

## **Oral history**

### **Possible interview questions**

#### **General Questions**

- What's your full name?
- When were you born?
- Where were born?
- Were you raised there too?

#### **Childhood**

- What are some of your earliest childhood memories?
- What was the greatest joy or sadness of your childhood?
- Who were your childhood role models?
- What were the things that you enjoyed as a child?
- How were you expected to behave in front of adults?

#### **Family Life**

- How were decisions made in your family?
- Do you ever remember any conflicts over decisions or decision-making?
- Who took the responsibility for childcare and discipline?
- Did you treat your own children the same or differently than your parents treated you?

#### **Growing Up**

- What kinds of values do you think your parents instilled in you?
- When did you first consider yourself grown up?
- Who were the people most important to you?
- How were unmarried people viewed in your neighborhood?

#### **Career**

- What was your first job?
- What were your wages?
- How long did you stay at this work?
- What other jobs have you held? For how long?
- What job did you like the best and which job did you like the least?

### Community

- Define your neighborhood or community.
- What was most important to people in that community?
- How has the community changed within your lifetime as far as physical appearance is concerned?
- What were the gathering places in your neighborhood or community?
- What did you do for fun?
- Where did the men go and where did the women go?

### Neighborhood

- What do you remember about your home and your neighbors' homes?
- Who were your neighbors?
- Which relatives lived nearby?
- What were the occasions for family gatherings?
- What do you remember about them?

### Education

- How much schooling did you get?
- Where did you go and for how long?
- Did you attend school for the entire school year?
- What did you like and dislike about school?
- How did the teachers discipline students?
- How were your parents involved in your schooling?
- What kinds of things did you learn in school?
- What were the major differences between your education and your parents' education or your children's education?

### Religion

- Did your family attend church?
- Where? Who made up the congregation?
- If you do not attend, why?
- If you do, what churches have you attended and why?
- Who were some of the leaders and what did they do?
- What was your church's and minister's role in civic affairs?

### **The Civil Rights Movement**

- Do you remember any particular controversy in your community/neighborhood?  
How was it settled?
- What was the role of boycotts of businesses, schools, transportation?
- When did you first vote?
- What do you remember about people organizing around voting?
- How did you get local/national news?
- Which newspapers did you read?
- Who were the most important people in your community?
- Who were the important black national figures in this time?
- What was it like being black in McComb (or other town) at that time?
- What were the signs and symbols of the Jim Crow era?
- What were some of the differences you encountered? Schools, public places?
- Who were some of the people fighting against segregation?
- Who was fighting for segregation?
- What role did women play in the movement?
- What role did churches play in the movement?
- How did the Civil Rights Movement affect your life?
- Was there an NAACP in your community? If so, who belonged to it?
- What were the main voluntary associations or clubs in your community?
- Who could join them?
- What did you think of the fraternal organizations and the sororities?
- Do you belong to any organizations?
- If so, how are decisions made at meetings?
- How are conflicts resolved within the organization?

Is there anything else you would like to add?