

**Annette Jones-White – “Bleeding Nose/Walk Home”**

I wasn't allowed to go downtown until I was in junior high; by then my training had taken place. And my mother told me, she said, you want to maintain your dignity and you don't want to have confrontations. She said so if you're downtown and you meet whites, see there was an unwritten law in Albany if you met whites on the sidewalk you were supposed to move aside. She said this is what you do: you casually walk over to a store window and you window shop until they pass by. And that way you avoid the confrontation, and you keep your dignity. But this particular day I was happy. I had some money that my grandmother had given me for my birthday and I had bought a new outfit, so I was thinking about what belt I could wear with the outfit. And I was looking down, because then I always looked down when I was thinking. And I didn't see them until they were about five or six feet, maybe 10 feet away from me. And it was too late, because all of the incidents that had happened to me had made, had built up inside of me and even though I didn't express it, I felt a resentment inside, and I guess it was a form of rebellion. But I never told my parents because I thought there was something wrong with the way I was feeling. So they never knew a lot of things that were going on with me. So one of them was that, for some reason, even though I knew all of the things that happened to people, I was not going to get off the sidewalk. And so he kept walking, there were three of them, the big one; he looked like a football player. He had teenagers; they had on something that said Albany High School. And so I just -- I weighed 98 pounds -- I held my head up and I had my little package and I kept walking and so did he. And I knew something was going to happen, but I didn't know what. So when he got to me, I'm going this way, like I'm facing you, he took his right arm and just threw the bone like that and it lifted me off the sidewalk but I didn't fall. And so he kept walking, and so did I. And I often think about him now and I wonder if he remembers that, and how he feels about it, you know? And so that was part of her training. The other one was don't pick up anything off the hanger -- you know if you're looking at something, let it stay on the hanger, don't pick it up or -- just call the clerk over, so you won't be accused of stealing.

And the other time I was walking in Kress Ten Cent store, which had swinging doors, and I had two bags. And I loved salted peanuts and jelly beans mixed and I was going to get some before I went home, So I was walking in the door and there was a white man in front of me. And he went through and he held the door open, and I was just about to say thank you as I stepped through when he let it go. And it hit me right in the face, and blood went down my face. And I was thinking, you stupid, you should have known better. But at that age, I looked at things more on a male/female basis, and to me this was a man holding the door

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for a female; that's how I was thinking, you know, which is not the way I should have been thinking, so he knocked me into the stomach of a lady, a white lady who was behind me. And she didn't say anything, she saw what happened, but she gave me some tissue. So I wiped my nose and I walked home. I didn't catch the bus. Ordinarily I would have caught the bus if I had that many packages, but the bus had a back-to-front seating policy for blacks, and I just felt like, if I got on the bus that day it was like pouring salt in my own wound so I walked home.

**Annette Jones-White – “Arctic Bear”**

We always went to the Arctic Bear for lunch. It was a drive-in eating-place, and they had a window. I'm not sure if they had a window for colored, there was no sign. And almost every time we went no one else would be there, so we always went to the same window. I don't know what would have happened had a lot of whites been there. But we'd always go and we'd get burgers and fries and a shake, it was probably the only place we could go. And this particular day, I don't know what was wrong with me. My grandfather would probably say she had the devil in her. But when we got our food, well Khalilah Bailey was driving, it was her car, and Yvonne Taylor was in the car. We rode to school together. We rode to the Arctic Bear, got our food, and as we started back to the car I said, “I don't want to eat in the car. I said I don't want to ride while I'm eating. Because when you're moving you've got to juggle this, and it's sloshing everywhere”. They hadn't made those little places where you put cups yet. And I said, “I don't want to sit in the car.” And she said, “Well what are you going to do?” I said, “I want to sit on the benches over there. She said, “You know that's not for you.” I said, “I don't know that, there are no signs.” So we strolled over there, sat down and put everything on the table, and we started to eat. And the manager saw us and the people inside. They were looking, but they didn't say anything. And we sat there, and then this limousine came by and it circled the block twice and then it pulled up into the parking lot, and it was, I think it was a chauffeured limousine. As I'm seeing it, he sent the chauffeur to get the manager and the manager went out to the car, and then the limousine left. And when the limousine left, the manager came out and he said “I'm sorry, but ya'll are going to have to leave.” He said “I appreciate your business but we don't get enough business from ya'll for me to upset my regular customers.” I looked at him, and I said, “Okay!” Just like that, I was, okay and so he left. And so Yvonne and Khalilah started gathering up their stuff; I said, “we're not going anywhere,” I said, “until we finish eating.” And so we sat there and we finished eating. And they saw us. He kept looking out and he didn't come back out, he didn't call the police. And I haven't been back, even after it was de-segregated. I never went back.

**Annette Jones-White – “Frog Houses”**

You'd see people, just droves of people in the streets going to the mass meeting. Nobody wanted to leave. The first mass meeting, after it was over we just hung around talking to anybody who'd listen because we didn't want the energy and the power that we had in that church to dissipate. When my grandfather, great-grandfather died, we had been close. And my parents saw a sadness in me and my grandmother, and in her way to try to help me she took me outside and she said we're going to do something that Grandpa Tom did when he was a little boy, and he taught me and I'm going to teach you, and then you can do what Grandpa used to do when he was a boy. And I said okay. So she took off her shoe and then she went to the faucet outside the house and she wet it, she made a pile of wet dirt. And then she piled all it on her foot, on the top of the foot and on the sides, and then she packed it, and then she pulled her foot out. And she told me to do the same, and I did it. And so I said what is it? And she said it's a frog house. And so I made frog houses and I would feel good because Grandpa Tom used to do this and now I'm doing it too. And this resentment was building up in me. It may have been something that happened with my father. But I just; I couldn't stand it. I ran outside. And I had made frog houses. And I ran to that frog house and I don't know what made me get down on my knees to that frog house, and I just breathed into it. I just kept breathing into that frog house. And I did that until I felt better. And I built frog houses up until I was about 13 or 14. Children were children longer then. And I found where, if I built them under the house, they would be there when I needed them. And I could run under when something happened-- and see my parents didn't know how badly this stuff was affecting me. And I would run under and just breathe in, and I would also close it up after I breathed in it, when I was younger, to keep it in there. So all up until I was about 14 I did that. So after this mass meeting, I'm thinking you know I don't need any more frog houses, I don't need any of the (gets emotional) I don't need any of the things that I had needed in order to cope. Because here it is, it's like a roadmap. We call attention to what is wrong, and has to be addressed. But that's what I felt then, it was like I don't know if that's an epiphany or what you call it, but I went home and I was just, I couldn't sleep.

**Annette Jones-White – White Only Fountain**

The dime store where I would buy the jelly beans and peanuts, I would run and drink out of the white-only fountain, but I never told my parents that either. They would not have believed that I was doing some of the things that I was doing and I felt like why shouldn't I, why do I have to drink at a different fountain? It made me think that someone thought there was something wrong with me, you know, you can't drink from this fountain, there's something wrong, this is yours over here and don't you touch ours. And so the first time I did it, I wasn't sure if anybody saw me. But then a customer saw me. She was outraged, you know. "Just that's not for-- oh I'm sorry, but she had this weird accent." That's not for you; you get over there where you belong. And so I just smiled and that seemed to infuriate her more than me drinking from the fountain. And also they had a habit in that store of giving you your change back, they didn't want to touch your hand, even the lady who my mother did laundry for would drop the money in her hand, so Janie and I-- Janie Rambo, we were friends and we would go to buy something, and you knew exactly how much it was going to cost, so we would get all this change and then just put it on the counter real hard, it would sort of spread out, and then we'd leave hurriedly. And so those were things, something was building in me and so I would do those little things. And I didn't think about it as being, trying to make things better. It was just, I don't know. It was all about me and not being taken advantage of or being treated like I was nothing. And I was something.