

Gift and Release Agreement

We David Sorensen and Scott Sorensen
Interviewee (print) Interviewer (print)

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121 Eldon Dr. Lot #12 Jacksonville Alabama 36265

on the date(s) of February 6, 1995

for the oral history collection being compiled by Dr. Marshall.

David H. Sorensen
Interviewee's signature

Address 602 Edgemoor Ave.
Ashland, OH 44801
Phone (419) 281-3660

Date 2/6/95

Scott A. Sorensen
Interviewer's signature

Address 121 Eldon Dr. Lot 12
Jacksonville, Ala. 36265

Phone 205-435-6429

Date 2-6-95

INTERVIEWEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name: David Henry Sorensen M/F male

Address: 602 Edgemoor Ave. Asland, Ohio 44806

Phone number(s): 419-281-3160

Approximate age or date of birth: 7/24/38

Mother's Name: Margarette Sorensen

Father's Name: _____

Places lived and when: Pennsylvania, California, Florida, Ohio

Education: grad. high school, 3 sem. of college

Religion: _____

Business, political and social memberships (past and present) _____

Present occupation: Exterminator

Former occupations: Crew Chief of a race team

Special Skills: Good with working on engines (any sort)

Major Accomplishments: Winning 12 hour Sebring endurance race

National Events in which interviewee has participated: 24 hours Daytona
12 hours of Sebring

Local Events in which interviewee has participated: _____

National born U.S. citizen? Yes No

Naturalized Citizen: Yes/No Date: _____

Country from which he/she emigrated: _____

Documents, photographs, and artifacts which are in the possession of the interviewee: _____

Individuals recommended by the interviewee who might be candidates for an oral history interview: his mother Margarette Sorensen

Additional information: _____

Scott Sorensen

April 6, 1995

Oral History Table of Contents

SIDE ONE

I. Introduction (Background Information)

- (A) Childhood
- (B) Family Life
- (C) Education

II. Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's

- (A) First Civil Rights riots in Jacksonville, Florida
- (B) Discrimination against qualified blacks
- (C) Roosevelt's ideas on integrating schools at an early level

III. The assassinations of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King

- (A) The power of Malcolm X
- (B) The fear of a powerful black man
- (C) Martin Luther King's assassination
- (D) The country and all of its turmoil

IV. The draft and Vietnam

- (A) Nationalism and Patriotism
- (B) The difficulties in living in the sixties
- (C) The death of drafted friends and the way it effected friends and families
- (D) The demonstrations of the Vietnam War
- (E) The lies concerning the war caused a disagreement in the reasons we were involved

- (F) The resentment of Jane Fonda's trip to Vietnam
- (G) The problems of Vietnam Vets in the U.S.
- (H) The trust in our American leaders

V. Assassination of John F. Kenedy

- (A) The Cubans resentment of J.F.K.
- (B) Who assassinated J.F.K.
- (C) The deaths of the Kenedy family
- (D) The resentment of American people cheering the death of a President
- (E) Jack Kenedy's involvement in the Civil Rights movement was respected

SIDE TWO

I. Fun times in the 1960's

- (A) Leisure activities
- (B) Music
- (C) Professional racing
- (D) Fashion (Style)
- (E) Entertainment

II. Idols

- (A) Fulton Jay Sheen
- (B) Priest
- (C) Dwight D. Eisenhower

QUESTIONS

What was your fondest memory?

What did your parents do?

How far did you get in your education?

Did you play pro football?

What activities did you do in college?

When did Civil Rights begin?

Where there any deaths in the Jacksonville, Florida riots?

What do you remember during the Malcolm X and Martin Luther King assassinations?

Did you know any people to go to the Vietnam War?

Did you feel the war was justified?

Do you think demonstrations split the nation in two?

Did you have friends that lived to tell about the war?

When veterans returned were they looked down upon?

How do you feel about us calling the war a police action?

Why was there a Vietnam conflict?

Who do you think assassinated John F. Kennedy?

Do you think Lee Harvey Oswald pulled the trigger?

What were some of the leisure activities during the sixties?

What was fashion like in the sixties?

What was your favorite T.V. show

Who were your idols?

Title of Paper?

Scott Sorensen
April 17, 1995
Oral History Project

I interviewed my dad on the critical times of the sixties. My dad was apart of the age group that the sixties affected the most. Doing the oral history project made me learn more about my fathers feeling toward highly emotional subjects. It was nice to sit down and listen to my father talk about his past. My dad has been all over The United States and Canada, and he is aware of all the social and political aspects of life. If there is someone who likes to share their opinion on any subject it would be my dad. The topic of the sixties is important because it was a big turning point of the Civil Rights movement. The assassinations of both Malcolm X and Martin Luther King aided in the uprisings of blacks for equality. The Vietnam War was a crucial period for our society in the sixties. The war tore a unified nation into pro war advocates and anti war demonstrators causing people to die for their first amendment rights. Eventhough the sixties had many negative features, there were also some positive points discussed in the interview. I conducted this interview with my dad at my house in Jacksonville, Alabama on February 7, 1995.

David Henrey Sorensen was born on July 24, 1939 in Downingtown Pennsylvania. David was the youngest child of the family, he had two older sisters and one older brother. David's father worked for Bell Telephone Company and then wound up owning a new and used car lot. David's mother, Margaret, worked for an auto ~~car~~ company which was the largest manufacturers of trucks at that time. David's fondest memory as a child was riding

in the Bell Telephone truck when he was not supposed to. As I said in the opening paragraph, my dad has been all over the United States. David started high school at Downingtown, Pennsylvania but graduated from Manatee High School in Bradenton, Florida. After high school, David went on to complete only three semesters at San Jose State in California on a football scholarship. Following his ambitions in life, David played semi-pro football in Jacksonville, Florida from 1958-1961. In 1962, David was offered a free agent tryout with the Chicago Bears, but he failed the physical and was released. "I was thrilled at getting the chance to play pro football, but I was amazed at meeting my all time favorite football player, Dick Butkas".

In 1954, legislation was passed for equal rights for all people. In the interview, my dad said, "Anything that happens needs to happen through revolution of some sort, but it does not necessarily mean physical." Although he believed this, he did not know he would be in the middle of one of the first Civil Rights uprisings, in Jacksonville, Florida. "In 1960, Roosevelt Wilson Jr. and I got to see first hand how scary a riot was. If people felt the fear and understood the reality of what it was all about, they would change their minds. The riot lasted eight to ten days. It woke me up about a lot of things." My dad was in a bad part of the city, and lucky enough he was with a black man while the riots were happening. I asked him if the riots were on the same scale as the Watts riots, and he

said, " It was not as large or Publicized but a riot is a riot." What angered him the most was how the riots got no national attention. My dad also gave a good example of how bad discrimination was back then. "Roosevelt Wilson Jr., a black friend of mine, had trouble getting a job as a truck drivers' assistant with an appliance company. He graduated in the top of his class in high school, was a master cabinet worker, and spoke three languages. This was a example of what blacks were up against." It is amazing how people can think the way they do. If it were up to me, I would rather have someone skilled and educated to work for me than someone my own color with no credentials. I do not believe discrimination is as prevalent as it use to be, but it still exist in the 1990's. ^{new paragraph} There were some highly public and important figures in the black race that were assassinated during their struggle for Civil Rights. One of the first public figures assassinated was Malcolm X. Malcolm X was a very powerful man, and along with him being black, people got scared and he was eventually assassinated. "People were fearful of him physically and mentally." The one thing I was surprised to hear from my dad was that he did not particularly like Martin Luther King. "I did not quite understand him, and I can not say that I agree with him." I personally believed that King's dreams were to bring both races together peacefully. Martin Luther King was not as radical as Malcolm X, But my dad still favored Malcolm X's beliefs over Martin Luther King's.

I briefly discussed the Kennedy era with my dad, but he

had a lot to say when it came to the Kennedy family. I was interested to see who my dad believed was apart of the John F. Kennedy assassination. My dad believed it was a conspiracy between many different groups, from the Cubans to the Mafia. Lee Harvey Oswald was one of the people to pull the trigger, but there was more than just one shot fired. "What I despise about the Kennedy era, eventhough I did not like John F. Kennedy, was people cheering and saying they were glad he was dead. It was un-American and left a sunken feeling in my heart." This was the way my dad felt about John F. Kennedy summed up in a single quote. There was no gray matter in Kennedy's stint as President of The United States, either you loved him or hated him.

"In all this era Malcolm X was assassinated, so was a president, a major war started, major Civil Rights legislation started, then we lost a presidents' brother and Martin Luther King in the same year. This was an eight year span, and it wrenched this country around. The country was in one hell of a turmoil for a solid ten years. In 1966, the Vietnam War escalated, and lucky for him my dad was one year tooold to be drafted. I noticed during the interview that my dad had a strong sense of nationalism. "I would have gone proudly along with 98 percent of other people to fight for our country because we blindly follow our leaders." Although this was a tough time for the American society, my dad felt that most men were ready to fight for their country. The attitude for the draftees was

that way for a long time. When all the lies ~~were~~ surfaced during the war, people began to realize how powerful and corrupt our government really is. The attitude my dad had toward the government changed for the worst along with the majority of our society. "People were over seas and losing their lives for nothing but lies." To this day my father swears up and down that if there was another draft he would do everything in his power to make his two sons dodge the draft. I personally feel that the people associated with the Vietnam War have a void in their lives that will not let them trust our so called democratic government "The Vietnam conflict was just a war of politics."

I enjoyed learning about my dad's past, and learning about his opinion on many different emotional issues of the sixties. After listening to the tape and hearing Dr. Marshall's lecture on the Vietnam crisis, I realized that my dad knew what he was talking about. Everything my dad mentioned on the tape was exactly what I learned in class, and it helped me get a better understanding of the entire crisis. It is sad to look back at our past and see all the lies our government told to us. This just shows that our government is not the democracy we voted to have and probably will never be. It is also sad to be apart of a society that suppressed people and tortured them for the color of their skin. We all bleed red, and I hope the future has more positive outcomes for our future generations.

citizens
can change
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they go out
to do it.

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