

## Oral book reports with 14 year old black female, New Haven, Connecticut (Transcription)

<YC?>---W148#4---Tape 1 All Begin M32 A(4)

Speaker: Uh well uh the book I read was native son and it was about a Negro who came from the south and he had a hard time getting a job or anything and he had a he was uh afraid of his parents and he had hardly any schooling so he got a job into a rich family and he was a driver and uh the conflict of the story was that uh he killed the white girl in the family and he had to get rid of her (ques.) because uh she he brought her up to her room because she was drunk one night after he had drove her around and after he had got her on the bed the mother walked in and she was blind and he got scared he thought because he was Negro they would say that he was doing something to her so right away he covered a pillow over her so she wouldn't scream and he didn't mean to kill her but uh smothered her and so uh after that when the mother left because she she couldn't tell who was there he brought her down to the cellar and he put her in the furnace and he burned her and he cut his head her head off and he thought he was going to get away with it and uh he went to his grilfriend's house and he told that she he had to help she had to help him you know to he said he was going to get some money from them because he was going to say that uh it was a Jewish friend of hers that had killed her and he was going to write a ransom note and he figured he could get the money so they his girlfriend didn't want to go through with it and uh they started he started planning everything and they made a letter and they sent it and everybody kept asking and everybody said it couldn't be him he was so quiet and he had to get rid of the knife and everything and so they they kept going on and uh later on they found

## Library of Congress

2

out it was him he ran away he took his girl with him and so she was going to tell everything so he killed her with a brick he smashed her head and threw her down a vat and uh she went she wasn't really dead but he thought she was and he found out he had thrown all the money down with her so he ran away and later on they found him and told him that she wasn't dead and uh that she tried to climb out of the vat and she froze to death but she would have lived otherwise and he has to go through all the trials and they try to help him Jewish uh man tries to help him even though he tried to convict him and later on he has to go to the uh death chair and his mother uh doesn't want him to go and everything but he feels he has to go because he says he didn't have any kind of a life that was it (ques.) He gets he has to go to uh the chair (ques.) yeah (ques.) well it didn't say much just said his father left them and everything and he didn't have much school because he had to go to work (ques.) I don't know he hang around with a gang and everything but he used to steal things so he probably wasn't too good (ques.) well I guess it was uh the his uh girlfriend and mother probably because (ques.) well the girlfriend uh she didn't want anything she she just wanted uh to be happy and everything she always tried to get him to marry her but he didn't want to get married and everything and but he got her into this and she didn't want to and she told him to get out of it and tell the truth so he would have to go to jail tell what happened but he said that they he wouldn't have a chance because he was Negro and the mother always was telling him to

3

go to work and stop stealing and everything and yet he always did it and was real bad and everything and she couldn't get him to be right that that was it (ques.) I don't know I think he should uh he was too rough and everything cause uh the gang he used to hang around with they used to go to a pool hall and they used to always fight and everything and they

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used to plan uh jobs that they were going to do and all that he was so mean to his mother and all they lived in one room with uh his brother and sister and mother and there was hardly any room for them to live and he always thought that it was all right and everything and he always told them to stop bothering her and get off his back (ques.) well don't I guess he figured that's how he should have tried out and told the truth but he figured he didn't have a chance but I think that they wouldn't somehow they would've got him out of it maybe uh just in life imprisonment would be better than the electric chair but he still said that he didn't do anything you know and they brought him over the remains of the body and everything and he still wouldn't he had to get convicted (ques.) well because he was a uh Negro and at the first time when they seen the bones of this body why they thought that he was trying to rape her and everything so that they tried and started to make up a big story about it and none none of it was true but he didn't want to tell anyone he didn't tell anyone of it (ques.) well they said that he probably tried to rape her and everything and that he didn't know how to get rid of her body because he was afraid that when they found out they would uh send him to the electric chair so then he threw her

4

in the furnace and then he thought he could make money off of it so he uh sent the letter and everything and he was really no good and they thought he was such a nice boy and (ques.) well he was going to send the ransom note and he was going to tell them that it it he signed it with the Jewish sign on the bottom and he said that it was the boy she was out with the night before so he made it look like the boy killed her and then he was going to say that you know it was them because they said they were communists and he said he put the communist sign and he said that uh they it was them that sent the letter and all and he said he told a big lie he told how when he came home he said the boy was with her and the boy went upstairs with her and they told him to go and they left the car out because they would make it look like it was him so they thought it was him and they

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couldn't get in touch with him so he tried he kept quiet and everything he was going to get the money (ques.) well after he he tried it they found out later on that you know that it was him because of he they were downstairs in the quarters and they were talking about how they were gonna get the Jewish guy and uh he found later on they found out that they the furnace started smoking because he didn't clean it out and so he went and you know he started getting panicky and everything and he ran and then this guy started working on it and he found this piece of an earring and then they found some bones and they said it must be the girl and he they didn't know it was him they had no idea but he panicked so he ran out so then they knew he had something to do with it and he started running and he ran to his girl-

5

friend and told her they had to get out and all and she didn't want to go but he made her go he said he would kill her otherwise so she went and they started hiding out in all kinds of deserted houses they found them in the end (ques) well they uh stated going through the whole city and he had nowhere to hide so he went up on top of a building and when they came to the building and they came up so he jumped one of the guys and the other guy he thought there was only one of them but there was another one so then he started running from rooftop to rooftop but they cornered him and it was real cold in there they had put some kind of gas they uh a bomb up up there and he had to faint so fell down and they got him (ques.) he had killed her in one of the deserted houses and left her body there they didn't find her til about a month after cause they didn't you know know know it until they started knocking on the house that she was gone (ques.) yes (ques.) no he was he killed her because he said that uh she after he got the money she would want to marry him and everything and she didn't he didn't want her so he killed her cause she started complaining again he said she was going to tell on him because she didn't want nothing to do with it (ques.) yes I finished it that was good (ques.) yes it was recently (ques.) no I

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didn't well uh about a a blind girl and how she didn't have a she had come from a family and when she was small her mother was uh lets say that she used to get money by having sailors come over and her father came home from the war and then uh she had had a big fight because uh he tried to kill the guy she was with so uh she threw some acid and hit the little girl instead and made her blind her

6

face was all disordered so then later on she's living with her mother and her grandfather and she didn't like it and everything cause they treated her rough and she didn't have any clothes or anything so then uh she used to uh string beads and get money so she had done it for eight years and so one day the guy told her he would take her to the park when he came to pick up the beads and he took her and it was the first time she had been out in about five years so she was all excited and everything and then she wanted to come every day so her grandfather said he would take her out as long as she could double the amount of beads so she was sitting there trying to do them and everything and she dropped a bundle of her beads so she couldn't find them so uh a Negro man uh Gordon came up and she didn't know he was a Negro because she hated Negroes and he started (ques.) because she said she always had to see black and anything black because she said she had to see black and anything black she hated because it reminded her of that she couldn't see like other people so uh he helped her every day she used to look forward to going to the park because he used to uh talk to her and he gave her a jewelry box one day and he told her to keep it and all so she buried it cause she didn't want no one to see it under a tree and one day she told him how ugly she was and everything and he said that she wasn't and he brought her a pair of glasses and he said she was pretty because it would hide everything that she had and all and she became to she started loving him and everything and he thought it wasn't right for him her to uh he couldn't tell her that he Negro

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because she knew right away that he would she would be afraid of him so he used to take her to the apartment and said he was gonna

get help for her and everything because uh her one day her mother came home and said that she could stop stringing beads and she got scared but she <unintelligible text> wanted to she had done them for so long she said that they were going to get an apartment and her girlfriend and her decided they could make money off of her and everything (ques.) the the mother's girlfriend so she hated both of them and she went back and she told Gordon and everything and he took her (ques.) she was eighteen and they took her to the apartment and he was talking to her and he thought handed her a bible and she was holding it because she never felt one and all and then he took her go church because she wanted to go and they were standing there and he said he was going to get help and send her to school and so she could learn to read and everything and maybe even write a book because she liked to write so he uh she said that she would she would be so happy so then when they went back they were sitting under a tree and he had to go and so he started to go and she forgot that she left the beads there and she didn't want no one to know that she was seeing him so she ran to find him and she fell in the rosebushes and she started crying so he came back and he was taking her out when a boy came by and he seen that he thought that the Negro was raping her of something or bothering her so he start cause she was crying so he started yelling nigger get out of here and everything and so then she heard it and she couldn't believe you know what she was hearing because she loved him and everything she wanted to marry him and then uh everybody started chasing him and he kept she kept wishing he would get away and he gets

and it ends like that and then she has to go back living with her aunt and everything and she gets help from the state later on she goes to school but she never sees him again and she always said she won't hate Negroes again because she knows how good they are and everything (ques.) yes it just ends like that she never sees him again after he runs away and she said she'd learned her lesson and everything and she knows now that people

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are the same and everything it doesn't matter what color they are and she was so sorry that she had even bothered talking to them because she knew why he was always hurt when she talked about them (ques.) I didn't like because uh well she didn't she just used her she used to make her clean the house and she was blind as it was and she after five years old she never went to school because she only had gone to kindergarten but that kept her home and she used to always give her the clothes that didn't fit her that were too big or something she'd hand them to her and they were all old clothes and she didn't have many clothes and she used to go out every night and leave all the chores to her and she wouldn't give her anything when she got the sunglasses she took them away from her and cause she said she found them in the park and she started using them and she used to every morning have to find them so she could go out cause she was ashamed of them (ques.) cause she was uh he told her she was pretty if she had sunglasses so he brought them for her and then uh she used to wear them so it would hide her face because it was a little uh discolored around the eyes and everything and so then she she said that she used to wear them she felt she felt better because she thought she looked prettier

9

(ques.) well she was uh blond she worked in a night club and she used to have a room on the end of the hall and she used to have men come there and everything and she used to get money through them and all and uh she used to always have a fight with the grandfather and beat uh she used to beat up the girl because she used to say that it was no she was no good and everything she had to suffer with her and always worry about her because she was blind and everything (ques.) he worked in a nightclub next to the mother and he wanted to get away from it because he really he really felt worry for her and he used to try to help her out and everything and every once in a while he would buy her ice cream and everything because he knew that she liked it but she really didn't but she didn't want to hurt her feelings she used to wash it down the sink and everything and so

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uh he used to take her to the park every once in a while and he used to get drunk every night and then later on she found out that he was gonna have cancer and she didn't know what she would do with out him because she knew her mother was going to take her into the apartment and she didn't want to live with them and so she didn't know what she was going to do and she went back to Gordon he told her he would get her help (ques.) It was really good I read it in one night

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