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Theresai Manley Interview

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Museum of History and Holocaust Education Legacy Series
Theresai Manley interview
Conducted by Adina Langer
June 11th, 2019
Transcribed by Kathryn Graham

Theresai Manley was born into a working-class family in 1934 Thompsonville, Georgia. Her father was a produce salesman and her mother a seamstress. Graduating from Mercer University, despite financial issues, she was one of eight women admitted to the Medical College of Georgia in 1957. Her marriage goals overtook her medical career, where she continued to work outside the home while also raising her three children. In June of 2019, Manley agreed to be a part of the oral history legacy series program at Kennesaw State University.

Full Transcript

- Interviewer, Adina: Today is J-June 11th, 2019. My name is Adina Langer, and I am the curator for the Museum of History and Holocaust Education at Kennesaw State University. I am here at Sturgis Library with Theresai Manley. Could you please state your full name?
- Theresai: My name is Henry Theresai Mann Manley.
- Adina: And when and where were you born?
- Theresai: I was in born out from Dewy Rose, Georgia. This is Elbert County, northeast Georgia. The house was where my parents were living and it's in the edge of the yard of the old home place, the Mann home place.
- Adina: And was this in your family for a long time? The Mann home place?
- Theresai: Yes, it was.
- Adina: And what were your parents' names?
- Theresai: My daddy was John Henry Mann; I was named for him. I was the first child, and my mother was Ulamay Bond Mann.
- Adina: And uh, what what were their occupations?
- Theresai: When they first married, Daddy was at, they lived in the Elbert area and that's the granite city of the south and Daddy like most men there worked at a granite shed. Um, Mother was a housewife, but she was a really good seamstress, and she took in sewing and made and repaired and altered clothes for people. Um, daddy had to change jobs because what they then called water on the knee and he couldn't do the granite shed work anymore. They moved from Elbert county to McDuffie county, which is where Thomson is, and Thomson is 30 miles west of Augusta. Um, and daddy became a Watkins man. That is to say he owned a truck

and drove all around McDuffie county selling Watkins products¹.

Adina: So, um, did you have any siblings?

Theresai: Yes, I had two sisters and two brothers.

Adina: And did you already have them when you moved to um Thomasville?

Theresai: Thompsonville yeah,

Adina: Thompsonville, pardon me.

Theresai: I had one sister there and the others born later.

Adina: So, um what sort of home did you live in Thompson?

Theresai: Two or three different ones, when we first moved there it was 1940 and um 1939 and um... the beginning of the war and there just weren't many places. And the first place we lived was an abandoned service station out from Thompson and they rented it until they could find a place and then they rented a house with um... with Miss. Louise out on Cobbham Road and we lived there several years. Uh, then they bought a house in Thompson and that house, on Neil Street in Thompson is where we grew up and where they lived until they died.

Adina: And that was kind of a small town?

Theresai: Small town, yes.

Adina: What was your neighborhood like?

Theresai: (Deep inhale) There were... the houses were mostly like our house was— small house. Um, Daddy bought an extra lot so he could do a garden. Um, and the neighborhood was close and friendly. Across the street was a girl about our age and we became good friends and um, it was really close walking distance to the elementary school.

Adina: And did you interact with white kids and Black kids or only white kids?

Theresai: I didn't know any Black kids; I never saw any.

Adina: And, um, so at this point the war was going on once you moved there.

Theresai: Uh huh.

¹See this article for the history of Watkins Trucking: <https://www.freightwaves.com/news/freightwaves-haul-of-fame-watkins-motor-lines-grew-for-decades>

Adina: Do you remember, do you have a sense for what it was like right at the beginning of the war? Did you notice, did you notice Pearl Harbor (Theresai deep inhale, laughing) happen?

Theresai: I noticed before that, we were still living in Dewy Rose and I was... in the house we moved to after, after the house uh at the old homeplace. I was probably about 5 years old and Daddy, and the war in Europe was going, Daddy always listens to the war news and it was horrible to me. As a young child, I could hardly bear it and I would beg Daddy to “please turn off the radio, I don’t want to hear this” but he couldn’t, he wouldn’t and then I would run out of the house through what we called, what Jackie and I called my sister um our playhouse. It wasn’t a house it was just a space in the yard where we played house and I would cry because I couldn’t stand it and I was four or five years old.

Adina: And what was it about that news that upset you so much? What do you remember?

Theresai: (Deep inhale) I’ve been trying to think of that and, and I think what it was was hearing the children were being killed, that houses were being burned and that something was happening in Germany about camps and and killing people. It was horrible to me. (Nods her head yes)

Adina: And, um, as the war continued and you were a young, probably at that point, you were probably a young student in school. (Theresai nods and groans in agreement) do you remember doing anything to support the war effort?

Theresai: (Smiles and inhales) Well yes! In fact, by that time, we were living in Thompson and I started to school in Thompson and, and uh we would gather scrap metal and, and uh take it over to the place that took the scrap metal, and it was that I suspect some other things that we now call preservation and all of that (nods head yes) that we were doing

Adina: Do you remember any posters or anything like that telling you that you should conserve or have a victory garden or anything like that—

Theresai: (Cuts Adina off, smiling) I certainly remember the victory garden and I think we must called ours that at some point, uh they certainly grew so much that we started with anyway canning and then when freezers were there, actually the first freezer was a building in town that people rented spaces in and they did they did that and froze things and that was a part of our conserving and so forth. (Thoughtful pause) I guess that’s, that’s the main thing I remember yeah. I remember also the posters of women working (smiles with excitement) and that was new to me, women working.

Adina: Did you know any women who worked?

Theresai: I’m sure I did but I don’t remember.

Adina: Do you remember um using ration coupons for, for anything?

Theresai: I don't specially remember the coupons, but I remember yes that things were rationed. In fact, the really nice house at the end of our street was rumored to be hoarding sugar, (sarcastically) it was a terrible thing. But yes, I remember rationing. They rationed soap, they rationed sugar, rationed tobacco in cigarettes. Um Daddy smoked at that time and I remember seeing him use a little machine that you put the cigarette paper in and the, the tobacco in and, and the machine would roll it into a cigarette. (long pause) It wasn't too long after that, that he quit smoking. Um, nylons or silk stockings were hoarded, well not hoarding but rationed because they used that material to make parachutes. And one of things a niece reminded me of when we were talking about this is that when you couldn't, at that time stockings seam in the back, (quoting older women at the time) "get your seam really straight", all of that well if you didn't have any stockings you had to pretend you had stockings and so you would draw a line up the back of your leg to pretend that it was a silk stocking with a line on it.

Adina: Now you mentioned that your father had been in the granite business and then he drove trucks for Watkins—

Theresai: Mh-hm

Adina: But you had an old family homestead, did you have a sense of how the Great Depression affected your family or change anything for you?

Theresai: Not really, um, we didn't have much money. Daddy didn't make a huge amount of money either place he worked. A part of Mothers sewing was helping the family economy, uh and we just had to be careful about what we bought and what we ate and what we wore.

Adina: And did your mother make your clothes?

Theresai: Yes, Mother made everything I ever wore, even my wedding dress and all of the bridesmaid dresses (smiles really big, very happy)

Adina: What was your mother like?

Theresai: Mother was very strong and bossy (laughs). She was kind of difficult to live with sometimes, um she was very very moral and, and um I guess the main thing was she was just very strong and did, did her best to rear us well.

Adina: Did religion play an important role in your family?

Theresai: Oh yes, we were members of the First Baptist Church of Thompson, we always went to church. You know, Sunday morning Sunday school, church—training union church at night and um, um Wednesday night prayer meeting too. And I

sang in the choir from the time I could.

Adina: And um, do you remember anybody talking about President Roosevelt or having strong opinions about the works he was doing as the president?

Theresai: Yes, he was very popular where I was, it was very strong, and he was doing something that would help lower income people like us.

Adina: And did your, did your family, I mean you mention that you never made a lot of money was there a sense that you were poor and other people were not or was it everyone was kind of in the same boat?

Theresai: I think everyone was in the same boat. There were a few who had more but I don't recall that we really felt poor (nods head yes)

Adina: So, you were still young while the war was happening—

Theresai: Yes.

Adina: Did you have any relatives or know anyone who served in the military?

Theresai: Yes, I had an uncle was actually a prisoner of war. And one of the articles that I brought when we brought pictures, one was a picture of 'Momma Mann', his mother, my grandmother, um and his and that picture and a newspaper article that mother, mother used her Bible as a scrapbook and that's where I found it. But this article was about 'Momma Mann' going from Alberton to Augusta to receive for him an, an award for having been a prisoner of war. That was her youngest son, Uncle Horace, (reassuring smile) he did come back yeah.

Adina: That's good to know. Would, if it wasn't for his knees would your father have likely served or was he older than the age—

Theresai: Well, he was somewhat older, but he also had been, um— (deep inhale) okay I'm losing a word. What is it when, it's it's a—

Adina: Was he a veteran? Had he served before? Was he a veteran?

Theresai: He was not a veteran from the first world war or... of the army... but, but he served in one of the local things that did that.

Adina: Oh, like an um, like a National Guard...?

Theresai: Yes (laughs) thank you!

Adina: Sure.

Theresai: Yes, my dad was in the National Guard at one point.

Adina: Did he take any role in kind of orchestrating and organizing any kind of home front—

Theresai: No.

Adina: — defense or...

Theresai: No.

Adina: Um, so what do you remember about the end of the war?

Theresai: (long pause) It was wonderfully exciting time, but I remember was what we did before that and that is, I remember Hiroshima very care, very much. In fact, I've talked with my brother in getting ready to talk with you. My brother is about seven or eight years younger than I, and Johnny said *he* remembers hearing about the mushroom cloud, and he was just about two or three. It was something that was awful but also amazing and so I remember that as awful as that was at least it helped to end the war.

Adina: How was it described on the radio? Did they talk about the shape of the cloud?

Theresai: (nodding head) They talked about the mushroom cloud, yeah.

Adina: And at this point you would have been in elementary school?

Theresai: Yes.

Adina: Were you starting to think about what additional education you wanted to get? Um what your hopes were for the future?

Theresai: I wanted to go to college but there weren't many people in our family who did. Um and we didn't have a lot of money. Um, I had a cousin who, whose mother's first cousin who came and visited often and he was at Mercer and um that's what I thought that's what I want to do "I want to go to Mercer", it became possible. I got some scholarships, I worked in the dining hall and Mother and Daddy did what they could. There came a time... well we'll talk about that later but getting, thinking about what I wanted to do I became a Christian, I joined the church and was baptized and was encouraged to do religious work and so I thought when I go to college I'll major in Christian education (nods head) and I got to college and started that and changed my mind (smiling big and shakes her head in conformation).

Adina: And um, um was there a sense that there were distinctly different opportunities for women versus for men?

Theresai: Absolutely. As I was looking through the pictures getting ready to talk to you, I

thought how different our lives were from my grandmother to my mother to me and to our daughters; so much has changed and so much is so much better for women now.

Adina: So, so what was life like at Mercer? What did you enjoy most while you were there?

Theresai: I liked knowing I could be there. I liked being there. I was a member of the non-sorority group called MICA and, and I became more and more active in that. I was active in the BSU, Baptist Student Union, BSU and I loved, I loved the learning I loved what I was doing and so forth. This was Mercer in 1952-1956 (chuckles) would you believe that to go to physical education, which we were required to do, we couldn't just wear our shorts across campus we had to wear a raincoat to cover up (chuckles) things have changed a lot, but also while we were there Mervin Griffin was governor of Georgia and Mercer was a big basketball school and a Yankee basketball team was gonna come, Pitt I think it was, gonna come down and play and Mervin Griffin said (Theresai pointing forward) "they can't come down, there are Black people on that, on that team". We hung him in effigy (chuckles).

Adina: (chuckling with her) So was there a sense, even then, on campus that, that was maybe hope that things might change, um in terms of segregation and—?

Theresai: I, I think this thing that happened to us had something to do with that. Also, when I was president of BSU, which was my senior year um the Mercer BSU met with the Fort Valley Black Uni— College BSU because we wanted to learn about each other and get together. We were demonstrated against but yes there were some things beginning and pretty soon after we graduated, they began to accept African American students.

Adina: Did Mercer accept African American students even before UGA?

Theresai: I don't know when UGA did (smiling, shaking head no and then yes)

Adina: But um, yeah so what um what were some of the first things you learned about Civil Rights issues?

Theresai: (sits up taller, thinking) I'm not sure about first things, I'm very aware... of my family's stance in this: they were very racist. I remember also being in high school and, and some of the things I said and did forgive my language now, some of my erstwhile friends called me a "nigger² lover". I had changed, I had moved away from where my family was and continued that.

Adina: Do you ever remember trying to have conversations with them about how your thoughts were changing or your attitudes were changing?

² The use of this term is included as transcribed to describe the racial climate of the time.

Theresai: Not much, it was difficult. My daddy in particular was extremely racist and some of his brothers, Daddy was from a family of 12, were very racist until they died and there was nothing you could do about that no matter what you said or did.

Adina: Do you ever remember talking about the Klan? I know they were active in the 40's and...

Theresai: Oh, it was scary. It was a terrible thing, yeah.

Adina: Well, um, kind of pivoting back to your college experience, can you tell me about meeting your husband or your future husband?

Theresai: (large smile) Yes, I was already a junior when he came there and, and um we had vespers every night after supper and um, I meet him at vespers, and we were friendly, but I liked a couple of other guys a lot better at that time. But that changed and there came a time in my senior year when there was nobody else for me.

Adina: So, what at that moment were you thinking you wanted to do next in your life? What were your hopes?

Theresai: When I became a junior, when I got to be a junior, I changed, changed my m-, I changed my major to pre-med. I decided I wanted to be a doctor, maybe a missionary doctor but a doctor and therefore in my junior and senior year (chuckles) I was making up for the science courses that were, that I had not taken earlier. Taking beginning and advanced lab courses at the same time (laughing) and working in the dining hall and being pres— it was a busy time, but I did okay. Um and um, I got accepted at Medical College of Georgia when I graduated. I made, when your gonna graduate at least back then they still do, you think your GRE Graduate Record Examines and I made the highest grade in biology that had been made at the time at Mercer, (very enthused) yes! (leans back laughing) but anyway I got accepted at Medical College of Georgia and I was in a class of 100 of which eight were women (smiling), it was the largest women class they ever had, and this was 1957, 56 57.

Adina: What was the experience like for you?

Theresai: It was terrific! I, uh, I loved the kind of learning I was doing dissecting the human body, the biology and chemistry courses that were medical and so forth. But also, at that time, I was in love with Clay and Clay was gonna go to seminary and at some point, their came the time that I had to decide about what I was going to do (getting emotional) sort of emotional now, still thinking about it. It was, it was a difficult time there were a number of things involved; one was that I, I was one of these women in the biggest women's class they had and the very idea of dropping out... (gets choked up). There was also wanting to be married to Clay and knowing that we could not afford for him to go to seminary and me to

stay in medical school. Now one of the things about my college experience that I haven't mentioned is that when I was a junior at Christmas time mother and daddy said "Honey, I'm really really sorry but we just can't afford for you to go back to school". I quickly wrote a letter to my pastor, who was the campus pastor, the day that he received the letter and called over to the President of the University and said, "Look I've got this worthy person can't come back..." and the president's office was a man representing a men's Sunday school class from First Baptist Church Decatur, who was trying to find a student to support and I became that student (smiling). And so, this men's Sunday school class from First Baptist Church Decatur paid the rest of my way through school, I still worked, but they paid my tuition and room and board and my first year of medical school and he was somebody I had to tell "I'm dropping out of medical school" (smiling). I— anyway that's those two or three years for me.

Adina: So, then you married?

Theresai: (looking off camera, smiling) And then I married Clay. I left medical school and Clay graduated from Mercer and the same time, he was one year behind me. Hey, I'm a year old than he is (smiling) but anyway I was— he was one year behind me in school and so he graduated in '57, I left medical school in '57 and in July of that year we got married.

Adina: Was it a big wedding?

Theresai: Well yeah (smiling and laughing)! My mother made an absolutely beautiful dress for me and the bridesmaids and the church was full of people and it was First Baptist Church of Thompson, where I had grown up, and it was really pretty special, yeah.

Adina: So, tell me about going to New York.

Theresai: There's several things involved in this that you've had no hints about. My sister went to University of Georgia and met at the University of Georgia the man she wanted to marry heaven forbid he was a Yankee and a Catholic. My mother and daddy didn't like that and had decided that even if they got married in Thompson mother and daddy won't go to the wedding (sighs in disbelief). They got married in Massachusetts, which is where he was from, and Clay and I (looking off camera) this was in what 1959, Clay and I—yeah, uh I was pregnant with our first child. We went up to be at her wedding and then went on to m— to uh Union in New York City. So, our trip to New York City did some family stuff too (laughing) and then we, we um we lived in a student apartment at Union and Steven was born that fall. Now I was already largely pregnant because he was born in November and we went up there, in August and September and I went to— you have to go to a doctor in a hospital, I went to OV Clinic, two or three different hospitals and they wouldn't accept me I was too far along and quote "didn't have any history with them" so I went to the Dean of Women at Union and I said "ya know if you don't get me in a hospital you're gonna have to help

me have this baby” (laughing), (looking off at Clay) did I say that Clay (more laughing). She got me in a hospital and that all worked out fine. And Steven was born three in the morning and the day before Thanksgiving, that year we moved to New York (smiling). Yeah.

Adina: And, uh, did you—did you have much of a support network while you were there?

Theresai: In a very real sense yes, we lived in in student apartment and we were in married student’s apartments so there were people there who, like I, needed friends and so forth. Also, I went to, I went to church which was right next door to Union and uh and I felt support from people there.

Adina: Now Union was a slightly different domination of Christianity than what you were used to?

Theresai: I believe Union was basically non-denominational. There were people there who were Baptist but other, other protestant denominations too. Um, one of the things that happen is that Clay was told “if you go to Union...” and this when we were still back in Georgia deciding what to do and he was told by people from the Southern Baptist Church that “if you go to Union, you’ll have a *really* hard time finding a church when you get back because they won’t accept you” and that was true. It was difficult.

Adina: And was that based on kind of North-South prejudice or Liberal-Conservative prejudice...?

Theresai: Yes, yes (laughs). And it was not Southern Baptists (shrugs shoulders) yeah.

Adina: So, did you take any theological classes while you were there?

Theresai: (smiles) Yes, I did! Um we were able as spouses of students to sit in on classes and some of the ones I liked so much I sat in a lot. The worst grade I had made in high school, I was practically a straight A student, except in typing. I made my only C in typing (laughs). I got really good at typing at Union because I had to type Clay’s papers (laughing). Um, and I learned a lot from Clay’s papers too.

Adina: And did, did you do any other work outside the home while you were there or—

Theresai: Yes, and in fact, um, when we got married and I dropped out of medical school one of the questions was “what will I do?” I didn’t want to be a nurse, mainly because everybody said “if you can’t go to medical school and be a doctor you need to be a nurse” well (laughing). But Clay had uh, has a cousin who was active as a nurse and um in the medical field and she said why don’t you, you two, go to Grady and become a medical technologist. I did that and so before we went to Ne— New York I had registered to become AMTCSP, a registered medical technologist and so some of the time when we were there at Union I

worked at hospitals and that us being there and being able to stay.

Adina: What, what what struck you as being different between New York and where you had grown up?

Theresai: There were so many people. The building we lived in, the apartment building we lived in that was connected to the school, I think it was— Clay, Clay's first pastoral after we married was before seminary and we were at Woodstock, which was a tiny town then, the floor we lived on had more people in it than the town of Woodstock (laughing). So, a part of it was the traffic, the climate, the the number of people, how you shopped. It was all very different. It was—

Adina: Did you find yourself homesick ever?

Theresai: Sometimes, mh-hm.

Adina: So, what was it like then to back to Georgia?

Theresai: On the way back to Georgia, I remember Clay saying, well he had gotten for a church at like... mid-west somewhere and he said “no I'm not going to do that and if anybody who wants us to move back to New York they'd have to stop me from moving south every morning”. It was time to go back home. We were not sure— Steven was so little, ya know he was born there, and we had a snow that was taller than he was (snickers) and our friend, Halford Hendricks, had a, had an old Cadillac and the window wouldn't close quiet and inside the car filled up with snow that time. That was not our usual climate. Nancy was born in New York, too so both our, our two first children were born in New York.

Adina: So, um once you did come back to Georgia you had one more child?

Theresai: Yes, Catherine was born when we were— she was born in Marietta at what was then Kennestone Hospital, the first Kennestone Hospital.

Adina: And that p— did you, did you settle in one place once you were in, back in Georgia or did you still move around a bit?

Theresai: We moved around some uh, pastors are not usually in place a whole long time, five years at the most and we moved around some. But mostly around the Atlanta area.

Adina: Okay, metro-Atlanta kind of area.

Theresai: Hm-mh.

Adina: And did you, did you observe some of the changes that were happening in terms of moving away from segregation and people trying to change things in terms of Civil Rights?

Theresai: Yes, absolutely, and farther along our granddaughter Courtney, well that was she's the daughter of our, of our youngest daughter Catherine, our youngest child. Um, they were at our house and she was talking about this class that she had at school and, and, and I said "Courtney, I grew up in a town that was totally segregated. I didn't even know anyone my age who was not white" (mimics Courtney's shocked face) she was so surprised she said, "Grandmother would you come talk to my class about this?" and I said, "if the teacher wants me to I will" and I did. It was an interesting experience for me because it made me think more about that particular thing; growing up like I did. After I, after I said what I had to say to the class I asked them if they had, and this was a mixed class, um ask if they had any questions and one of them said "did you have any friends who were, who were black?" and I had to tell them no. I didn't even know anyone my age who was Black (sighs). The changes that happened, happened more after I grew up. Yeah.

Adina: Do you remember Martin Luther King Junior as a figure?

Theresai: Absolutely. Absolutely, that was a very special man and a very special time. I remember when he was killed and those awful pictures, television pictures of him showing it happening. Um, I appreciate him a great deal.

Adina: So, did you ever um take a job after your children got a little bit older, working as a medical technician or another—?

Theresai: Yes, yes. Absolutely, um, it was it was helpful to the budget for me to work and I liked working and I worked most of the time. Um, bless him Clay, my jobs were often like seven - three (laughing) and hospitals did that, and some doctor's offices did. And bless him, Clay was the one who had to be the children up and off to school. Um, I had a traveling job too. I'm trying to think of chronology here. One of the major important laboratories in the country was Bioscience Laboratories, Bioscience was in the Los Angeles area and Catherine— you've heard us talk about Catherine's... not feeling self-confident because of the competition between her and her older siblings (laughs) and at one point I was offered a job at Bioscience laborites, to be head of client response, which is the call center. We talked about it and decided that I would take that job. Clay didn't go, he would— if things work out, I'll come later, and he was working in real estate at the time. Um Catherine and I, Steven and Nancy were already in college, Catherine and I moved to California. It turned out to be, it was her sophomore and junior years in high school... and I've always felt that it turned out to be a good thing for her, she was away from the siblings and she could make her own way and she did, and Catherine has become a very special young woman. She's thoughtful and caring, but we think that about all our children (laughs) um, but I felt like that was good for her. Uh after two years, it was time for us to decide what we were gonna do. People would always say "are you and Clay separated?" no were just apart right now (laughs), and it was not that kind of separation, it was just a job thing. So, I applied for a job back in Atlanta and

uh Clay and Steven came out and collected our stuff and we drove across the country moving back to Atlanta. It was a really good thing to do.

Adina: What— when was this?

Theresai: When was this? (long pause) Clay, when did we move back? (laughing) (Clay off camera) 1982. 1982 (laughing) Catherine had one more year of school and she, she went she finished school at um (Clay off camera) Decatur (Theresai) Decatur High.

Adina: So, um thinking about your childhood and your family, what did you find to be the greatest changes between your experiences and your children's experiences?

Theresai: Maybe the best way for me to describe that is to describe what they now do. Nancy and Steven both went to college. Steven graduated from Mercer, Cum Laude. Nancy graduated from, from Bryn Mawr. Her college, her high school counselor had suggested Bryn Mawr for her and got her PhD at MIT in biology. Nancy is one of these women who is her own person and is very strong and very bright. She is now head of a couple of departments in the biology and research departments at the University of Georgia and when she was doing her post-doctoral work at, at University of Utah she met Brian who became her husband. She didn't take his name (clear throat) she's still Nancy Manley and um, they have one son Eli. I think part of the difference with Nancy is, she did what she wanted to do and what she needed to do. She made up her mind and she was able to do that. Steven did too, and he married and, and they have a really good relationship— long term. Their son, their youngest child, just graduated from college. They um, Steven was head of the computer department at CarMax for a number of years, which is why they moved to Virginia. They know live in the Richmond area uh because that's the home, home office of CarMax. When CarMax got new leadership, they did the same thing somebody did to me at, at, at the lab and that is when your middle management they want new middle management. So now Steven is head of IT the state patrol for the, for all of Virginia and his office is still in Richmond. Catherine decided not to finish college and, and that was okay for her. But Catherine is now head of the Department of Acquisition for the, for the uh library system of Gwinnett County and has worked for that for a very long-time um and she has two children. And she's our younger child and our youngest grandmother now (laughs).

Adina: Sea of grandchildren!

Theresai: And we have great-grandchildren, yes!

Adina: And great-grandchildren!

Theresai: Yeah. Does that answer your question?

Adina: Sure, yeah! So uh, my last kind of big question then is what, what would you like

a student, what do you think a student of history should take away from learning about your life?

Theresai: I think there are several things. When there is something that is important to you, don't let people change your mind about what's important. Be sure that your confident in what you're doing and continue. Um, on the other hand, Clay and I have talked about this recently... (laughs) I have this little thing on my refrigerator that says (laughs) don't look back you're not going there (shrugs). However, I looked back, and it was good thing to do. My choice to drop out of medical school, was not an easy one to make it was, it has turned out really well. You see, even if Clay and I had married later and had children later we wouldn't have had these three children (holding up three fingers). They would not have been the kind of people they are, and they are... these are three people to be proud of and we are. They are good citizens; they make good choices, and they work hard, and they are rearing good families, so we did the right thing (smiles) in several ways. So that a part of it— just be careful the choices that you make but you can make choices of your own, that's part of it. And also, go to school, learn as much as you can, graduate from college, do more if that's where you want to go because that's an important part of your life and church is important too. Really important in so many ways.

Adina: Thank you. Is there anything I haven't asked you about any stories you wanted to get to tell?

Theresai: (looking off, thinking) I'll probably think of them when I get out there.

Adina: Maybe, maybe as an aside, I know you wanted to talk about your husband's um peacock cane, so it might be nice just to tell that story.

Theresai: Okay. Clay show me your peacock cane (laughs).

Adina: We might be able to bring into the line of the uh the, the film.

Theresai: Tell me if I'm—

Adina: You can see it? You can see it. Okay.

Theresai: The peacock is uh, a symbol of Clay's family, Clay's mother. Ms. Manley, you'll notice I still call her Ms. Manley. I'm not sure why she was the best— she was the best mother-in-law you could have ever had. Clay and I lived with her for a little while after we married and then we got our first apartment and when we did, we invited her over for the first meal. And I did everything I could to make a wonderful meal and when I got up to go take away, to clear the table and get dessert, Clay told me later he said, "oh Mother, I forgot, you don't like cherries and Theresai made cherry pie" she said, "tonight I do" (smiles). It was her attitude about so many things; to be thoughtful and careful. Well for some reason, animals knew that. There was a little kitten, a cat, that showed up at her

door that apparently been snake bit or something it was a sick cat and left its kitten for Ms. Manley to take care of and she did. And later the cat got okay and came back and got her kittens (laughing) who does that happen too? She didn't, most of the time that I knew her, she didn't have pets. One day a peacock appeared in her yard, landed on the well shed. She didn't know where it came from, she eventually found out that a neighbor across the highway, some miles away, had had acquired a male and female peacock and didn't know they flew. They do. That one lived the rest of its life at Ms. Manley's house. We all have peacock feathers that it shed that we collected. I still have some, and when Anthony, our grandson the father of the two great-grandchildren, decided he wanted to make a cane or have a cane made for Clay we all decided peacock is what it should be, and it is (smiling) and that's that story.

Adina: (laughing) that's great thank you so much. Well thanks so much, thank you for your time and sharing your memories with us—

Theresai: And thanks for listening.