the Geechee language and the Gullah language is the same except in the way that they present the language to you. For example if you went to the Charleston area, Charleston South Carolina and those areas North of Beaufort County. Mostly Say Charleston and other areas up further going north up highway 17, youll come into a group of people who they refer to as Geechees, those are your mainland people. The people that make up the island territories like St James Island, and John’s Islands, and Claude Millar, oh just to name a few Islands Warsaw, Lady's Island, St. Helena, Dakaw, Distant, Hunting Island, Daufuskie, Hilton Head places like that, these people are referred to are Gullah. The people that live on the islands are Gullah and those that live on the mainland are referred to as Geechee or Gullah/Geechee. The ones who are 30 miles inland from the Atlantic coast are usually referred to as Pure Geechees. The Geechee language when I go up to Charleston to go to the VA hospital if I see anyone from the Beaufort of St. Helena areas we will sit together and listen and judge each other when we hear the Geechees talking we’ll say, if I run into some people from our area, from the Beaufort St. Helena area we would sit and we would listen carefully to the Charleston area Geechees when they were talking. We were sitting in the lounge sometime and some young charleson females who worked in the hospital as housekeepers, they were doing their work or as the Gullah would say “wok,”

they doing their work” and we would say listen carefully to how they talk, listen to the Geechees. When they stopped talking amongst themselves, we’d say “you hear ‘em? Boy they sound funny don’t they” The Geechees have a faster way of talking and you have to really set your mind, you have to really program yourself to pay attention to the Geechees and how they’re they’re talking. For example, the Geechees will say “I want some Fush,” whereas the Gullahs say fish Geechees will say “Can you give me a knuckle,” we say nickle. And usually if you’re of the Gullah culture you try not to get into a deeper conversation with the Geechee community, because you could get lost in their conversation, and say something that might come back to haunt you because it might have a totally different meaning to them, and what you think. So when we come into contact with them and they’re myths we find it best for us to just mind your own business. You know, and speak when you’re spoken to, just don’t try to get into their conversation too much, speak when you’re spoken to, just don’t say too much. Be yourself and when they ask you a question just try to answer to the best of your ability.

DF: Now we know that on St. Helena’s island the community is very important as well as the church, can you tell us a little bit about the community and the Church?

JB: The St. Helena island community is a very unique community. This is a community that is approximately 12 miles long, and maybe about 8 mile swide, you know, some have a different opinion or estimate of how the areas stretches whether it’s this amount of miles or whatever, and I’m givin you my view which is 12 mile long and 8 miles wide, it is divided into about 50 different communities at one time in history, and still today as some they are known as the plantations, 50 different plantations. The older generations you’ll hear if you ask them “what part of St. Helena are you from they will call the name of a certain area what they will say I’m from “Frogmore, or Hope, or Tom Frep, I’m from Cedar Grove plantation” and they will say planation. And the young people, although some of them will say plantation, they prefer not to use the plantation word because it brings back memory of what used to be in history, so they prefer to say I am from the Penn Center Community, or the Warsaw community, or the Ladies Islands community, they will say things like that in order to make it seem like they have broken the chains of what used to be.

DF: So the plantation piece reminds them of. . .

JB: The plantation piece reminds them that still we are still yesteryear, and we’re still subject to certain ruling elements ,human populations, of the community on the islands. As far as the church goes, you asked me about the importance of church, religions itself plays a very major role in this community, most of our people used to be that starting at the age of 12, some of them still do it, but not on a regular basis like they used to, but starting at the age of 12 all the boys and girls had to go into what is called the wilderness to seek, for their religion, or not religion but

‘ligion, get they salvation, but they go out there three times a day to pray, and when I say wilderness, literally I’m talking about the snake infested bushes, they had boys and girls starting at the age of 12 they would be assigned to a teacher, an older member of the community, either male or female whoever was available at that time, and the girls would have their teachers and the boys would have theirs and they would have their heads tied with white rags or bands, like something you would see the native American tribes wear over their heads, like say the Apache indians, they would have these white rags bands around their heads with a knot in the back and they would have to wear those around their heads until they passed the wilderness test. And they started at the age of 12 and they had until the age of 13 to pass this test, and if you did not pass this test then you could attend church but you could never be allowed to be an official member, be baptized by the water, always use the right hand fellowship, and that means you would not be able to participate in activities in the church like being in the usher board or singing in the choir, or taking communion on communion sunday. You would mostly be classified as un-godly, as an ungodly was someone who wasn’t truly converted to the faith. To pass the wilderness test, like I said you had to go into the wilderness and pray three times a day and you had to go to a certain spot that was designated that you picked out that you thought was kinda safe, maybe away from venomous reptiles. You would pray at dawn, then you would go again at 12 o’clock noon, then you would go back at just before dusk or around 6 o’clock in the evening. Then you would be responsible for going and sitting with your teacher, your spiritual leader, you would be, the child, would be referred to a the seeker and they would go sit with the teacher in private, and the conversation was about what was your dream? What did you dream about? The teacher would address the child as the seeker and they would say “seeker, tell me your dream seeker,” and the seeker in humble reverence would not look they teacher in the eye, but in humble reverence would bow their head and they would come back with something like “Teacher, teacher, I dream I been in a fire,” anything can pass you, or fail you. As far as the dream goes, for example, “Teacher, I dreamed I been walking through a dert road,” a dert road, not a dirt road, “and while I was walking that road a big rattlesnake crawled out of the bushes in front of me in a ball he curl up and he be shaking his tail at me and he be mad, he be lookin like he want to bite me but he could not bite me because a man dress in long white gown, he was Gullah but he looked like jesus, the man who looked like jesus he come down walking in barefoot and he stepped on rattlesnake head and kill rattlesnake, crush it head.” So they see the serpent as the snake in Genesis that was meant to bruise your heel but then god sent his son, looking like a Gullah, someone you can identify with, to crush the head of the serpent. Any dream could pass you or fail, “I dreamed I was in a fire but it did not burn me, I did not get burned, I was in a flood and did not drown”, these kind of things, your dream and your teacher’s dream have to line up together, they have to be exactly the same. That is one of the biggest mysteries that anyone could ever ask for, how could two people to dream the same thing. The Gullahs and the Geechees are referred to as the anointed ones, the Gullah even more so, because of certain things, spiritual experiences, that the Gullahs have that other people never testify about or claim, for example, for

a young person and an elder's dream to coincide with each other. So until your dreams match each other's you will never pass the test, your teacher's interpretation of your dream would determine whether or not you pass the test in the Gullah-Geechee community so you keep going until you get it right, you never try to use somebody else's dream because they know if you lying because they heard it before and they will probably have you bent over and hit you with a nice stiff strap or paddle and tell you straight out, "you a liar, you know boy or girl, you a liar now, That the dream Freddy had three weeks ago, how you know Freddy dream how you know his dream?" Because they know you been talking to them and they know the teacher when you see her, but they should have told you not to lie to the teacher. Because the teacher always be 3 steps ahead of you, any dream can pass you or fail you. You don't want to be telling the teacher that you had any kind of intimate dream, for example a boy, he tell his teacher "Teacher, I dream I been a walking to go to my Aunt's house, Aunt Caroline house, and I cut through on a foot path through the bushes and while I walk through the bushes Cornisha walk out in front of me and Cornisha be dress up like one of them female rappers," or something liek that some tight thing on, "and she put her arms around me and is singing, and when I wake up I was sweating" your teacher immediately gonna tell Cornisha wasn't sent by God that was sent by the devil and it was meant to tempt you and make your blood run warm and think, you need to God to come up because your fire got burnt, you need god to help you one of these days and you say yes'm or yes nana, or whatever you wanna call her. "Huh" it's not her but "huh" or it's "bub, bubba, papa," whatever it might be.

DF: I know there is also a strong tie to family because even though people that were born on the island may go away that they will always come home, so can you talk a little bit about the importance and the strong family ties on the island?

JB: Gullah culture, Geechee culture, Gullah and Geechee culture is very heavily, family oriented. Everything revolves around the family, just like I talk about "chutch" earlier, everything is around the family, and notice I said the word chutch, not church, chutch. Ok, everything revolves around they fairly and every plantation has X amount of families, as far as this island go, St. Helena I might say there are 40 different families of Gullahs on this Island, but now it's hard to say which one's are connected to the other ones, you know you could have 2 or 3 different families that are really united together because of marriage in the past, it is very very close knitted, if you violate a Gullah or a Geechee, you can expect if you say, hit one, say a gangbang situation, if one gets jumped by others for one reason or the other, could be at the basketball game, could be at school, could be for any reason. If one of them gets jumped and can't win, then you should see a Gullah lose a fight though really, if you walk up to one let's take the girls they walk up to each other and say "Kesha, I heard Shaniqua beat you up?" and She'll say "What? Shaniqua did what?" "Yeah we heard Shaniqua wallowed you around on that floor the other day and she'll say "Keana come here, Meeka, come here," Keana telling people around

here that she wallowed me on the floor vht high school the other day, who whacked who, I wanna know who whacked who backside the other day? If they're friends they're gonna stick up for her and make it look like she is the victim in the confrontation. If that is so, if they got beat up, I guarantee they going home, and they gonna get other members of their family and their coming back. Gullah are not gonna get the last lick, I'm just gonna tell you, plain and simple they aren't gonna get the last lick, and the littlest one will get up in the biggest one's face and dare him, saying "I'm not scared of you, who you think you is?" That's like John Cena getting up in Mark Henry's face, "You think you something because you so big I ain't backing down, who you think you is just cause you big and got a big self?" It's very close knit, they want to make sure ,most of all, they don't cross the line on having an intimate relationship with a member of their family, so now, if a girl and a boy get hooked up, whether it's at school or whatever, usually the girl will take the boy home to meet her folks and her people and usually it is the oldest member of the family, usually the oldest female ,who would find out things about the two, the male and the female, the girl, Shaniqua might come and bring her new found male friend, and she say, the momma gonna introduce him, she'd say "Momma, Shaniqua wants you to meet Mr. Robert, Brother Robert," say "Eh? Who you say his name is again?" "Robert," "Eh, and how he get here, how'd you bring him here, who brought you into this area, where this boychild come from?" They call the boys boy children, and the girls girls children, ok. "Where this boychild come from," "Shaniqua bring him here, and want him to meet you," "Boy who's your people," that's the first thing we ask each other when we come into contact, even when we see little children playing around we say "Who's your people," that's very important for us to find out who;'s your people, and she gonna ask him that questions, and he'll say my momma name is "Parsella, and my daddy name, Roy." "And what's the last name again, Major, how did you and Niqua hook up together, how you meet each other, how you get together? Because let me tell you something Niqua people and your people is first cousins, 2 first cousins her granddaddy and your grandma is two brother's children, I hope y'all didn't do anything funny yet." "No ma'am," he wasn't gonna admit that in the first place even if he did. Then they gonna hold his hand to decide if him and this girl are compatible with each other, they hold the hand because the size of the hand, the texture of the hand, if it's soft or if it's rough, if it's a boy with callus, if he got a hard grip, got a rough grip, then he's a working man, and he gonna be able to take care of his responsibility if this girl is given to him to be his lifelong partner. But if his hand soft and thin then he not a worker, then they gotta stop the relationship, but they won't tell the boy and the girl that, they tell the girl's momma. Say "girl, look it let me tell you something, don't let that boy come back round here, if him and Niqua have children they gonna be cracky, have a bunch of cracky children and I don't want no cracky grandchildren, that elevator going upstairs isn't getting where it's supposed to be going (does crazy gesture with pointer finger to head spinning) might be broke down as a matter of fact it can't move, because it might not get no further than the 2n floor, or the 3rd floor because of what they did." But enough talk about that. The family is very close that's why we have the family reunion. The family reunion was a very important

thing, I say, one of the most important moves that was ever done in our community, our Gullah/Geechee community so that our people can know who each other's is. You don't wanna be at the family reunion with 200-300 people sitting together and all the old people sitting at one table because we sitting in age groups. Little children be playing with their kind, and the teenagers listening to Jay-Z and Beyonce, and the young adults who thinking that they somebody gonna be together, and on and on, and the children acting funny, acting coo-coo. The old ones be sitting next to each other and they tap each other with the foot and say "that one there acting cracky, that girl child cracky, ain't she" and they say, "They have to be cracky, you know who his mommy and daddy is." I know they didn't know, but his truck be parked behind her house in the daytime "They didn't know they was cousins. That's how that happened eh?" They be shutting my mouth gal, I talk too much anyhow, but I don't want to hear you saying that again, if I hear it again I'm gonna know where it came from." But the family is very important in the Gullah community. They stick together, they eat together, they play together. Aunty, uncle, gran, great gran, nieces, nephews, they all are connected, but like I say, it is very important to find out who is who. Some plantations, I would say, it is said that nobody off of that particular plantation should be getting married to each other because they all might be family. And the only time you can tell who is the real family is when the funeral day comes, when the funeral home is marching the family into the church for the processional, and people standing up or especially if you a minister and you watch the different march side by side, you say "Oh my god, I didn't know that those ones were connected, and now see since things changed in the 1930s, now you can't just say Gullah, that's why they say Gullah/Geechee now, now it's hard to say you a pure Gullah or a pure Geechee because of the interrelationships amongst each other since the 1930s, it is almost, you could say now, that there's a possibility that Geechees and Gullahs are closely united, so to make the real distinction between the two is really difficult in this day in time.

DF: Now one thing I know after being around this island is that a lot of family's live together, live on compounds and maybe it's because how heirs property goes, but maybe you could talk a little about how families living together and how heirs property goes?

JB: Heirs property or as our people say it "yeirs property" as our people pronounce it, the Gullah say "yeirs". When the troops came here, in around 1862 the year after the beginning of the civil war, 1861, the beginning of the civil war, the Gullahs call it the year of the big gun shoot, when the white brother's was killing each other, the one dressed in the grey, versus the ones dressed in the blue, the one they called the Yankees, the one called Rep, Johnny Rep, Southern states volunteers, versus the Johnny Yanks, from the yankees, New York and all those other northern states, and they clashed with each other an issue and as the union army advances into the south, when they finally arrived at places like we are at now, like St. Helena, before their arrival, the white plantation owners abandoned the islands, out of fear, not wanting to be here when the yankee troops arrived, especially General Sherman and his troops, because it was said that

General Sherman was one of the hardest generals that there ever was against the confederacy. They say he burnt Atlanta to the ground. He been to a lot of places and destroyed total confederate communities in his march, when they finally arrived, just before they arrived the white people here decided it would be best not to be here, at first they thought about taking up arms to fight the union army but after second thought they figured it would be better not to be here, because after all they got union guns, a whole lot more than our squirrel rifles, and sawed off shotguns, and muskets, and whatever we had at the time, they were gonna do more damage to us then we could ever do to them. They thought that they should leave this island, or the islands, I would maybe say probably say and go as far away as possible and go elsewhere, far away so they don't suffer a serious physical inflictions, so they left the area, they abandoned the islands, and they took some of their slaves, they took a handful that they would need to serve them and the rest they left to fend for themselves, the union when they got to the island they found it completely abandoned. The island was found abandoned by the white plantations owners and their families, and they found the island totally occupied by black, negro slaves, what they did was they freed the slaves, the grounds were confiscated, and ,most of the grounds a lot of it was redistributed to the newly freed blacks, starting back in the mid-1800s, starting back in that time, a lot of the land that was not distributed and was left out still there was sold for a dollar an acre, now can you imagine anywhere in the United States of America, anywhere, where you could buy an acre, a piece of ground, for a dollar. Anywhere, can you think that's possible in this day and time that you could buy a piece of ground for a dollar. I don't know how much a dollar was worth back then but I know a dollar today wouldn't get the job done. A dollar, that can hardly buy you a sandwich or a good cold drink, and you still have to have a few cents to pay tax on it, unless you get a real 69 cents, small whatever. But from that time to now the lands were passed down from one generation to another and referred to as "yeirs property" whatever land that is, you mentioned you had noticed Gullah people living on compounds, whatever land they ancestors were slaves on is where they still occupy to this day, they're still there, anywhere from 3 to 7 generations are living on those property, and they all have their own houses, you have anywhere from children to grandchildren to great children, great great grand, nieces and nephews ,they all living on the same piece of ground and every family by last name as their own, so many acres of property. And in order for a piece of ground to be sold in the Gullah community that is "yeirs property," every member of the family that is of a responsible age, the age of accountability or responsibility, each one of them would have to ok a sale, or put their signature on a piece of paper saying it's ok to sell this piece of ground. If you do find a lawyer who can work an underhand deal somehow and you do get rid of a piece of ground in the Gullah or Geechee community without the family being notified about it and they're coming together and agreeing to it, what you would have done is brought upon yourself, shame, you would be ostracized, you would probably be, oh, not be involved in the family activities, such as reunions, different sorts of get togethers even sometimes you go to church and ushers you to a seat, if your family was sitting on the seat and they were ones that were totally against you doing what you

did when the usher try to sit you next to them they might either slide over, or change seats, or just get up and leave the church, you have actually made yourself the black sheep of the family. They will talk about it, they can tell if you do these things because even if it's not heard about immediately when they see you driving a new car, a new expensive one at that, or you're buying a new home to settle down with, they start conversing with each other they say "Well, you know how Niqua get that new car, how you get that 'ca'?" Not the car "You heard that? She got a new trailer too, yeah that girl sold some of we property, some of we people's property. How she do that, some slick lawyer in Beaufort tell her how to do it and she get it done. Ok I bet cat's gonna eat it's supper from now on." that means you're in bad shape. They might say something about you about how you not a real strong christian or don't have a real strong belief in god, they might get a hold of some of your belongings or something, like your underwear and take it to a root worker, a root worker, a root worker is one who practices West African voo-doo. And they might take it to the root worker to have something done with it and they'll bring it back and sneak it back on your line or in drawer, and you gonna put it on again, not knowing what happened, it can cause some problems, it's your an "omen", not a women, but an "omen," she might get pregnant and have miscarriage, not be able to get pregnant or have no children, if it's a male, all the sudden he can't do certain things like he's supposed to do, or can't eat his supper, and he don't want that to happen, he don't want that kind of thing to happen, you know, cause someone else gonna eat your supper if you can't ok, and you don't want that. You know, you're lady gonna be hanging out with someone that parked in the back or in the room behind the church. At night you think she out at work or she to the store but she someplace else. You know Jody? Going home, that's what they used to tell the marines at Parris Island, ain't' no sense in going home cause Jody's got your girl and gone, he got your girl and gone, you know the recruits got all mad, because they think they girl is back home and loyal and the DI got it in your head that she ain't even thinking about you no more, blah blah blah. But that's how it goes.

DF: And again, when we come on the island we really do experience the strong ties between family, community, and religion. I wanna go back a little bit on the Geechee/Gullah because you talk about the Geechee more in the Georgia area and the Gullah more in South Carolina, is that just, I mean how do you explain that?

JB: That's the way they usually classify it, there was a Gullah women that brought it to my attention. You know, they have their different philosophies as to what it is, there is no such thing as right or wrong philosophy, I want you to know that, I'm not the authority, on the Gullah culture, you know, I am an authority, but not the authority, I do speak from my personal experience of growing up and being raised in this culture, and knowing what I know and that's speaking truth about what I know from this culture, whereas you might talk to another gullah or another geechee and they might see it totally different. Some might tell you that Georgia was is a bunch of Geechee people if you went to Savannah, or other parts of Georgia, and some in South

Carolina, they would say if you went up to Charleston those are Geechees, and the ones that live in the Beaufort area are Gullahs. Well, I sometimes, I used to wear the t-shirt and different things in the Cafeteria in Charleston for any reason, and the young ladies be doing the cash register and I'll wear "Gullah Culture" on my T-shirt or "Gullah Speaking Brother" and they'll holler out sometimes "Gullah (screams) Mr. Where you at, where you at, and they say Gullah Brother in the house, Gullah brother here", and they look at me and say "What you doing up here, how'd you get here? Who bring you up here" And I say I come up here to see the doctor "Oh we didn't know that Gullah people get sick. Y'all supposed to be old world, don't you got a root doctor down there in Beaufort to go to, to heal y'all. Y'all have to come up here to see regular medical Doctor?" "Oh yeah we do, cause there ain't enough root workers to go around anyway." But in the meantime Gullah and Geechee, but it was brought to my attention that the island people is the Gullah people. The reason that is said is because the island people was left abandoned from 1862 until about 1930 the island blacks was different from the mainland Beaufort and surrounding area blacks because the island blacks was the ones that was the rice producers, they did the rice and the indigo crops and they was left in isolation because of their certain ability to do certain types of labor that the others could not do. Gullah is the strongest of all the blacks in America, the Gullah breeds is the strongest. If you was raising dogs of different categories the Gullah would have to be in category of I say the Rottweiler, big, strong, viscous, they don't bother you, but don't bother them. If you wanna compare them to the native Americans in the wild west on old John Wayne movies and all that then the Gullah would be the apache's, the most elusive ones, the one that can walk like a cat and crawl like a snake. The one that can hid during the day and blend in with the darkness of the night. The Geechee would be more like I'd say the Comanche, there's a whole lot more of them than there is Gullah, there's just a handful of Gullah when compared to the Geechee camp, they are territorial people. But basically the island people is your Gullah people and the mainland people is your Geechee people, the reason why the island language stayed like it did is because of them being isolated from all other societies.

DF: And they were at least influenced by a few other cultures?

JB: Other cultures it was totally forbidden for the Gullah to have an intimate relationship with people of other nationalities, like take the young girl right there, that a pure Gullah sister right there you can tell by the reflection. The Gullah is usually the darkest of all blacks in America, skin wise. The Gullah is the strongest physically speaking, the Gullah language is a blend of West African dialects, Sierra Leone and Angol-en, Ghana-en, Senegal-en, and Geechee culture is not all of the same nationalities. They mixed, when they brought them in over from Africa they had them chained together but they would not chain two of the same kind together so that they couldn't speak, the only thing they had in common was their skin color. You could have a Ghan-en and a Nigerian chained together, because you didn't want them to be with people of the

same nation because you didn't want them to cause rebellions or insurrections. Can I take a break for a second, I need to make another call.

[End of Interview]