

**Transcript of an Oral History Interview in the collection of the  
BREVARD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
308 Forrest Ave., Cocoa, FL 32922**

William E. Gary: [inaudible 00:00:01] I'm President of The Moore Cultural Complex, Incorporated<sup>1</sup>. This evening we have for you an evening with Evangeline. Mr. Ben Green sends his regrets. He was going to try to be here, to be with us, but due to some scheduling conflicts and the weather up there, he wasn't able to get away in time. With us this evening, we have Miss Deidre Gordon from Florida Today, and, we're expecting shortly, Mr. [00:00:30] Max Johnson who's with WCFB 94.5 FM out of Orlando to help facilitate the discussion with Ms. Moore this evening. Okay?

Deidre Gordon: Okay, thank you. My name is Deidre Gordon. I'm the assistant managing editor of features at *Florida Today*. You all have to bear with me because I'm usually—I'm a print journalist and I'm usually behind the scenes, so this is a little overwhelming right now, but I want to be the first to welcome Ms. Evangeline Moore here to—back home to Mims [00:01:00]. And I'm going to open with the first question and then welcome all of you to ask Ms. Moore questions. My first question is, Ms. Moore, at what point, or at what age did you realize that your parents weren't what we would consider ordinary? When did you know that they were doing extraordinary things in the community?

Evangeline Moore: I don't think I really knew what was going on [00:01:30] until after they had passed. I knew that we went on trips every weekend, usually on Sundays, from the time I was about four years old. We had a Model-T Ford and Mama would put Peaches and me in the back and we'd go off to some city and some church to try to organize another NAACP chapter. So, I knew what was going on. I didn't know the depth [00:02:00] of it-

Deidre Gordon: The magnitude.

Evangeline Moore: Yes, until after he had passed, and I started reading all of these things that he had done. We never talked about it as a family.

Deidre Gordon: Do we have any questions from the audience?

Audience 2: You worked with your father, right?

Evangeline Moore: Yes. When I got to the age, I'd say maybe 11, 12 years old, I was able to help him in the office that we had [00:02:30] in the dining room. I would help him to run off things on the ditto machine. I addressed envelopes. I'd lick envelopes. I'd licked stamps and I always accompanied him to the post office. I didn't think he was supposed to ever get out of my sight. So, yes, I did help him and I was very active in the Florida State Conference of Youth Councils, as well.

Deidre Gordon: [00:03:00] We had the pleasure of sending a reporter to Washington to interview you last week.

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<sup>1</sup> The Harry T. & Harriette V. Moore Cultural Complex, Inc. is located at 2180 Freedom Ave. Mims, FL 32754

Evangeline Moore: Yes.

Deidre Gordon: And in the interview you said that upon seeing your mother in the hospital, that you claimed that, "I just hate white people".

Evangeline Moore: I did.

Deidre Gordon: Your mother said to you, or had a very long conversation with you about why you shouldn't feel that way.

Evangeline Moore: Yes, she did.

Deidre Gordon: Where do you think you'd be if you had not had that conversation?

Evangeline Moore: I wouldn't be in this position. I think I would be a very old, [00:03:30] hateful, shriveled up woman if I hadn't listened to what she had to say. Hatred does very, very bad things to you and I always said that is why God allowed my mother to remain so that she could get me, particularly, on the right track.

Deidre Gordon: Yes.

William E. Gary: Ms. Moore, I've always been interested in, your father and your mother at the time, both [00:04:00] were professional people, you know then. You all were living a comfortable life at the college there. Did your father really ever really talk to you about why he decided to take on this role that certainly took him out of a comfortable setting and security for his family to try to change things that were monumental at that time?

Evangeline Moore: Yes, I can remember him. My family was a very [00:04:30] Christian family. My father often told us that he believed that God had sent him to do the work that he was doing. His mother was actually the only person who complained about, you know, his activity. My mother was staunchly behind him and, of course we girls were, as well. So that's what he thought, and I often have in the last, say, 10 or 15 years referred [00:05:00] to him as a 20th century Moses. In fact, I've made speeches about that because reading, I don't remember ... it's in Exodus, where God takes Moses and he shows him the burning bush and all that. Well, all of that did not happen, but he firmly believed and I also believed that God put him in that place at that time and sustained him and us through that period.

Audience 3: [00:05:30] In an effort to record some of the things, I was not aware of Mr. Moore's great activities until I came here for the summer from my winter home. However, I'm trying to do like Kipling, write some 'just us' stories with the subtitle being just 'See King', in parentheses, S-E-E K-I-N-G, capital KING [inaudible 00:05:58]. And so, I'm trying to kick it [00:06:00] off with the Moore story. I would like to right, because I saw that some of the writing that I had done seemed to be erroneous, if your father had this property passed to him down through the generations. Then I saw somewhere that he was not born in this area, so I would

like to know some of your early beginnings and especially about the house that you occupied.

Was it one of those shotgun homes, or was it one of those with the large dining room [00:06:30] table? I'm writing about some of the things, insert some of these things myself, instead of making them up so the children can know [crosstalk 00:06:38].

Evangeline Moore: No, the property that we lived on came from my mother's mother's family. I understand that a large plot of land was given to, basically the Warren family. And it was in South Mims, instead of North Mims, so as families grew, [00:07:00] the acreages were parceled out to the sons, daughters, and that type of thing. So my mother received her land where the house actually sat from her mother, who's name was Annie Warren Sims. Yes, the house was a three bedroom, well, it didn't start out as a three bedroom home. It started out as a two bedroom home, living room, dining room, a small kitchen. [00:07:30] Most of the time that I can remember, there were three bedrooms, because they added on to the house. There was a hall, and there was a bathroom, and the kitchen was enlarged.

And there was a jalousied back porch. We also had a garage over to the right of the house.

Audience 3: Thank you.

Evangeline Moore: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Audience 4: Both of your parents were educators, and your whole family graduated from Bethune-Cookman College. Could you tell us a little bit about [00:08:00] the importance of education in your family and to your father and mother?

Evangeline Moore: When we first came into the world, we were told repeatedly that you will get your college education. I must say that it was very, very difficult, especially when I started at college, because it was that year that my parents had been fired from the school system. My sister was a senior [00:08:30] in college that year, I really don't know how we made it but God was with us and so we carried on, and I finished.

Audience 5: Did you graduate here from Florida universities?

Evangeline Moore: No, we all went to Bethune-Cookman. We all got degrees from Bethune Cookman.

Audience 6: First of all, I'd like to say, Ms. Moore, it's a real pleasure to have you here. I came back to [00:09:00] Florida in '96 and several years ago I came up here before this whole foundation was built, and I was really excited by what was happening. What I'm really interested to know, I know that the Medgar Evers story that's been out there, obviously Martin Luther King has been out there for years and

years. What I'm curious is, has Hollywood approached [00:09:30] you as far as movie aspects, of making a movie, documentary, or anything like that about your parents' lives? It seems like such a fascinating story, that it's really always fascinated me that we Floridians don't know the story. Of course, in '51 when it happened, it was worldwide news.

In London, published papers about it, I'm sorry, articles about it, but yet today, in today's society, I'd like your opinion on [00:10:00] that. How do you feel that this great thing, what your parents accomplished, the whole story, great story, is just not known? I'd like to know, what do you think today in 2005, that how you feel about that? In relation to not only, obviously we're starting to know a lot more about Malcolm X and all the other Civil Rights leaders. So I'd like to know, [00:10:30] basically, since your parents played such a [inaudible 00:10:31] how you feel about that?

Evangeline Moore: Disappointed, a bit angry, and I've been that way ever since it happened. Yes, there were a lot of news reporters there from the Soviet Bloc countries and other countries overseas. And they did do a lot of writing about it, but somehow, this is my theory, I have no proof of this, I think the officials in the state of Florida, we all know that they are the ones that control the media. They did not want Florida to be famous for something like this, because they were afraid that it might prohibit some [00:11:00] of their tourist trade. And so therefore, they just proceeded to stop all of, you know, advertisements, any articles about my father and mother. I'm absolutely certain that that must have been what happened, and yes, I'm very angry. Beg your pardon?

Audience 6: [inaudible 00:11:22] Hollywood?

Evangeline Moore: I did get, this was when Ben Green's book came out, I guess that was in '91. I [00:11:30] did get a letter from a producer, I don't remember his name, out in Hollywood who said he was interested in doing the story but it fell through. More recently, I guess maybe about four or five years ago, there was producer who does HBO movies, who came down from New York to talk to my son and [00:12:00] me about the possibility. Well, that's fallen through as well. So, another disappointment.

Audience 3: Has CBS approached you at all? Because I was with Mrs. King once, she had a million dollar proposition going on right that evening with CBS, and I think if they don't do it, you could initiate it.

Evangeline Moore: Very good, I would be very, very happy. But, no, nobody has approached me, other than those two.

Deidre Gordon: One of the people you mentioned, Ben Green, who is very [00:12:30] determined to get your parent's story out, can you speak to us about your relationship with him, and how you responded to him calling you, saying, "I want to do this story?"

Evangeline Moore: Well, I was very, very happy about it. A little bit hesitant at first, but Ben is such a warm, nice person, that-- and we talked. He told me what he wanted to do, he wanted to come [00:13:00] up to Washington and do some research at the Library of Congress, but he also wanted a sort of personal approach to his book and that involved two full days of interviewing me at my residence in New Carrollton. We have remained staunch friends, he and his family, throughout the years. And he's always been supportive of me.

Deidre Gordon: Then the book went out of print, did you have some role in getting it [00:13:30] reprinted?

Evangeline Moore: No, no. Ben just told me a few months ago that it was going to be reprinted in paperback, probably this spring. I was very disappointed, of course, when it went out of print, but I'm not a publisher.

Audience 7: Could you share with us the story of how you found out what happened on Christmas Night, 1951?

Evangeline Moore: Yes. [00:14:00] I had reservations on a train from Washington D.C. to Titusville called the Silver Meteor. I was to leave, and I did leave, on the day after Christmas at 7:00 in the morning. I did not know what had happened until I got off the train on the 27th, and found a delegation of aunts, uncles, [00:14:30] cousins, and what have you at the train station, but my parents were missing and I knew at that point that there was something wrong. So I greeted all of my relatives and finally my sister and I were riding in my Uncle George's car, that was my mother's brother. One of her brothers. We got into the car, and sat down. And I just asked, I said, "Where is my mom and my dad?" [00:15:00] So, nobody said a word, for a few minutes. Then my uncle George turned around and he said, "Van, I guess I'm going to have to tell you the story. Your house was bombed Christmas night. Your father's dead, and your mother's in the hospital." That's the way I found out.

Deidre Gordon: We have our other commentator here to assist today.

Evangeline Moore: Hi, how are [00:15:30] you?

Deidre Gordon: Hello, how are you?

Max Johnson: Hi folks, I apologize for being late. I'm sorry.

Audience 8: Ms. Moore, I have a question for you. You have some very interesting items that you have in the museum here, I learned you have a pot that's there. Could you tell us the story about that pot?

Evangeline Moore: It's a pot that my grandmother, my mother's mother, baked beans in every Friday. [00:16:00] Our menu for Friday, for lunch, were donuts at school. We always went down to Nana's house on Thursday afternoons. And of course, the beans would have been boiled the day before, but they were always put in that pot. And my

grandmother was responsible for baking them all day, on Friday. So that's the story of that pot.

Audience 8: I noticed also that you [00:16:30] had [inaudible 00:16:33]

Evangeline Moore: Yes. It's still one of the responsibilities that I [00:17:00] can't get away from. I have all the family pictures, I have all the family records. The things that I did not have in my possession before my sister died in 1972, I got them from her home. So keeping records and things like that are very, very important to me, I could not exist without.

Max Johnson: Hi there.

Evangeline Moore: Hello.

Max Johnson: I'm [00:17:30] going to hope that nobody has asked this question yet, but obviously your father was active in terms of helping people trying to change things. Can you talk a little bit about what it was like in the house, as he was, you know, working with the NAACP, as he's registering people to vote? What types of things are, you know, happening in the house?

Evangeline Moore: Well, my mother was mostly the [00:18:00] disciplinarian. We lived a fairly normal life, although I wouldn't say that it was actually normal because we weren't allowed to go out of the house unless we went with my dad and my mom, or one or the other. We used to ask them if we could take walks in the woods. And no. We had no sleepovers, we didn't have company very often. Mostly, on [00:18:30] the weekends particularly, we were either preparing to go out on a mission on Sundays, or just trying to get ourselves together to go to church, which very, very seldom happened in Mims. So it was just a constant togetherness, we went to school together until my sister and I started high school in Titusville. We came back together, we had breakfast together, we had lunch at school together.

My mother and I—my mother [00:19:00] usually kept us inside for lunch, and we came home in the afternoons together. We sat at the dining room table fully dressed, the table was set for dinner. And it started all over again the next day.

Max Johnson: Was that because of his activities, or was that just the way that mom wanted the house to run?

Evangeline Moore: Partially I think it was my mom's [00:19:30] way of running her house, her home, but the mere fact that we were not allowed to go out in public without one of them being present I am sure was because dad and mom were afraid that someone may hurt us just to get back at them. Particular, to get back at Daddy.

Audience 9: I bet you didn't get to acquire any, you know, true friendships with [00:20:00] neighboring kids or classmates?

Evangeline Moore: Well, we did. There were two families that I can remember visiting. The Cuyler family, who had two girls about the age of my sister and me, and the Strickland family, who had daughters about the age of my sister and me. On occasion, when we were in town on Sundays, Daddy would sometimes take us up to the northern part of Mims and let us [00:20:30] visit either one of the other families. But mostly, we were at home.

Audience 6: Did you travel to Orlando and Daytona some too to patronize black owned businesses as well?

Evangeline Moore: Yes, about once a month we did go to Orlando or Daytona, depending on where the best western was showing. We would do our shopping, my mother made all of our clothes and so we would shop at Sears for material and household items, [00:21:00] and then after that, Orlando and Daytona both had very nice black restaurants. So we'd go and have dinner, and then we always ended up at the movies. And it was always a western, because that was my dad's favorite.

Deidre Gordon: You obviously spent a great deal of time with your sister, can you speak to any separation anxiety when she left for college? Or in a piece that I read, you said that you believe that she [00:21:30] died of a broken heart, not of the symptoms that the doctors had said. Can you speak to how you related to her death, and how you moved beyond that?

Evangeline Moore: Well, when she went away to college, my parents were well aware that I missed her very much, because we were inseparable. So about one weekend a month, they would take me up to Bethune-Cookman and I would spend the weekend with her, and then come back and pick me up on Sundays. [00:22:00] So far, as my sister's death, yes I'm absolutely certain that the trauma and the shock she experienced when she opened the door between our room and my mother and father's room, and saw the hole with my parents in the hole and rafters from the ceiling, because they had been thrown up through the ceiling, and all the furniture that was in the room on top of them, [00:22:30] I just don't know how she survived as long as she did.

We never talked about it, but I do know that she was very, very frightened. And when I noticed when I got to Ocala to her home, after she passed, that she had a night light burning which she never let go out. She just could not stand the dark. I'm sure her being [00:23:00] an asthmatic, the strain is the very thing that took her away.

Max Johnson: Did you have question?

Audience 8: Yes. You have a son, you have a grandson. How are you seeing some of your father's traits in them?

Evangeline Moore: My son will stand up, and you can look at him and tell [00:23:30] how much like his grandfather he looks. Stand up, Skip. His mannerisms, I must say, are very, very similar to my father's. He's very quiet. Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yes.

Max Johnson: Yes. Gentleman with the t-shirt, and then you're next.

Audience 10: I saw that documentary tape, done by your family after the fact, and I'm very impressed [00:24:00] with last Thursday at BCC in Palm Bay. I don't know what year it was done, but I would like to try and get a copy of it.

Evangeline Moore: I think it was probably in 1992 or '93. It was produced from the University of Florida in Gainesville. I don't have those addresses, [00:24:30] Sandra Dixon, I think, was the producer, and Churchill Roberts was the co-producer. I would suggest that you call the University of Florida in Gainesville, they can give you all the details because they were the ones responsible for doing the whole documentary. I do know it is available.

Max Johnson: There was another gentleman with a question back there.

Audience 11: Did your father receive a lot of threats, bodily harm or whatever, as he traveled [00:25:00] around the state of Florida?

Evangeline Moore: I can't say that I knew anything about them, although looking back on the situation, I do know that there were threats. The first time I really recognized that was on the 27th of December of '51 when I walked into my home. I went past my parent's bedroom, and then I went to my sister's and me bedroom. [00:25:30] And her bed was up against double windows, and I looked at that. It was covered with shattered glass, and I said, "If I had been here, you would be dead as well." She told me then, she said, "When I have been coming home recently, I have been sleeping in your bed, which was furthest away from the window, because I felt safer." So, by that, I know that there had been threats. [00:26:00] My parents may have discussed things like that with my sister, but I was kept out of all of it. I was just supposed to be the happy baby girl.

Audience 12: How did your father, what interest drove him to the Groveland Four? How did he ...

Evangeline Moore: He had investigated a lot of lynchings in the state of Florida from, I guess, the forties. [00:26:30] He could not stand injustices, and that was a true injustice. They had no business being put in jail, they had no business being railroaded through a confession. They had no business being on death row. That was what he did.

Audience 12: How did you feel about what the NAACP had done, and the fact that they were trying to bully [00:27:00] them out of the organization?

Evangeline Moore: Very angry, and I still am. Yeah, it was completely uncalled for. They said he wasn't doing his job, but he was, and anybody with any sense can tell that now.

Audience 13: Was it originally, theorized, that it was your father's involvement in the Groveland case that lead to the bombing. But I understand you have a different perspective on that.

Evangeline Moore: I do. I consider [00:27:30] his being able to get that 100,000 black folk registered to vote as probably the primary reason, because during that time, the state officials, of course you know they were all white, they were very angry because Daddy preached the fact that if we have a voice in selecting people, like congressmen, [00:28:00] senators, and other people who are working at the state capital, and in the counties as well, like the sheriff, that we would be able to approach them when things of this nature happened and demand that they do something about it. But before that time, we could only vote in the presidential election. And that was no good, [00:28:30] because the electoral votes, you know, they control that anyway.

So, that is why he was determined that we needed to have a voice in government, or we could not move forward. Yes?

Max Johnson: Hold on just a second, we've got a question here.

Evangeline Moore: Hi. Thank you.

Audience 14: What did this area look like back when you were growing up? It was part of the old Warren estate, and of [00:29:00] course, Annie Sims lived here on the Warren estate. Was the schoolhouse, the old Warren schoolhouse still around here, and also how did you get into the property? Was it from Old Dixie Highway?

Evangeline Moore: Yes, mm-hmm (affirmative).

Audience 14: [crosstalk 00:29:18] It was. But what did it look like? Were there groves around here, was it built up? Were there other houses close by?

Evangeline Moore: Well, there were a few houses, but most of them were inhabited by [00:29:30] members of the Warren family that had gotten married and, you know, built homes of their own. So I always considered it as a sort of a family community. So, does that answer your question? Okay.

Audience 6: Ms. Moore, I was curious how you chose to move up north? I am curious how long you have lived up north and have you ever considered [00:30:00] ... I know in the last couple of elections, I've considered moving outside of the United States so [crosstalk 00:30:03] I was wondering, you know, why you chose to stay in the states. And did you entertain the idea of maybe going to another country?

Evangeline Moore: Do I ever entertain going to another place? I do, particularly after this election, presidential election. I have threatened many times, of course I can't do it because I have family here. But I've threatened many times to find a very nice, small island, keep [00:30:30] my American citizenship, and just move there to get away from all the mess that's going on in the United States. But the reason I went to Washington after I graduated was because I did not want to teach. And teaching was the only professional job that I would have been able to get in the state of Florida.

So a recruiter from the US Department of Labor came down to the post office in Daytona, where [00:31:00] we spent summers most of the time, and called my dean and asked if she had anyone that she could send down to take the civil service examination. She called around, and I was the only person that she could find. I said, "Oh, yeah, I'll do it," not having any intention in moving away from home. But I passed the examination, and on the way back, of course Daddy took me to the post office, waited for me, brought me back. [00:31:30] But we discussed it, and he said, "Well, since you don't want to teach, this would be a very good opportunity."

Plus the fact the recruiters who were coming from Washington D.C., this was the beginning of their recruiting black people to go to Washington. So he just said, "Well, you go, and work a couple of years." I wanted to be a librarian, and he said, "In a couple years, [00:32:00] your mom and I should be able to help you get your masters in library science, and then you can come on back home." Six months after I was up there, they were gone. Yes?

Audience 15: Ms. Moore, could you tell us about the [00:32:30] orange grove that surrounded the house? Is that something that Mr. Moore was doing to supplement his income later on and the way the system treated [inaudible 00:32:35]

Evangeline Moore: Well, yes, in fact, he had purchased some acreage from my mother's brothers and sisters. And he was developing a grove so that he and mom would have something to live on in retirement. He really did not intend to retire after, you know, when they fired him. He went to work [00:33:00] for the NAACP full time, although he was not paid. He had to raise his own salary, the little that he got. But he felt that he could get into a college or a university, a black college or university, and continue his teaching career, but he wanted something to be in Mims, at home, that my mother and he could look forward to retiring.

Max Johnson: Yes [00:33:30] ma'am?

Audience 16: When you went up north, were there less racist ... were they less racist up north than down here?

Evangeline Moore: They were less racist, but I'll give you an incident that happened to me the day after I arrived in Washington D.C. The recruited peoples lived at the Y, YWCA on Rhode Island Avenue. There was another young lady there who was from

Tennessee, the two of us became friendly [00:34:00] and that Monday morning when we started out to go down on Constitution and 14th Street to work, we stopped at a drugstore at the corner of 14th and Rhode Island Avenue NW. We were very early, so we went in and ordered coffee and donuts. When the coffee and donuts came out, they were in a brown paper bag. We simply [00:34:30] said, "We would like to eat them at the counter."

"You can't do that here." So we just politely said, "Well, you keep it." So there was a problem, because there were theaters downtown in the shopping district on 14th street that blacks could not attend in 1951 when I first went up there. It was really ... it was segregated, too.

Audience 16: Are you talking about Washington?

Evangeline Moore: I'm talking about Washington D.C., yes I am.

Audience 16: You step on [00:35:00] one side of the street you're in Virginia. And not only is that that, but Washington D.C. was one of the greatest [inaudible 00:35:07] for the auctioning of slaves. So it's not truly that all northerners, they do the same thing, but in Washington, you know, blatantly did.

Evangeline Moore: It was the most disappointing thing that could have happened to me, because I thought, I'm here, I can do what I want. I found out too [00:35:30] quickly.

Max Johnson: Yes ma'am?

Audience 17: Ms. Moore, you appear to be a very strong lady and I commend you for that.

Evangeline Moore: Thank you.

Audience 17: Listening to you speak, and I'm thinking, I myself raised two daughters. Usually my daughters always look to me, and usually the daughters do look to the mother. My question is, do you think that your strength was obtained from seeing the work that your father did, or [00:36:00] the strength that your mother portrayed in supporting him and the work that he did?

Evangeline Moore: I think it came from both. My mother was a tremendously strong woman, she had to be to have gone along with the life that Daddy lived. But I think it came from both, but I do know that I got the personality, the strength, most of the strength that [00:36:30] I have from my mother. She was very strong, and I emulate everything that she has ever done in her life. I cannot get away from it, I have to live like my mother lived. Even to, I don't fix meals like you get from the freezer, I have to do all of my cooking from scratch. So--

William E. Gary: As you know, one of the things that I do is NAACP, I'm president [00:37:00] of the local branch here. In reading about the things that your father did, the work that he did, I find a certain irony in the fact that here some 50 years later that we are

still have an issue with blacks and other minorities voting here. We're still have an issue with [00:37:30] incidences of police brutality, in some cases, killings. We still have some instances of economic injustice there, and I just like to know, from your perspective, at that time looking here, do you see the irony in that? Also, do you think that perhaps there's been a disconnect in terms of teaching [00:38:00] young people, especially young African Americans about the struggle, your father, the work that he did.

I'm particularly drawn to the part where he filed a lawsuit on behalf of a teacher to equalize the pay for teachers in the state of Florida. Yet, even now, in terms of membership, we have very few teachers who are members of the NAACP. I, you know, can't put those things together.

Evangeline Moore: [00:38:30] Mr. Gary, during that time, when we were all together, it was very, very sad so far as I'm concerned. Because I can remember going to churches where Daddy would ask if he could speak and tell the people about the NAACP and perhaps start a chapter in that particular church. [00:39:00] And the ministers always waited until the benediction was said, and people, some of them had gotten up and left before they would let him say anything. That still hurts, even now. So far--Daddy did teach black history, because he taught all of us in fourth and fifth, fifth and sixth grade, but it was not a part of the curriculum.

[00:39:30] He did it on his own, and I'm sure that's another reason why they fired him. But yes, we do need right now, we need some strong black leaders, that's the main thing. Of course, yes, teachers should realize what my dad went through to get the salaries equalized, and yes, they should be members of the NAACP. But I suppose they are still afraid, [00:40:00] as they were back in the forties and fifties. That's the only answer that I can give you.

Max Johnson: We have a question right here. Before you answer the question, I'm happy that I do see some younger people here in the audience, so I'm going to put the young people on the spot a little bit. I won't call you out, but I'm going to solicit a question or two from you young people of Ms. Moore, whatever you may be thinking about. I'll give you a minute to think about it, and then hopefully [00:40:30] one of you may have a question or two.

Audience 18: Ms. Moore, I wonder, with both your parents being educators at that time, was that an all-black school? And I guess what I'm leading the question would be, now that we're studying that era, a lot of times we're realizing that obviously we had to have desegregation to happen to come forward, but a lot of the argument is that [00:41:00] actually, ironically, under segregation a lot of the school systems had the principals that were black. You had leaders, you know, coaches, et cetera, that were black which were role models, actually, because that's the way schools were set up.

When they desegregated, what actually happened, a lot of times, they didn't have that same person in that level of authority. They went to [00:41:30] the white schools, and I guess the question is, I'm just curious what your comment is in how

we can get to breaking boundaries down, but yet still have those authority figures for our minority students.

Evangeline Moore: Well, I really can say from my point of view that desegregation has not completely happened, so far as the segregated schools, I went to elementary [00:42:00] school in Mims, Florida, where my mother, my father, one other black woman, and all black. Then I transferred to Titusville High School, which was the ugliest, most unsafe building I can ever think about. And that's where we went to school, because that was the black high school. So far as the coaches and all that, it doesn't really matter whether a child [00:42:30] emulates or looks up to a black coach or a white coach. We're all God's children. We all breathe the same air, we all have the same heartbeat.

So that should not happen, and desegregation is a long way from being over.

Max Johnson: Oh, we have a question from a young person.

Audience 19: What are your views on the recent resurgence of Civil Rights [inaudible] such as Emmett Till and [00:43:00] your parents?

Evangeline Moore: I am very, very happy about it all, and I am hoping that the state of Florida will be just as diligent as the Emmett Till case and the three boys that were murdered in Mississippi. It's past time for all of those things to be cleared up. And I'm sure it can be done.

Deidre Gordon: [00:43:30] I've read about how you spoke about how your personal relationships didn't go so well because you sort of expected people to live up to the expectation of your father. Can you speak to ... you've said a few things that made me think that your relationship with your father was very special. Can you speak to some of the things that you two shared that had nothing to do with [00:44:00] voter registration, or those kind of things? What kind of relationship did you have with your dad?

Evangeline Moore: Well, it was a very, very special relationship. I remember when I was really very young, particularly in the summertime when he'd be out in a garden that we usually maintained, I could not sit still in the house. I had to be out there where he was. I did not learn [00:44:30] to play the piano, because that was during the time that my father was clearing off land to build his orange grove. And my mother told me if I could not sit in the house and practice an hour in the morning, and an hour in the afternoon, no more lessons. And I couldn't do that, because I had to be out with my Daddy. I can remember times when we usually made two trips to the post office, one in the morning, one in the afternoon.

Often [00:45:00] times I would not be dressed when Daddy, he got ready to go to the post office. And it was very simple, I'd just say, "Daddy, wait until I get my clothes on," and he would sit in the car just as patient, never rushed me, and take me to the post office and bring me back. I looked forward to him coming in in the

evenings, because up until I was a big girl, I sat on my father's knee in [00:45:30] that rocking chair and we shared things that, like the first book that I read was a western. So we'd talk about the western books. We both had a love of poetry, so we'd talk about poetry. It was something that was really, really special.

And yes, I think the reason that my relationships have not turned out the way they should have is because that was what [00:46:00] I expected. That was all I knew. And when relationships came and went, no one, but no one, could ever measure up to my Daddy. Not even half way. So we did have a very, very special relationship.

Max Johnson: Did he talk about or encourage civil participation [00:46:30] in the household? Did he talk to you girls about when you become older, when you become a member of the NAACP, or become active in trying to right wrongs, was that a conscious conversation?

Evangeline Moore: Not really. Just as I said, I was a member of the Florida State Youth Council. I held, I don't know whether it was secretary [00:47:00] or treasurer of that. I guess it was just something that was expected. We didn't have to talk about it because--and my sister was really not interested. She was an avid reader, and she really didn't take an interest, wherein I was my dad's Girl Friday, to help him with all the office work. She would help at times, but she really wasn't interested. This was just common knowledge, that this is what [00:47:30] you do.

Max Johnson: Yes sir.

Audience 20: Ms. Moore, I realize it's been a long time since 1951 and the present, but I wonder if you could give us a little information about your career and your life experiences, perhaps, in Washington D.C., what you enjoyed there.

Evangeline Moore: Alright. I went to Washington D.C. as a clerk typist for the US Department of Labor. I got off the train on an August [00:48:00] afternoon, and immediately I hated Washington D.C. The heat, the humidity, buildings that I was absolutely certain had to be all apartments, because no one could ever live in houses just built all together, but I was there and I had to work so I stayed. And of course, I told you that I [00:48:30] had no intentions of staying in Washington D.C., but after the bombing I went back.

And I actually tried to get my sister to come and live with me, but for some reason, she just said, "Well, I'm a Floridian, I cannot live in that environment," so that's the way it had to be. From the US Department of Labor, I went through a reduction in force when Eisenhower became president. [00:49:00] I was out of work for approximately eight months. Finally I got a position with the US Department of State. I stayed with the Department of State until 1976, so I went to State in '54, I stayed there until '76. And I decided that, oh, Florida has changed, I think I'm going back home where the pace is slower [00:49:30] and it's much more comfortable.

Well, little did I know, Florida had not changed at all, and I ran into the most viscous types of discrimination on my job that anyone could ever face. So, I stayed here, I was working with the Department of the Navy. It got so bad that when I reached age 55, I finally had [00:50:00] my years of service in and I could retire. So I retired from the government and went back to Washington D.C. because that's where my son was living, and I just stayed there. Because I can't live in Florida. I still have problems from time to time when I come to Florida with discrimination. So that's been my work career. When I went back to the [00:50:30] Washington area I moved into New Carrollton, and I worked in private industry for 10 years. And when I became 65, in 1995, I retired completely.

Audience 21: It must have been difficult that your parents' legacy was overlooked so much, probably because they were killed before the Brown v. Board of Ed. decision. We're here at the second annual Moore Heritage Festival for the Arts and Humanities in the Moore Cultural Complex, [00:51:00] how do you feel about the festival and the complex?

Evangeline Moore: I am grateful, I am happy, and I hope that all the people who are helping to maintain this legacy will continue. It makes me very, very happy.

Audience 3: I would be remiss if I didn't [inaudible 00:51:25]. Your father was instrumental in having just [00:51:30] the common people, you know, people who had outdoor toilets, and who were thrilled whenever they could come to your house and your mother would allow them to come into the bathroom. They tell these things, where I go to the beauty shop, and some of them should be here, because some of them were inspired to go school and get an education. At that time, they were pickers. They'd come up north, picking, [00:52:00] et cetera, and I'm trying to get a [inaudible] of that group, those who are so touched by his inspiration [inaudible 00:52:09].

Evangeline Moore: I don't know what happened to them, that's a hurtful situation as well, because my mother was very active in the community. I can remember often that when I first started coming back to Mims for the memorial service, there was one [00:52:30] young woman who came up to me repeatedly and told me how grateful she had been to my mother, because my mother at the beginning of school year, she always made new clothes for Peaches<sup>2</sup> and me. Her daughters, apparently, were about the same size. And she always gave all the clothes that we had worn the year before to this woman. Also, I remember [00:53:00] my mother had, her classroom had a cloak room by it.

And because she said that she knew that some of the students who came to school would not have a hot meal all day long, she ... my dad petitioned the board of education to supply canned goods and a stove to put in that cloak room and facilities for eating. So Mom would [00:53:30] adjust her class to where we would have a study period, say about a half an hour or so before lunch. And she would go into that cloakroom and prepare lunch for the whole school. So it hurts to

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<sup>2</sup> Peaches is the nickname of Harry and Harriette Moore's eldest daughter, Annie Rosalea.

know that people don't apparently remember, or maybe they're frightened, I really don't know.

Audience 3: Some do remember, [00:54:00] and I know this because I come down here for the winters. And I knew nothing about Florida.

Evangeline Moore: Oh yes, they were very, very helpful in the community. Everybody could come to Professor Moore and ask his opinion about anything. Our doors were always open.

Deidre Gordon: We're going to get ready to wrap up, if there are any final questions you'd like to ask?

Audience 22: I can attest to what you're saying, because I've made many trips [inaudible 00:54:29] [00:54:30] by the railroad track, down that little dirt path man-made road to your house. Always welcome. Of course, Mr. Moore would have meetings, even though they were not allow him to have meetings, like you said, until the end of the services sometimes on Sundays. But he used to have meetings at night, and my father would always carry us, you know, and a lot of times we didn't [00:55:00] want to go because he didn't want to sit and listen to lectures.

Dad always said, "You need to know, you need to be there. You need to know what's going on, it'll be a help to you later on." And so a lot of times, people just forget. Some people are frightened, and some people just don't care.

Evangeline Moore: That's right. I think so.

Audience 22: [inaudible 00:55:27]

Evangeline Moore: Thank you.

Audience 22: He was always there [00:55:30] for us, and in school, he was about the best, Professor Moore. He was always nice, and so was your mother. And I was there, because I'm a little bit older than you.

Evangeline Moore: But we were in the same class.

Audience 23: And to let you know, the teaching is still continuing, we have lots of kids who come through the museum during the festival and they have been so impressed.

Evangeline Moore: Very good.

Audience 23: An fact, they said, "We didn't get enough [00:56:00] time in the museum to learn about Mr. Moore." I think you should be encouraged to know that there is a new generation that is learning about your father, and want to know him.

Evangeline Moore: Thank you so much.

Audience 24: I sat as long as I could, without saying anything. But I was one of the few people that would always get a card or [00:56:30] a letter from your mother. When I left Mims Elementary, she taught, she was teaching. I think Miss Adams was teaching first and second grade—

Evangeline Moore: Yes, that's right.

Audience 24: And Mrs. Moore was teaching the third and fourth grade.

Evangeline Moore: That's right.

Audience 24: And Mr. Moore, we always called him Professor Moore, he taught the fifth and sixth grade.

Evangeline Moore: Yes, that's correct.

Audience 24: We were very poor, my mother had children every year. My mother had sixteen children, and as I said, speaking about, sometimes [00:57:00] we look more ahead. We don't take time to see what we need right here. We're all over the place, all over trying to help someone else when you got somebody right here in town.

That's the way Professor Moore and Mrs. Moore was. They saw the need in our family. And when I left Mims Elementary school, I thought it was all over, you know. I went to Titusville, and after that, Mrs. Moore, she still kept in touch with my mother. Every year before time for us to go to school, even when they [00:57:30] left Mims, I think the last time we got a letter was in '51, in August. I don't know how the clothes would get there, but she would call for me to come down, and my sister Bernice and I would always walk down old Dixie, take that long skinny road. [inaudible 00:57:47] and I I'm the one Miss Nobles told you about how I used to go there to the house.

One time, I said, "Mrs. Moore, I need to go to the bathroom." All we had then was outside toilets. She said, [00:58:00] "Okay, baby go right in there." You know, she had it fixed right, and you didn't go outside. And I can say when they passed away, it was like a part of my family had gone.

Evangeline Moore: Thank you.

Audience 24: Even when I would go away to school, there was a bed, it was a three quarter length bed. When my father passed away, he was sleeping in the bed that Mr. Moore gave him.

Evangeline Moore: Is that right?

Audience 24: And it was a few days before he passed away, they came to our house. I don't know, I might be a bit confused, [00:58:30] they were supposed to have [inaudible 00:58:32] come back here and stay a while at Christmas time. And he came to our house and got my two brothers to go over there and help them lift something, some kinda-- I think it was a refrigerator off of the truck, just for Christmas. But like I said, they were very good people. Mrs. Moore, I was--, we had a Girl Scout. I said, "Mrs. Moore, I can't do that." She said, "Yes you can, I'll buy you a suit." I want to tell you, I loved your mother and your father, and [00:59:00] I shall never forget them.

Evangeline Moore: Thank you so much. Thank you.