

JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

700 PELHAM ROAD N.

JACKSONVILLE, ALABAMA 36265-9982

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

TELEPHONE: (205) 782-5632

Gift and Release Agreement:

We Bunti Britt and JEANNA D CHANDLER
(Interviewee) (Interviewer)

Do hereby grant permission to Jacksonville State University to copy the tape of the interview conducted at 2006 Little John Drive on the date(s) of _____ for the oral history collection being compiled at Jacksonville State University.

This collection will be maintained by Jacksonville State University for research into the history of Northeast Alabama and the South. We further grant researchers permission to quote from the interview on this tape.

Bunti Britt
(Interviewee's signature)

Date _____

2006 Little John Dr.
(Address)
Oxford, Al 36203
205-831-
(Telephone)

Jeanne D Chandler
(Interviewer's signature)

Date _____

4640 Sprague Ave. #9
(Address)
Anniston, Al 36206
205-237-17989
(Telephone)

INTERVIEWEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Name: Bunti Britt M/F F
Address: Little John Drive, Oxford, AL
Phone number(s): 831-6428
Approximate age or date of birth: 47
Mother's Name: _____
Father's Name: _____
Places lived and when: Boaz, Albertville, Atlanta GA,

Education: BS in Education, JSU, and GSCC
Religion: Baptist
Business, political and social memberships (past and present) _____

Present occupation: English Teacher, Oxford High School
Former occupations: Johnston Elementary
Special Skills: _____
Major Accomplishments: Raising 2 daughters

National Events in which interviewee has participated: _____

Local Events in which interviewee has participated: Annual staff,
Quarterback Club

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: Coach Tim Britt (husband)

Additional information: _____

End

Oral Interview Table of Contents
Interviewer - Jeanna Chandler
Interviewee - Bunti Britt

- I. Background Information *add DOB*
 - A. *add grade school year - place*
- II. College Years - *where -*
deciding to teach *Goddard State 1 yr*
JSU - BS ed.
- III. Teaching Careers (1970-1995)
early years - racial problems
- IV. College During the 60's - *where*
- V. Punishment in the School
corporal punishment
parental role
- VI. The Female Role
in her youth
in the school system - bad experience
as role models
- VII. Vietnam's Effect on Education
- VIII. Equal Pay for Equal Work
- IX. Changes in Education
drugs in the school system
attendance
the students
the parents
- X. Effects of the Cold War
test scores
- XI. The Civil Rights Movement and Education
- XII. Problems in Education
tenure
salaries
parental support
reward system for students
academics and athletics
counseling

*I like the
corporal's
of the story !!*

Good quality

Oral Interview of Bunti Britt

Conducted by Jeanna Chandler

The mid twentieth century ^{was} a time of change in United States ^hHistory. Many grass root movements see their awakening. From this time of question and change the Civil Rights Movement and the movement for equality among the sexes evolves. Both of these movements have a great impact on the education of the children of the United States. Many of the changes in education are a mirror image of the situations facing our country at that time..

The main focus of this essay are the changes in the educational system over the past 40 years. It will discuss changes and problems in the system. It will also include the impact of historic events of this period on the system. The information for this essay is taken from an oral interview with a high school teacher, Bunti Britt. She reflects on the changes she has seen in education as a college student and a teacher.

She was born in Boaz, Alabama. Most of her youth was spent moving from town to town. Because of this she encountered many different teaching styles. Starting with her first day of kindergarten until she graduated from college she remained in and out of trouble in school. She began and remains a high spirited, hard headed woman. She learned to read at the age of three. She is probably the only English teacher who's made an "F" in English 101. Her first two years of college were at Gadsden State Community College, Gadsden, Alabama. She finished her education at Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville, Alabama. She has received two master degrees from JSU. Mrs. Britt has held five different teaching positions since her career began.

use
past
terms
for history
writing

Copy

When Bunti was in college women were treated differently. The rules for college females have changed a lot since the sixties. Mrs. Britt had a hard time dealing with the rules of the dorm at Jacksonville State. All females who attended college in Alabama at this time were unable to live off campus unless they were commuting from their parent's home. The females could live only at home or in the dorm. The rules for dorm life were strict and extremely controlled. If a female received three room restrictions she would be sent home or kicked off campus. Any broken rule was equivalent to one room restriction. Of course this opinionated, strong willed young woman received two room restrictions before graduation. The first was for signing her roommate in because she had her arms full of groceries. The second restriction was for bringing a puppy in from the snow covered campus to stay in her cozy room.

Mrs. Britt attended college during a time of turmoil for our nation. During the 1960's many college students became the hippie generation. Campuses all over the nation embellished an environment full of drugs and "free love". Any student in the school of education caught under the influence or with drugs or alcohol in their possession would be expelled from the University. These rules are no longer enforced as strictly as they were then. Many of Mrs. Britt's colleagues were involved in the drug scene. Because of her desire to teach children to write Mrs. Britt kept away from the "pot parties." She did say she wasn't a "Miss Goody Two Shoes" but she tried to stay away from drugs.

Another influence on college life during the 1960's was the Vietnam War. College campuses were full of anti war demonstrations. Those men who were financially able went to college. Those who couldn't afford it were drafted or enlisted in the armed forces. College was the easiest way to avoid the draft. Because of this many of the college men who weren't

interested in receiving a degree. As a result of this many of the coaches and male teachers were lacking the teaching ability they should have. These were the men who taught school sitting on the corner of the desk. Teachers who read monotonously straight from the text. This is one of the things that has changed. Most of the men teaching today are there because they want to be.

The Civil Rights Movement had a large impact on the education system. Mrs. Britt defined civil rights as "anyone's rights not black rights." She feels Civil Rights have become a black and white issue more than a Civil Rights issue. This was the first major issue she faced as a teacher in Alabama. Her first experiences as a teacher weren't what she expected. She was an English major teaching physical education at Johnson Elementary School in Anniston, Alabama. From day one racism has been a problem. She began teaching right after southern schools were forced to integrate. Racial fights were a daily occurrence at Johnson Elementary. Racial riots were a common threat. Although racial fights no longer occur on a daily basis Mrs. Britt sees racism as a problem teachers still face today. Her view on The Civil Rights Movement is that it had its time and place. She disagrees with the fact that there is a month set aside for one race but not any of the other races. She doesn't believe there should be favoritism toward any certain race.

Another change that impacted education was the nuclear era. After World War II the threat of nuclear war filled minds all over the world. The capitalist and communist began competing in every possible field. This competition helped education. United States schools began emphasizing subjects such as math and science. Countries began comparing test scores. As a result of the competition between communist and capitalist countries, test scores in the United States rose. Comparing test scores wasn't always fair. For example, the Chinese separate

their students at junior high level into two groups, college students and workers. Because of this the United States compared their masses of students to the Chinese intellectual elite. *Footnote for these pros?*

Many changes have taken place in education throughout Mrs. Britt's career. One of the main changes Mrs. Britt has seen is in the realm of punishment. Mrs. Britt is a firm believer in corporal punishment. Both of her daughters were brought up with a "fly swat". The degree teachers and principals are allowed to punish students has declined since Bunti's first teaching position. Within the classroom the teacher must have full control of the class and have their respect. In order to remain in total control teachers can't be lenient with their classroom rules. Rules must be made and enforced. The more students are allowed to slip past the rules the less control the teacher has. Bunti hasn't had many problems with her students. The biggest problem she faced with punishment was the other children threatening the problem student.

In Mrs. Britt's opinion the punishment problem started in the home. She thinks the role parents play in the lives of their children has changed. She believes today's parents aren't doing their part. "Parents feel guilty," she stated, because they have to work. Parents don't want to spend the little amount of time they have with their children punishing them. Parenting has become more and more liberal over the years. Parents today don't take the time to discipline their children or to teach them how to behave.

Mrs. Britt had seen drugs in college but not in high school until she taught in a school outside of Atlanta, Georgia. From her experience the drug problem was much worse on the high school level in the 1970's. As a teacher in Atlanta, Georgia, she had a student, "who would come in Monday to take orders and Friday to make deliveries, those were the only two days of the week he showed up." The problem got so out of control police officers had to be brought in.

She has been teaching at Oxford High School in Oxford, Alabama for the past ten years. She hasn't seen such a drug problem among the students at Oxford.

The way teachers deal with attendance has changed. Instead of making it rough on children who cut class regularly the burden was put on the teachers. For every absence a form had to be filled out by the teachers. When a student reached a certain number of absences the teacher had to write a letter to the student's parents. The teachers also had to take time away from their classes to attend meetings to find a way to deal with poor attendance.

The students have also changed over the past ten years. Mrs. Britt teaches the eleventh grade at Oxford. The students she has now compared to the students she had just three years ago seem to be much younger. She said they are at "grade level." The students three years ago acted more like a thirty year olds. Most of them were sexually active and involved in alcohol and drugs. These students seemed very worldly for their age. Students always differed from year to year. She thinks the parents have had a lot to do with this. As a coach's wife she had to call football players each week for their spirit supper (a meal for the players and their families Thursday before the game). From the list she called only four of the boys had a different last name from the parents (1995 football season). She feels single parent homes created the more worldly students.

Change in education is inevitable because change itself is inevitable. The many changes in the middle of this century have results we see today. Some results seem good where others are seen as problems. It will be interesting to see how the teachers and boards of education deal with the problems today and change to adapt to the ways of the future.

Needs more revision, more gentle & polishing

83

If you re-do the Table Cont

You need to re-do the content to be asked earlier and dates to release for need info sheet