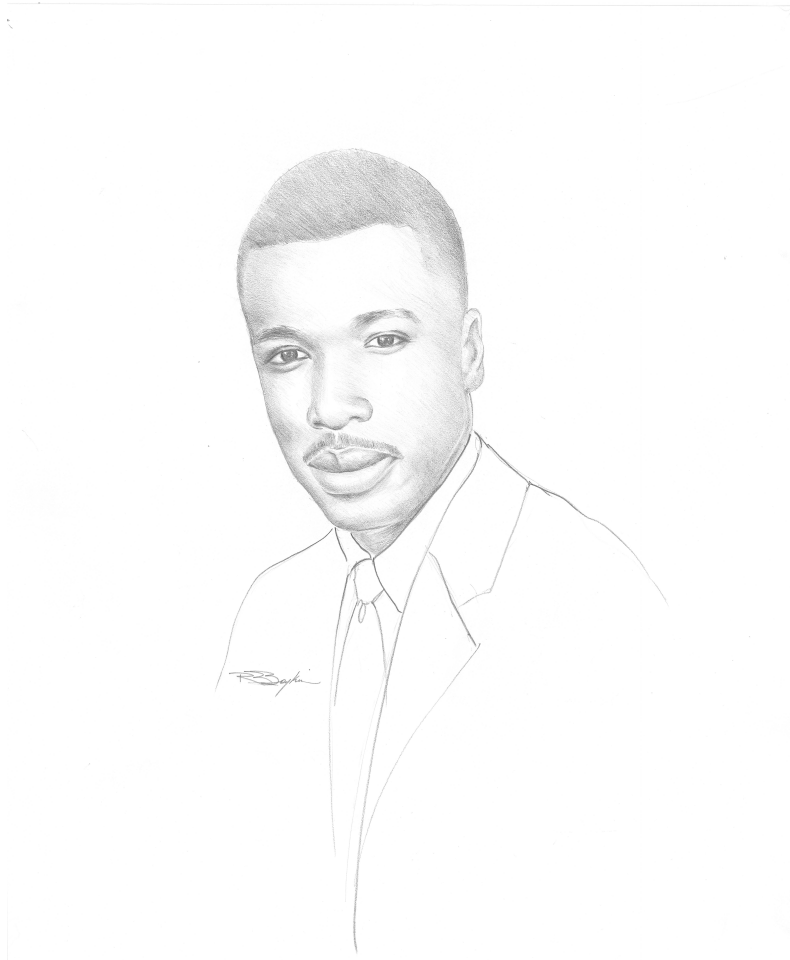


## Transcript



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## BOBBY DOCTOR ORAL HISTORY

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**Prepared for:** The South Carolina State Department of Education

**Prepared by:** The Auntie Karen Foundation

**Date:** June 15, 2017

**Project:** Documenting South Carolina Civil Rights Oral History from 1950 – 1979

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Dedicated the memory of SC House of Representative

**Joseph “Joe” H. Neal**

August 31, 1950 – February 14, 2017

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## Civil Rights Oral History Interview with Bobby Doctor

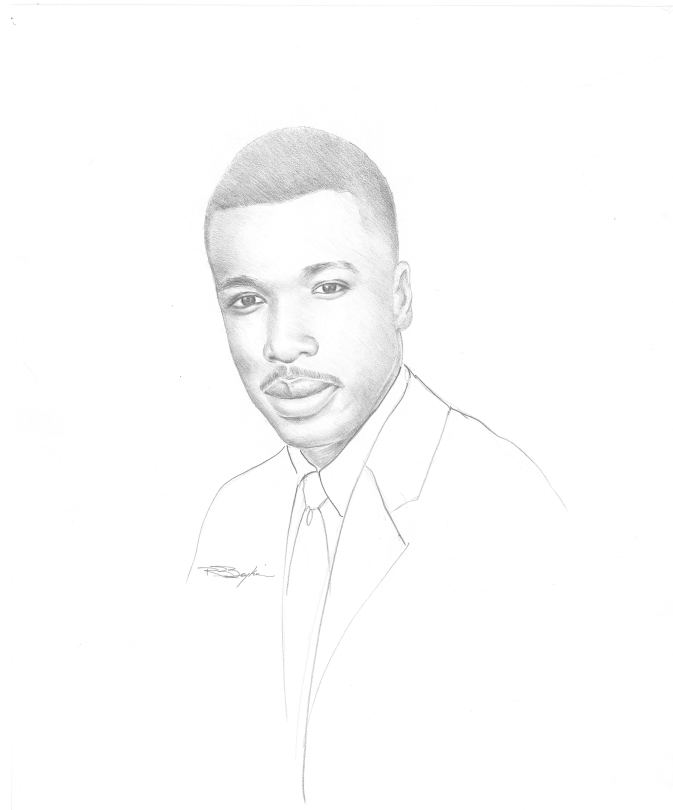
Interviewee:	Bobby Doctor
Interviewer (s):	Tre Tailor Karen Alexander Ricky Taylor Tony Kenion
Location:	Jon-Ric Spa at 200 Peachtree Street Atlanta, Georgia
Interview Length:	49:32
Supplemental Material:	Includes transcript, interview release form, select photos, video, art rendering by Rodgers Boykin, music by Byron Counts

## Transcript

## Abstract

Bobby Doctor was born in Columbia, SC in 1939. He spent most of his youth living in Allen Benedict Court housing projects. Bobby attended CA Johnson High School, Carver Elementary School, and South Carolina State College. Inspired by the student sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina on February 1, 1960, he organized a group of students in Orangeburg, South Carolina the very next day to start the sit in movement in South Carolina.

In the interview, Bobby describes his life and involvement in the Civil Rights Movement in South Carolina in the 1960s.



## Transcript

Tre Tailor: Today is Sunday, March 12th, 2017. I'm Tre Tailor and I'm here with Dr. Bobby Doctor, and we'll be talking to him about his life and involvement in the Civil Rights Movement in South Carolina between the time period of 1950 through 1979. Dr. White, I mean, Dr. Doctor, please tell me your name.

Bobby Doctor: I'm Bobby Doctor, born in Columbia, South Carolina.

Tre Tailor: When were you born?

Bobby Doctor: 1939.

Tre Tailor: Where did you grow up?

Bobby Doctor: In Allen Benedict Court.

Tre Tailor: Tell me about that time growing up in Allen Benedict Court.

Bobby Doctor: Well, the projects were, Allen Benedict Court, that is, were developed in the early forties. We moved into the projects in the J building, as a matter of fact. Right across the street from a business that my parents owned. It was quite an experience. My parents had five children. We later moved from the J building to the D building. Then, of course, when the family became seven, we moved up to the A building. It was quite an experience, to say the least. I met Harold, I guess, probably about five years after we had been living in Allen Benedict Court. It was an amazing experience, it truly was.

Tre Tailor: Tell me what was so significant about living in Allen Benedict Court.

Bobby Doctor: Believe or not, it was one of the finer places in Columbia, believe it or not, to live. We had indoor heating. We had indoor bathrooms. There were a lot of folk who didn't have that, to be honest with you, back in the forties. And so, there were a lot of people who really were, sort of, dying to get into Allen Benedict Court. It was across the street from Benedict, around the corner from Allen, and we were, without

question, influenced by both those institutions.

Tre Tailor: So, but it was still public housing?

Bobby Doctor: It was public housing. It certainly was, yes.

Tre Tailor: Now, you said you moved from the J to the D to the A building. What did that mean? Was that-

Bobby Doctor: Well, there were sizes, bedrooms, to the various units. Of course, the J building had a one-bedroom unit. Of course, the D building had a two-bedroom unit. The A building had a three-bedroom unit. So, you could see, as the family grew in size, we had more need for larger spaces.

Tre Tailor: Now, you say it was right across the street from your parents' business. What type of business?

Bobby Doctor: Well, my parents owned ... There were two businesses in this one building. My mother was a beautician and my father ran a dry cleaner's. They ran both those businesses, probably, for about five or six years. And, I was a little boy when they had those businesses so I don't know that I remember much about all of that, but it was quite an experience to live where we lived.

Tre Tailor: Tell me about your educational experience. Where did you attend school.

Bobby Doctor: Well, I attended CA Johnson High School, Carver Elementary School, and I also attended South Carolina State University. Never had any plans to go to college but my mother, who was very much interested in education, talked me into it. And that was one of those most moving experiences of my life.

Tre Tailor: Tell me if you faced any discrimination, either living in Allen Benedict Court or your matriculation through elementary school, junior high

school, and over at CA Johnson.

Bobby Doctor: There was discrimination all over the place, every where you turned. Transportation system, educational system, across the board, everything was segregated back in those days. And, we lived through an awful lot. It was a rough time in South Carolina.

Tre Tailor: Can you remember any personal experiences that you or your family members may have experienced?

Bobby Doctor: Well, my father was a fighter. Willie Doctor. I mean, he fought white folk, physically, all over the place. We would ... He had a car. He always kept a car. And every Sunday, we would get in that car and drive all over the place, drive out to the old Delta Airline station, out by the fairground. I remember his contact interaction with white folk. He was ... His father, his grandfather, rather, was white. Mm-hmm (affirmative). And he had a real problem with white folk early on. That began to change as he moved into the professional level but the old man, I guess I got a lot of my fight from him and the educational interest from my mother. But, it brings back memories.

Tre Tailor: You said that your grandfather ... Well, you came from a mixed race family. Your grandfather was white. Did that affect you in any way as far as, I know you said it did affect your father.

Bobby Doctor: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Tre Tailor: What about you and your family dynamics having a mixed race family?

Bobby Doctor: I am not saying that they were mixed because they weren't. I got the impression, my father never talked about that, but I got the impression that he knew who his father was. He was very fair. I, from time to time, tried to get him to open up about it but he never would. So, it was not truly a mixed family. His father just happened to be white, and he had a real problem with white folk because he didn't take anything from them. I remember we went for a ride up at the corner of Taylor, Taylor Street then, and Harden.

We were right there on the corner, right there in front of that Allen building. The folk behind us pull up and they started honking their horn. It wasn't time to travel through the light but they just started harassing us. He got out of the car and threatened to, you know, make a move on them. Of course, that was the end of that. He was a strong man, to say the least, but he also was very, engaging kind of person. He would take on the devil if need be.

Tre Tailor: When you were at South Carolina State College, at the time, it was right in the midst of the Civil Rights Movement. Tell me about your time at South Carolina State.

Bobby Doctor: Well, I had an interesting experience at South Carolina State. One afternoon, we were in the student union building and I happened to see on the television, four students in North Carolina who were engaged in a student sit-in. And, it gave me all kinds of ideas. The next day I pulled together 12 of my fellow students and we headed downtown. The second group in the country to do that. It's not widely known, to be honest with you, but we were the second group in the country to sit-in in public facilities.

As we were walking downtown that next day, 12 of us, 12 to 16 of us. I remember this black woman who said to me, "Why don't y'all leave them folk alone? They ain't bothering y'all." And I looked at her and I wanted to say so much to her, but we were walking and I didn't get a chance to express what we were trying to do. I'm interested now in where that woman is. She probably is dead because she was elderly woman at that time.

Tre Tailor: What would you say to her now? What would you have said to her?

Bobby Doctor: I would say to her, "Miss, you don't understand. This foolishness has been going on for many years and it's time for it to stop." That's exactly what I would've said to her. But we moved onto what's the Five and Ten Cent store, in the downtown area. We walked to the counter, sat down, and blocked all of the seating, at the counter, that is. A woman came up to us and asked us, or said to us, rather, "We don't serve," I think she said, "Colored folk." We said ... We didn't say

anything, we just sat there. What the store manager did, was to close the store. We literally closed that store that day, and we sat there and we sat there. After they said that they were closing the store and locking the doors and all that, we got up and walked out. That was the second demonstration of the modern day student sit-in movement to take place in this country.

Tre Tailor: So...

But, interestingly enough, one additional point. We didn't get a lot of attention, interestingly enough, because Orangeburg was not a major media draw, but we were the second in the country. That is the honest truth. I think Atlanta or Nashville was third. But it was an interesting experience and from that point on, the movement in Orangeburg grew. Not only grew in Orangeburg but we opened the doors for that movement to take place in a number of different towns around the state. I was making a comment along that line at a meeting we had, not long ago, in Columbia. And there was one woman who took exception to that. She said, "Well, I'm from Greenville." You would know her if I were to call her name. I said to her, "We were the second in the country," and she took exception to it. Of course, it was clear that the Greenville movement started long after February 2nd, 1960.

Tre Tailor: So, the police were never called at that particular time. He just closed the-

Bobby Doctor: They closed the store. I think the police did come in but they didn't do anything to us but, yeah, they called the police.

Tre Tailor: The 16 of you walking back to campus that day, what was that conversation like?

Bobby Doctor: Well, that was our first time so there was not much conversation. We realized that we had opened a can of worms, so to speak, and that was the beginning of a new era in South Carolina. But, we didn't talk very much, we didn't. We were quiet, reserved, going down and coming back. It was truly an interesting experience.



Tre Tailor: So, when you guys ... Was it male and female?

Bobby Doctor: Yeah. We had a couple females but mostly males.

Tre Tailor: So, when you all ... When you organized the group, did you just get a group of your friends?

Bobby Doctor: I just sort of said to a group of friends and contacts, "Let's do that tomorrow." And I was able to get 16 of us and we walked downtown. Down the main drag, so to speak, into the heart of downtown Orangeburg and went in that Five and Ten Cent store.

Tre Tailor: So, what was the conversation like when you got those 16? Did you guys have a plan once you got there and did you have different scenarios? "Well, if the police are called, we're going to do this."

Bobby Doctor: Well, I made it clear to everybody that we were going to be nonviolent. I mean, there was no way in the world we could've existed otherwise under the conditions we were going into. But, it was truly an experience. From that point, we ... I think the next demonstration we had, we ended up with about 410, 15 students from State's campus. We had meetings on Claflin's campus. Claflin's campus was next door, is next door, to State's campus. And prior to their placing that fence up there. That fence was placed there because, I guess, the president at State, who was a conservative, ultra conservative, I, but he was ultra conservative. He had that fence constructed and it literally blocked the two campuses. But before that, there was no fence there.

We used to meet in ... There was a building right across from our ROTC building. It was the band room of Claflin's band. And we didn't want to meet on State's campus because that clearly meant that we could be dismissed from that school. It was a state school, it is a state school. So we met on Claflin's campus. And I made it very clear that we had to involve Claflin students. So we asked some of our people to get in touch with a guy named ... He was the president of student body over there, and his name will come to me in a minute. I haven't seen him in 50 or 60 years. But he had a brother and a sister at Claflin. His name is, and you might want to talk to him too. His name is ... It'll

come to me. I've had a stroke so my memory, when it comes to names, is not the best. Jim Clyburn, did y'all meet with Jim?

Tre Tailor: We're familiar with him. We didn't-

Bobby Doctor: Okay. You know who I'm talking about then?

Tre Tailor: Yes-

Bobby Doctor: Yeah. Okay. He had a beautiful sister and a brother, who ended up becoming, I understand, a superintendent in Beaufort schools. Anyway, he was the student body president over at Claflin. Of course, the kids did get in touch with him and he then became, and Claflin then became, a part of what we were trying to do. So, the next march we had, we ended up with about 415 students. They were all placed, it was raining that afternoon. I ended up leading a group of about 12 downtown to ... It was a Rexall down there, on the square. I decided that it made sense to try and divert attention because we knew we were going to have a big crowd the next time. And I got 12 of my most trusted friends and we went down to that Rexall drug store, and we sat in there.

The manager tried to get us to get up and get out of there but we didn't move. That time, we were arrested by the cops. I'll never forget. There was this big, huge deputy sheriff who threw all of us in the back of a police car. Twelve of us in the back of this police car, sheriff's car. And of course, they never searched us. They just threw us in the back and then they got up front. The two of them said, "Well, we need to check to see whether or not they got any weapons." And they made all of us pile out of that car. I was the last one into the car this time, again. He said, "We want you to run," and I never opened my mouth. I got back into that car because it was clear to me, he was serious about doing us some physical damage.

Tre Tailor: What were you all trying to accomplish? What was the goal of that particular march?

Bobby Doctor: Well when you grow up in South Carolina as a young boy and every

where you turn, every time you turn, you would see signs that said, "Coloreds. White." And I guess I got tired of that but I didn't know what to do, until I saw those kids in North Carolina that afternoon. And that's when it hit me, "This is what we're going to do. This is what we should've been doing." I'll never forget when I, my parents first found out about it. They told me, "Now, you be careful out there." I said, "Well, I intend to be." That was all they ever said to me about my safety and my welfare.

Tre Tailor: Interesting, I was going to ask you what your parents thought about your activism.

Bobby Doctor: Well, my old man ... I kind of think he was proud of me, although he never would say it. My old lady was concerned about my welfare. The old man, he wasn't that concerned about my welfare but he was concerned about what we were trying to do. If he were alive today, he probably would say, "I'm proud of you son," but he died ... Oh, I don't even remember the year now, but he's gone. And he was quite an individual, so was my mother.

Tre Tailor: Of course, you know, your mom is going to be concerned about you. Your dad, you said he was a fighter

Bobby Doctor: That's true. That's very true.

Tre Tailor: That may be where you got all your tenacity from.

Bobby Doctor: Yeah. Probably is, because my old man was rough. He was mean. I didn't take any stuff off of anybody.

Tre Tailor: Were you ever fearful, Dr. Doctor?

Bobby Doctor: No, I really wasn't. I guess I should've been. I remember one trip, the guy I was telling you about who was president at South Carolina State ... I mean, Claflin's student body. After we had gotten well into the movement in Orangeburg, we decided we needed to share some of what we were doing with the rest of the state. He ended up going up

to Rock Hill and he literally started the movement in Rock Hill. That's where the Greenville movement grew. The woman that I was telling you about, she said to me, "We started that movement on our own." Then she made the mistake of mentioning influence that they got from Rock Hill, and this guy, who I was telling you about, can't think of his name now. I don't know why. But that's where the Greenville movement got its influence, from Rock Hill. Columbia got its influence from Orangeburg.

I'll never forget, leaders coming down from Columbia to give us advice and counsel, and we had already started the movement now, but they're coming to give us advice and counsel. And of course, we sat there and we took their advice and their counsel, and they took our advice and counsel. They went back to Columbia and started doing some of the same things we were doing. As a matter of fact, they invited us to come to Columbia to provide some leadership for the Allen and Benedict students. That's where that article came from. That was the first time Jim Clyburn and a guy name Duke Missouri, you don't hear much about Duke. Duke has had about three strokes and he is physically impaired at this point. But that's how the movement in South Carolina got its start. Few people realize that but that is the honest truth.

Tre Tailor: So tell me what a typical organizational meeting would be like. For instance, when you organized in Orangeburg and then when you helped the leadership at Allen Benedict. Tell me a couple of points that you guys would go over.

Bobby Doctor: Well, I remember one occasion. It's the longest time I've ever been in jail. In connection with that photograph there. They invited us up there, me, Jim, and Duke, to help provide leadership to the kids who were going to march on the state capital. Which is where the group of us were going. And I lead a group up Gervais Street. Jim led a group and Duke led a group. These were South Carolina State students leading Allen and Benedict students on the state capital. We got to the state capital and the policemen met us right there at the corner of Main, where Main juts into the state capital. He said, "If this march continues, y'all are going to jail." So I ... Must have been about 150, 200 students in my group.

I stopped the group, and I said to them, "Anybody who doesn't want to

go to jail, you better step outside the line because we're going to jail," and he took us all. Threw us in the back of a, I don't know why, on the back of a police car. But, interestingly enough, on that particular occasion, I was the only one who ended up in jail, with the so-called criminals, because I clearly had identified myself as a leader. And, I ended up in a jail cell, not a jail cell, but a tier. Had a bunch of big cells on it. As I walked through the door, kids that I had grown up with were in there. There was a DJ named Mr. C, who was in there. I'm not going to tell you what he was in there for but he was in there. And Claude, who ran the Gervais Street gang was in there. Willie Joyner's little brother was in there.

A bunch of kids that I grew, and had grown up with, and knew well. So, they asked me, "Doc," which was my nickname back then. "Doc, what you doing in here?" And I explained to them what I was doing in there. I had a very close friend who was up on the tier above the tier that I was, and they put a mirror down so you could see him up there and he could see you down here. And, I guess the most memorable thing about all that was, besides those four days I spent in jail, was the food. They fed us in these little beat up dog pails. And, you got grits with a hunk of cold cornbread and a piece of meat, either fatback or sardines. I never ate any of them until the last night I was in there.

If I had known I was going to get out that night, I wouldn't have eaten anything. I ate one sardine, I'll never forget it. One sardine. When we got out, I guess I was mad. Because we had been pretty much assured that we wouldn't stay in jail any length of time but we stayed in that jail for four days. Now, I later found out from Jim that they didn't, his people, didn't go to jail. My people didn't go to jail. They were placed in the stockade out at Fort Jackson. I was placed in a jail cell, with so-called criminals, with the idea in mind that they would want to do me some harm. Well, they turned out to be my old friends. That's the most memorable thing.

Tre Tailor: So, you said, and I was going to ask you about jail. I was going to ask you if you did encounter any violence, whether it be from fellow inmates or from, maybe, the white guards or administration.

Bobby Doctor: Well, I went into that jail cell by myself. Which caused me to think that they were trying to do me some harm because none of my group went into that jail cell. I was the only one who ... Clearly, I was leading the

group up to the state capital, but I was the only one who went into that jail cell. And it just so happened that I knew everybody who was in there. After we served those four days, I don't remember how we got back to Orangeburg but we did. And I took off my brand new suit, you can see on that thing there.

I'm wearing a hat, a brand new hat, a brand new suit with a tie and suit. I mean, tie and shirt, or shirt and tie. And I took that suit off before I walked in my room at South Carolina State, left it on the floor. We had a couple of guys who were in the dry cleaning business. They picked up dry cleaning from the students for somebody who was in that business. I told them to go ahead and take it and clean it for me. I wasn't going to go in my room because I had slept in that suit for four days and four nights.

Tre Tailor: Did your jail experience affect you in any way? Particularly, as far as your continuing with the Civil Rights Movement.

Bobby Doctor: Well, I think it's interesting to note that I ended up as director of the US Commission on Civil Rights. I spent 40 years with the Commission. Most of that time was spent as the regional director here in the South. But, I guess that is what got me into this business, professionally. Because, you don't experience something like what I experienced and not have that impact on you. But, I think back on it, as I think back on it. Somebody had to do it and we did it. And, I think it's interesting to note that one of the reasons I ended up with the Commission. There was a guy named Sam Simmons.

Sam Simmons was a remarkable man. He ended up, interestingly enough, he was the field director for the US Commission on Civil Rights. Sam hired me as a field rep in our Memphis office and that's where I first started with the Commission. There's a building in DC, on 14th Street, named in his honor. Sam was a remarkable individual. When he hired me, he told me, he said, "Bobby, I want you to go back down South," because I was up in Richmond at that time, part of the South. He said, "Go back down South and give 'em hell," and that's what I did.

Tre Tailor: I want to talk about your time with the Civil Rights Commission but before we go there, I want to ask you, did your activism cause you any

problems at South Carolina State? You said, at one point, that you guys couldn't meet on State's campus-

Bobby Doctor: Yeah.

Tre Tailor: Because it was a state supported school. But, even along your time with organizing on campus, then even going to Columbia to work with Allen and Benedict. Did it affect your, not only academics, but even your relationships with faculty and staff?

Bobby Doctor: Well, interestingly enough, two years before I got there, a group of students had had a problem with the food. I think Fred Moore was one of the individuals, from Charleston, who lead that group. And he was kicked out of school along with several others. We were mindful of what could happen. I'm not sure Fred ever came back to South Carolina State but we were mindful of what they could do. But we were never bothered. We had all kinds of support from staff, lawyers, want to be lawyers, who advised us and counseled us, but we were not bothered, no.

Tre Tailor: So, you finish at State and, I guess, you go on to get your master's?

Bobby Doctor: No. No, I never got a master's. I've had people try to convince me I should but I never got a master's. I didn't feel the need to get a master's because I had gotten a good start with the Commission. I had all kinds of support. Sam Simmons, another guy named Jack Wilmore. Brilliant minds, deeply committed, who literally trained me. I mean, they taught me a lot about government and what should happen with government. What government should be doing and was not doing. It just so happened that after I got to Memphis, with the Commission, the 1965 ... No, the 1964 Civil Rights Act was passed, and we took off down South to try to get folks to understand what it was about.

And so, soon as I got to Memphis I was out. I was down ... I think the first trip I made was to Louisiana. We had a good meeting down there, a lot of people. And, you know. A lot of white folk were ... Well, I'll put it this way, they were not interested in any Civil Rights. And there was some danger involved in that. I remember driving, because we used to

drive federal cars. I reached the point where I said, "I'm not driving another federal car." ' cause I was followed, you know. They honored that. I would rent cars that were not marked with that federal stuff on the side of it, the door. But...It was rough early on, no question.

Tre Tailor: You want to share any experiences that you had working for the Civil Rights Commission. Because, as you said, it was, and I'm sure it was-

Bobby Doctor: It was very tough, yeah.

Tre Tailor: During the midst of the Civil Rights Movement, being on the Civil Rights Commission, traveling, as you say, throughout the South trying to educate both blacks and whites.

Bobby Doctor: Well, I guess the most interesting part about all of that was ... Early on in my career with the Commission, it became ever so clear to me that policemen were the biggest group that we were concerned about, and had to be concerned about. I remember in Tampa, during that particular time, all over Florida, as a matter of fact, but kids would be shot and killed. Then, of course, up in other parts of the South the same thing was happening. And so, I got my advisory committees to bind to the idea of adopting police-community relations projects. And we took it up on ourselves to hold hearings, informal hearings, all over the South. Must have been about 20 of them. In addition to that project, we also looked at prisons and the extent to which prisons were playing a role in dividing us.

The Commission has copies of all of those projects we did, reports. They have published reports. So, you might want to get copies of those. It was a tough time and I received a lot of criticism. My boss wanted to know from me, "Why I was focused on police projects," and I said, "Well, policemen maintain law and order, allegedly, and if we were to solve this race problem we got in this country, we're going to have to deal with police because they are the protectors of the status quo." And they finally bought it and I think I must've done at least 20, close to 20, projects around the deep South on police-community relations. To be honest with you, after a while they started singing my praises but that was long before this current project. I mean, the current ... You understand what I'm saying.



Tre Tailor: Yes, sir.

Bobby Doctor: The current situation between the police and the black community. We were way ahead of that. It always seemed that we could look at a situation and analyze it, and immediately move to do something about it.

Tre Tailor: What were you able to do, as far as police were concerned, during your time at the Commission? Exactly what was it?

Bobby Doctor: Well for one thing, we focused a lot of attention, public attention, on what was going on. The police couldn't do what they were doing before we got involved. We had these informal hearings, as I indicated to you, and there was quite a bit of press coverage of all of that. So they were not able to just go out there and shoot people like they were shooting them before. We were able to influence some of those mayors down there and we were able to influence some other city officials, including police chiefs and sheriffs, that what they were doing was wrong. I remember telling some of them, "Look, if you've got police officers who have at least three complaints against them, misconduct complaints, and you've ruled to support them, you got a problem."

"If you've got police officers who are out here beating up people," because the black community knew the nicknames of these police officers. Down in Florida, for example, in one town they had a guy named "Bulldog" who was supposed to be a bad dude, and he was. I mean, he'd come into these towns and I mean he would do all kinds of things to these black folks. Just sitting out on the corner, they weren't doing anything, but just sitting there talking. There were other names but if the black community knew those names, and you didn't know them, you got a problem. And so, we had some impact. I'm not suggesting that we solved a lot of those problems but we had some impact.

Tre Tailor: What do you think happened from the time that you guys, when you and your team, were able to quell, or keep that police, for lack of a better word, brutality under control to where we've gotten, seemingly,

back to where it was?

Bobby Doctor: That's a good question, very good question. I think a lot of it has to do with us, to be honest with you. A lot of it has to do with white folk. I'll just simply say, a lot of it has to do with us and white folk.

Tre Tailor: What do you think needs to happen? If you were back in that position, now, how would you tackle the "police versus us" situation, today?

Bobby Doctor: Well I'll be honest with you, I'm not sure. I knew back then but I'm not sure about now. That's a very difficult question to answer. I'm not sure.

Tre Tailor: With everything that you've done in your life from really starting the Civil Rights Movement on the campus of South Carolina State University, garnering support from students all across South Carolina, to your work with the Civil Rights Commission where you really just continued your Civil Rights activism. What do you want your legacy to be? How do you think you've truly affected our race, our nation, the Civil Rights Movement in general?

Bobby Doctor: I tried.

Tre Tailor: Did you do what you came here to do? Did you do what the Lord brought you here to do?

Bobby Doctor: I think I did. But, you know, race relations is a tricky, tricky business. White folk continue to deny that they ever did anything wrong. Black folk continue to complain about how they've been treated. But there's no coming together. If we're going to solve this problem, there's got to be some coming together, and I don't see it right now.

Tre Tailor: Okay. I'm finished. Does anybody have any questions about this? I'm going make a transition into a Harold White theme.

Karen Alexander: Dr. Doctor, this is Karen Alexander. I have two questions. Harold White, who recommended you, he referred to you as Dr. Doctor. How

did you get the initial doctor?

Bobby Doctor: That's an honorary degree that came from John Marshall Law School. I was instrumental in helping them to save their license and they awarded me that honorary degree. A lot of things, I guess, we did that don't come to mind right now. Like I said, I've had a stroke and can't remember like I used to, but that's how it came about.

Bobby Doctor: Well, ask that question again.

Karen  
Alexander: Were you married and did you have any children?

Bobby Doctor: Oh, yeah. My wife died, my first wife died. I guess, probably about eight years, nine years ago, something like that. She went to South Carolina State with me. Her name was Joan Farr. Her maiden name was Joan Farr. I'm married, the second time now, got three sons. Anything else?

Tre Tailor: Was Joan one of those people that you recruited?

Bobby Doctor: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. She was in that march, that 400 and something march. Those kids stood out ... I was already in jail by the time, because I was leading the group into that drug store. They showed a picture of that one and it was raining that day. All these 400 and some kids were standing in this blockade in the rain. I'll never forget, we had a teacher on South Carolina State's campus, and I guess he was doing what he thought he should do.

But in the trial that was held in association with that, with those 400 and some children, or students, rather. He made the claim that he had advised us not to go downtown anymore. Needless to say, we never did care much for him. But he testified at court. I remember sitting in that courtroom, listening to him. And I guess, I wanted to say to him, same thing I would've said to that woman who made the comment, "Why are you all bothering them folks. They ain't bothering y'all."

Tre Tailor: Are any of your children involved in any type of activism?

Bobby Doctor: No, not really. They're activist-minded, but they aren't involved. I guess that was one of the real reasons why I become so active, because I didn't want my children to have to do it. Like I said, when I went to college, I had not planned to go to college. I had planned to go into the military. But, after getting down at South Carolina State, it became ever so clear to me that I had made the right move. Yeah.

