

**The David and Barbara Pryor Center  
for  
Arkansas Oral and Visual History**

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**Arkansas Memories Project**

Jerry Jones

Interviewed by Scott Lunsford

January 12, 2010

Valley Ranch, Texas

## Objective

Oral history is a collection of an individual's memories and opinions. As such, it is subject to the innate fallibility of memory and is susceptible to inaccuracy. All researchers using these interviews should be aware of this reality and are encouraged to seek corroborating documentation when using any oral history interview.

The Pryor Center's objective is to collect audio and video recordings of interviews along with scanned images of family photographs and documents. These donated materials are carefully preserved, catalogued, and deposited in the Special Collections Department, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville. The transcripts, audio files, video highlight clips, and photographs are made available on the Pryor Center Web site at <http://pryorcenter.uark.edu>. The Pryor Center recommends that researchers utilize the audio recordings and highlight clips, in addition to the transcripts, to enhance their connection with the interviewee.

## Transcript Methodology

The Pryor Center recognizes that we cannot reproduce the spoken word in a written document; however, we strive to produce a transcript that represents the characteristics and unique qualities of the interviewee's speech pattern, style of speech, regional dialect, and personality. For the first twenty minutes of the interview, we attempt to transcribe verbatim all words and utterances that are spoken, such as uhs and ahs, false starts, and repetitions. Some of these elements are omitted after the first twenty minutes to improve readability.

The Pryor Center transcripts are prepared utilizing the *University of Arkansas Style Manual* for proper names, titles, and terms specific to the university. For all other style elements, we refer to the *Pryor Center Style Manual*, which is based primarily on *The Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition*. We employ the following guidelines for consistency and readability:

- Em dashes separate repeated/false starts and incomplete/redirected sentences.
- Ellipses indicate the interruption of one speaker by another.
- Double underscores indicate two people talking at the same time.
- Italics identify foreign words or terms and words emphasized by the speaker.
- Question marks enclose proper nouns for which we cannot verify the spelling and words that we cannot understand with certainty.

- Brackets enclose
  - italicized annotations of nonverbal sounds, such as laughter, and audible sounds, such as a doorbell ringing;
  - annotations for clarification and identification; and
  - standard English spelling of informal words.
- Commas are used in a conventional manner where possible to aid in readability.
- All geographic locations mentioned in the transcript are in the state of Arkansas unless otherwise indicated.

### **Citation Information**

See the Citation Guide at <http://pryorcenter.uark.edu/about.php>.

**Scott Lunsford interviewed Jerry Jones on January 12, 2010, in Valley Ranch, Texas.**

[00:00:00]

Scott Lunsford: All right. Thank you, Jerry, for—for doing this.

Um—David Pryor wanted me to thank you for doing this, too. He told me to tell you hi.

Jerry Jones: Well, it's exciting for me to do it, and—uh—it's a privilege to do it.

SL: Today is January the twelfth, 2010, and we are at the Dallas Cowboys corporate offices. Uh—One Park—uh—Dallas Cowboy Parkway, is that right?

JJ: Number One Cowboy Parkway.

SL: That's . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . right. And—uh—my name is Scott Lunsford, and we're gonna be talking with Jerry Jones, the—uh—owner of the Dallas Cowboys and—uh—a great Arkansan. Uh—Jerry, this session, this—this interview is gonna be archived in the Special Collections Department in Mullins Library at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville campus. It's part of the Pryor Center Memories Collection. We'll use this stuff for educational purposes. You will get a copy of everything that we do. Uh—

before we release anything, we'll have your permission. We won't put anything out there that you don't want out there. If all that's okay with you, then you just need to tell me, and we'll keep goin'.

JJ: Well, it's great to participate. And yes, that's—uh—a great idea, and I'm all for it and very much, again, thrilled to get to be a part of it. But yes, let's do this.

[00:01:15] SL: Okay. Great. Um—usually—um—uh—we have, really, two missions today. One involves the Arkansas Business Hall of Fame's—Fame—which we are partnering with the Walton business college to record these interviews—uh—of the inductees that are—are gonna be honored . . .

JJ: Okay.

SL: . . . and I've been given a list of questions that we're gonna deal with. Now, if it's all right with you, I'm—I'm thinkin' that we should deal with that first.

JJ: Let's do. I'd like to have . . .

SL: Um . . .

JJ: . . . my mind knowing—uh—uh—what we're gonna show . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . next month.

SL: And it's in the can and . . .

JJ: And—exactly.

SL: . . . and—and I know they're . . .

JJ: And then we'll . . .

SL: . . . anxious for it.

JJ: . . . then we'll go on and I—and . . .

SL: That sounds great.

JJ: Now, length. Give me an idea, ultimately, what the length will be for the—uh—sha—for the deal . . .

SL: For the Hall of Fame?

JJ: . . . at the Hall of Fame.

SL: I don't think it's gonna be more than five minutes.

JJ: Okay.

SL: And I would think [*JJ clears throat*] that thirty seconds to a minute and a half of you. I'm guessing. I—I—I don't know.

JJ: Okay.

SL: I'm not sure. But they will send you a copy.

[00:02:08] JJ: Okay. But [*clears throat*] if we look at our questions here, then you'll—then you'll probably see it at, let's just think, two minutes would be, ultimately. So my—my answers really need to not ramble. They need to be succinct . . .

SL: Yes, sir. Mh-hmm.

JJ: . . . probably throughout it, but certainly . . .

SL: Well . . .

JJ: . . . for the part for the Hall of Fame.

SL: . . . for this thing. And if [*JJ clears throat*]*—*and if*—*and like I say, we can do this over and over again until . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . we get this right . . .

JJ: Okay.

SL: . . . 'cause this is more of a show thing than . . .

JJ: Yeah. Okay.

[00:02:33] SL: Okay. Um*—*le*—*I'm gonna start right at the top.

Um*—*it's ask here, what is it*—*what is it about the sport of football that you really like?

JJ: You know, initially*—*uh*—*I think people grow to*—*um*—*let's back*—*let's just . . .

SL: Okay.

JJ: . . . let's just start again. Okay.

SL: All right. Wh*—*wha*—*what is it about the sport of football that you really like?



JJ: I think you evolve into a love for football. My initial*—*uh*—*sporting*—*uh*—*interest was baseball . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

JJ: . . . basketball. Uh*—*football asks you to do things that are not

natural. [*SL laughs*] You're supposed to get out from in front of 300 pounds, not get in front of it. And so, I think—uh—as it grew, as you became involved, you realized the value of teamwork, the value of a blind faith in your coaching—uh—the accomplishment that you feel after a successful play or a successful win. All of those things had to come with the—uh—progression of bein' involved over the years. When we—when I first started a—uh—a little touch football out there, well, that was a totally different thought than when I—uh—was in—at the University of Arkansas and the responsibility that I felt wanting to go out and—and be successful for the state and be successful for your team. Uh—I really knew, for instance, before the game, that—uh—in thirty minutes, I was gonna come back in with a headache; I was gonna come back [*SL laughs*] in with a skinned-up head. Uh—and I'd hear all the fun goin' on outside, and I would say, "Boy, I wonder h—wh—I bet that's fun. I b—I wonder what I'm doin' here." [*SL laughs*] But then when we came back in and had that win, it was all worth it.

[00:04:17] SL: [*Laughs*] Well, you know—um—let's see. Uh—I wanna go a little bit further with that question. Football an—and that whole—um—culture takes a young—a young person and kinda prepares them for life, as well.



JJ: Yes. Um—I initially—uh—grew up thinking of the Razorbacks, listening to them on the radio. And—uh—that instilled in me a—a—a desire to be a part of that team. And of course—uh—given the chance to do so—uh—you had such great respect for just getting a part of the team. Uh—I think that carried over, not just the success because—uh—I got to be a part of a national championship football team, but I think what carried over was the—uh—appreciation and the respect that you have for teammates—uh—the respect that you have for—uh—the interest that—uh—the citizens of Arkansas had in that team. And it transcended—uh—uh—a play, or it transcended, if you will, really, a little—uh—uh—self—uh—accomplishment, and I think it had everything to do with some of the things that have helped me throughout the rest of my life. I know it had so much to do—the experience, the experience of playing, had everything to do with me ultimately ended up owning the Dallas Cowboys.

[00:05:47] SL: Okay, that's good. Um—do you remember what it was like to win the national championship?

JJ: Have—have never forgotten it. [*SL laughs*] Um—I remember—um—goin' to Texas—uh—and Texas was number one in the nation. And I remember that we had struggled earlier in our senior year with some of the earlier ball games.

SL: Mh-hmm.

JJ: We went down there and beat the University of Texas. When, individually, we came back to Fayetteville and came back to Arkansas, we were never the same again. When you looked in the mirror, things had changed. You were a part of a team that had just beaten the very best. And then we became the very best. And we unquestionably rose above any talent level that we might have had. And therein lies, to me, the—the—the finest quality about sports and the finest quality about football. It's—um—uh—really havin' that blind faith again. Uh—it is—uh—understanding that you really can, through effort and hard work—uh—be better than you're supposed to be.

SL: Raises your own bar above the—your . . .

JJ: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . given abilities.

JJ: Mh-hmm.

SL: I mean, there's something about it that—that—you get something deep inside of you and . . .

[00:07:11] JJ: You know, when we practiced at Fayetteville, there would be hundreds of people just—uh—a few hundred feet from you, watching practice so that every drill, every time you—uh—did a repetition, it was as though, well, you couldn't mess that

up because you had so many people lookin' at you, and plus, you wanted to be the very best you could on every play. Um—uh—football has a way of asking the most out of a young man, and consequently, I have—uh—uh—always gu—uh—I g—I gravitated—uh—toward that need. It's almost like—uh—hunger. It's almost like thirst. [*SL laughs*] And I think it's a natural thing in human beings that, once you get a taste of—uh—that—uh—uh—inducement or once you get a taste of that incentive and you actually have positive results, you want more.

SL: I never thought about—uh—folks—uh—watchin' you practice and—and—when—you come to realize that all those folks believe in you, and you can't let 'em down.

[00:08:19] JJ: Well, there is a—uh—uh—I've always operated with fear a—as one of my chief motivators. And there's no question—uh—there was the feelin' of you couldn't mess up. Uh—and don't mess up. A lotta people will say, "Well, that inhibits you from bein' the athlete that can you b—you can be. You can cut and shoot." Uh—I think not. Uh—I think the fear of—uh—uh—of—uh—of not doin' your best on a play, a fear of makin' a mistake—uh—causes you to be more focused. And I got to play on a team when I was senior at the University of Arkansas that if they were anything, they were focused. If they were anything,

they were prepared. And they did it not only from—uh—the great coaching and supervision but also from their individual, again, respect for gettin' to get on that field and be a part of the Arkansas Razorbacks.

SL: This is all great stuff . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: Jerry. I . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: It's hard for me to stay right on this.

JJ: Sure.

[00:09:17] SL: Um—um—why did you major in business at Walton College?

JJ: I had great coaching off the field as a young man growing up. Uh—my parents were entrepreneurs. And—uh—uh—they had to make—one and one had to make three, not two. [*SL laughs*] And just through osmosis, being around them and bein' around the dinner table and listening to their pursuit of success and how they had to beat it outta the ground. They had to—they had to do it through borrowing money. They had to do it through—uh—uh—making promotions and creating sales and creating business. Now, of course, I wasn't sitting there taking notes like a student, but I got it. And so that when I went to Fayetteville,

when I went to school—uh—away from my parents—uh—they insisted—uh—that I prepare myself the best I could up there, and that's how I got involved. Uh—my heroes, the people that I respected, were the people that did the selling, at a very young age, the people that took the risk, the people that extended themselves to create jobs. Uh—those were my heroes. Now, I'm—I respected politicians. I respected engineers . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

JJ: . . . uh—but certainly the people that—uh—caused the wheels of our—uh—country to turn, those were my heroes. And so, I was fortunate. I was able to take—uh—uh—a great education there at the university, great coaching from my parents, and plus, mix that in with sports that—uh—uh—made you—uh—really realize and think ahead so that—uh—when the train came by, it wasn't a surprise. When the train came by, you had seen it before. Uh—you're taught, "Imagine the play before the ball ever comes your way." So that when opportunity has come along in my life, I've seen it before and I didn't hesitate, and that often is a very significant thing in timing. And so, I just grabbed it. And that was the case with the Dallas Cowboys.

[00:11:36] SL: That's good. Um—let's see. Do you have any other—um—uh—other than—uh—in addition to playing football,

any other special memories from the University of Arkansas?

Your time in college there?

JJ: Yes. I had—uh—uh—a—uh—professor in—uh—in—um—uh—the—uh—[clears throat] okay, let me get—back up here. I had a—I had a professor that—uh—was my key mentor—uh—in my speech work. And I wrote a master's thesis—uh—called *The Role of Oral Communication in Modern-Day Collegiate Football*. And in doin' so, I sent out questionnaires to the best collegiate football coaches in this country, people like Bear Bryant, people like Woody Hayes, people like Frank Broyles. And amazingly, I got those back [SL laughs], and I got unfettered comments about how they used communication to not only teach but inspire their teams. And so, I wrote my thesis on the role of oral communication in modern-day football. And—uh—Dr. Eubanks was—uh—um—uh—very instrumental in guiding me with that work, and—uh—just within the last few years, he sent me all of my notes and all of my background with that thesis. And ironically, here I am in the football business. Who would've ever guessed at the time I wrote the thesis.

SL: That's great. That's really good. And . . .

JJ: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . it's great that he sent that to you.

JJ: Mh-hmm.

[00:13:22] SL: He was able . . .

JJ: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . to gather all that for you. That's really good. Uh—it—this says here—uh—you were selling insurance for the—for your father's company while in college. Is that right?

JJ: When—as I went to school, my father organized the first life insurance company in Missouri in over twenty years. And it was an exciting time for my family because they moved from the central Arkansas area to the southwest Missouri area. But in that time—uh—the—uh—the—the—let's see. I'll start right where I said but. Okay.

SL: Okay.

[00:14:04] JJ: But during that time, the building of that company—uh—was one that I not only got to be a small part of because I was in school—uh—and would work and spend my summers selling insurance during that time, but I also got to see the makeup of literally hundreds of men and women as they discussed, as they came on board, in that insurance company. And I saw—uh—ambition. Uh—I saw the pursuit of ambition, and I saw the difference in the degree of ambition—uh—between people. And I saw what self-confidence would do and training

would do as far as the success of those—uh—the—of those—uh—agents and those managers in selling. It was a tremendous education, and so that—uh—during the year—uh—when—um—uh—school would—uh—in the fall or in the spring—uh—then I would be very active in the Northwest Arkansas area and other parts of Arkansas, basically makin' appointments and selling life insurance while I was in school.

[00:15:16] SL: Darn, I wish you'd called on me. [*Laughter*] That's good. You were a busy guy. Um—let's see, now. Uh—can you talk about selling the insurance business and deciding to go into the oil and gas industry?

JJ; Yes. Um—you know s—um—uh—the areas at—when I graduated from school—uh—the area that I was responsible for for the insurance company that my father was president of—uh—was the—uh—Oklahoma area. And in my—uh—pursuit of attracting—uh—people to sell insurance, attracting people to—uh—be involved with our insurance company, then I learned about the oil and gas business. And I ran into a salesman that was a better salesman than me, and so, he had spent his life in it. He had recently lost his job. And he encouraged me that if I would help him raise money for these prospects, if you will, potential wells that he wanted to drill—uh—that we could make—



uh—do well and be successful. I did that. And—uh—uh—initially were—uh—successful in the initial wells that we drilled, and there began my career in the oil and gas business.

[00:16:41] SL: Okay. That's good. Um—let's see. Is there a secret of your success in the oil and gas business? Is there—it says, what was your secret of success in this industry?

JJ: Well, I'm a good—um—uh—well, I listened. I don't have a background in geology, or I don't have a background in engineering. Uh—so I was a—a good listener. But—uh—I—of anything that I am, I have a high tolerance—I'm gonna back up here.

SL: Okay.

JJ: Good question. We'll just—ask it . . .

SL: You want me to ask the question again?

JJ: Yes, please.

[00:17:16] SL: Uh—what was your secret of success in this industry, oil and gas industry?

JJ: Well, I think—uh—it—it may be a common thread—uh—of all of my business—uh—career. Uh—I have a very high tolerance for ambiguity. [SL laughs] Uh—I work best when I don't know that I'm gonna get my check at the end of the week, or I don't know what the answer is at the end of the month. Uh—some of us

need to know exactly what that's gonna be or it's hard to function. When I've hit comfort zones in my life as to what the end result was gonna be, I didn't like the way I worked. [*SL laughs*] And so, I have always, in the insurance industry, the oil and gas business—uh—all of those businesses, you made what you were able to go out and create and—uh—and generate. And certainly, that's the case with the risks that are involved in the oil and gas business. [00:18:16] And I think it had everything to do with—uh—how I could—uh—come to make a commitment that I made when I bought the Dallas Cowboys because—uh—I was very aware that I'd been very fortunate and—uh—had—uh—uh—had some success that—that—uh—uh—I thought many times I didn't want to risk. Uh—but when the Dallas Cowboys came along—uh—that was the devil [*SL laughs*], and I had to step [*laughs*] out and take that risk. And—um—uh—being able to—uh—uh—tolerate the—uh—the anxiety, bein' able to tolerate the—uh—uh—frankly—uh—being as alar—or scared as I was about—uh—ultimately failing or being known as the guy that had a little bit of success but blew it all on wantin' to be a football coach.

SL: That's really, really a dynamic way to approach . . .

JJ: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . life, I think, to—uh—not really be comfortable knowing the outcome. You'd rather have it open-ended. I guess the potential . . .

JJ: It can get you in trouble.

SL: . . . is much better.

JJ: It can—it can . . .

SL: Gets you in trouble but . . .

JJ: . . . give you some anxious days.

[00:19:22] SL: Yeah. Okay. Well, let's see. Uh—she says here you are still excess—success in the oil and gas industry. What did you learn from the—uh—oil and gas industry to help you thrive in professional sports? I think you've already answered that.

JJ: Okay.

SL: Don't you?

JJ: Okay. Uh—well, I—one other thing I might say is . . .

SL: Okay.

JJ: . . . that the oil and gas business—uh—requires you to—uh—uh—basically—uh—uh—seek out and get real experts in their field—uh—and it causes you to do a lotta homework.

SL: Mh-hmm.

JJ: And—uh—you don't jump quick. It's not the—the knee-jerk thing that we think of about wildcatters. Uh—it's—uh—arduous

homework, and—uh—I think that's helped me in—uh—  
preparation—uh—for—uh—some of the other things that I've  
been involved in in my career.

[End of verbatim transcription]

[00:20:12] SL: What inspired you to buy the Dallas Cowboys?

JJ: I had always wanted to be involved and have my focus of my  
time in sports. My dad told a writer in Missouri, about the time I  
got outta college, he said, "I think my daughter"—my one  
sister—"she's gonna be fine. She's got her feet on the ground.  
But every time I sit down with her older brother and ask him  
what he wants to be or what he's gonna do, all he can talk about  
is sports, and all he can talk about is football." [SL laughs]  
"And I'm afraid he's not gonna amount to anything." That was a  
few years back, written in the *Kansas City Star*, and at the end  
of it, they said, "Well, that was Mr. Pat Jones, and he was talkin'  
about the guy that has the Dallas Cowboys." But I've always  
wanted to spend my days in sports. Basically, I tell writers, and  
they've been some of my biggest critics—media. And I say, "It's  
ironic because we have somethin' in common. You've decided to  
spend your life in sports, and I have, when I coulda gone any  
other direction I wanted to go, I've spent my life in sports, too.  
So we really do have somethin' in common, so get off my back."

[*Laughter*] The way they can often do, but of course, that's unrealistic thinking.

SL: Yeah.

[00:21:40] JJ: But I think a desire to not only be involved in the competition, in this case, win the Super Bowl, but also wanting to do it the best way the—I often say there's no joy in Mudville to win and to have lost your tail on the other side of the ledger. And so, from the get-go with the Dallas Cowboys, huge financial commitment was involved there. Between the capital costs that were required to buy it, over \$160 million, the interest—or lost interest—I'm gonna back up on this.

SL: Okay.

JJ: I can say this much better. Give me the question again here, too.

SL: Okay.

JJ: But there's some of that . . .

[00:22:39] SL: What inspired you to buy the Dallas Cowboys?

JJ: Okay. The Dallas Cowboys have always had a lot of visibility and, arguably, twenty-one years ago had one of the best brands, if you will, in all of not just sports, but in the whole spectra of our country. That's—that was unique. And so, it took the Dallas Cowboys at that time in my life for me to take the risks that

were involved. The interest on the capital that it took to buy the Dallas Cowboys at that time was \$75,000 a day. [SL laughs] The Dallas Cowboys were losing 1 million a month in cash flow when I bought them. So that no matter if you laid in bed, went to a movie, or decided to go hunting, there was a \$100,000 a day [snaps fingers] tickin' off just like the clock. Now, that'll inspire you and cause you to go win a Super Bowl in three years, if you strap that on. [SL laughs] Yeah.

[00:23:53] SL: That's good. Let's see. How have you turned the Cowboys organization into one of the top NFL teams, especially in the area of business management.

JJ: You know, you get a lotta energy from people who have been outside of business or outside an inj—an industry. You—okay. Let me back up a minute.

SL: Okay.

JJ: I've got the question.

SL: All right.

JJ: Okay. Someone who's been on the outside looking in of an industry or a company that they feel has a lotta promise can bring a lot of energy to the table. Just being involved for a number of years, sometimes you can come a little conditioned and take for granted some of the real opportunities that are

involved, and I think that's the case with me and the NFL and the Dallas Cowboys. There were a lot of people that had been in it for forty, fifty years in the National Football League.

[00:25:07] Because of the commitment I made, the proverbial write a check that you've gotta cover with your fanny, because of that commitment that I made, I hit the ground running for ways to create viability. There's no joy in Mudville to win yet have your you-know-what handed to you, and so that I immediately started looking for ways that would generate income for the Dallas Cowboys, who needed it at the time. We all know that Santa Claus doesn't put the tricycle under the Christmas tree. To get those guys in the end zone to get those tackles made, you better have some financial viability. And frankly, no family, no community, no business can really cut and shoot and be an athlete unless they're sound financially. So my attention immediately turned to those areas and tried looking for opportunities that were there that could bring in revenue. Certainly, it was contentious in the early going with the other owners that had been in the NFL for a long time. And frankly, I remember one point that I was tryin' to make, and Bud Adams, that had the Houston Oilers and now owns the Tennessee Titans, he came up, and he said, "Jerry, I didn't understand one thing

you said, but you're so enthusiastic about it and believe in it so much, put me in. I wanna go with it, and I don't really understand it, but I like your enthusiasm for it."

[00:26:44] SL: There you go. That's good. She says, "You have been very innovative in the areas of marketing, corporate sponsorships, television, stadium management, and community service. Where did all of these new ideas come from?"

JJ: I think that my experience shows that if you have the right incentive and you have a longer-term picture in mind, you'll get creative, and you'll start thinking of ideas, or you'll start evaluating areas that might have the potential for some new ideas. However, I must tell you, I had some very good influence when I was growin' up. My father was quite a marketer, and he was, in his own way, quite a showman. [00:27:36] And I grew up living over our store, called Pat's Super Market, and then later that was expanded. But my dad would put on a Wild West cowboy uniform [*SL laughs*] and strap guns and come down through the middle of the store. He had a great radio personality that he heard in Fort Smith, brought him to the Little Rock area, called Brother Hal that is a legend in his own right. Set him up right in the middle of the store, and he played over the radio, played the records and did his show, plus they had



live, amateur talent shows while people were buyin' groceries. And so, when I look back on the influences that I had as to how to create something different, how to create some energy to do business, I think I don't have to go any further than my dad and mother. They were quite an influence.

SL: That's a great story. We'll talk about that a little later.

JJ: Kay.

[00:28:40] SL: Are you thrilled that your three children also work for the Cowboys organization?

JJ: The fact that my entire family is involved in the management of the Cowboys is probably the most rewarding thing for me on an individual basis. The—so much of the things that I get credit for, they should get. Their—it's their ideas, and they execute 'em. The Cowboys came along for them at the right time. Stephen, for instance, my oldest son, we thought he was gonna be drillin' wells, so he's educated as a chemical engineer and graduated from engineering school at the university. Charlotte graduated from Stanford. Jerry graduated from Georgetown. But then when the Cowboys hit, they were all able to take their education, their energy, and they were right at the time of their life to come in and be a part of managin' the Cowboys. There was no blue book on how to run an NFL team. There was no manual here at

the Cowboys when I bought them on this is the way you do it. Yet there was no family tradition that I could look over to them and say, "Now, this is the way your grandfather did it; this is the way I did it; and this is the way we're gonna do business." There was none of that to rely upon, precedent, so we just all had to get in here and figure out how to do this. And it—we made it exciting, and by the way, there was no rule book to throw out, and we just went till we hear glass broke on a lot of the real fun things that we've been able to do off the field with the Dallas Cowboys.

[00:30:19] SL: Sounds like to me the entrepreneurial spirit, though, is the acorn here that didn't fall far from the tree. I mean, there's not a—you say there's not really a playbook passed down, but I'm gettin' the idea that your father was out there tryin' to be creative and come up with ideas, and you certainly have, and it sounds like your kids just happened to be at the right time, at the right place, to deploy their spirit in . . .

JJ: Well, my father called me about three months after I bought the Dallas Cowboys. And he said, "Jerry," he said, "I had no idea you were gettin' in anything like this. I've never seen anything that had so much visibility or so many people interested in it." And he said, "Son, you're a relatively young man." I was

forty-five when I bought them. And he said, "If you ever plan on doin' anything else in your lifetime, you've either gotta make this succe—you've either gotta make this a success, or you've gotta use some mirrors or smoke or something, but the perception has gotta be that you made it work, or you won't be able to do anything for the rest of your life." [*Laughter*] I said, "Dad, you really know how to make my day." [*Laughter*] But I'm gettin' after it.

SL: Yeah. That's good. That's good. Well, he's right.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: He was probably right.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: He knew you'd make it work.

JJ: Yeah.

[00:31:43] SL: And you've done that. Okay. Can you talk about how you got the idea for the new Cowboys Stadium?

JJ: I thought when I first bought the Cowboys that Texas Stadium was the prettiest thing I'd ever seen. And it was the pride of a new owner. But it came apparent to me over the years that with the visibility of the Dallas Cowboys and with the perception that the Cowboys have and the following they have around the country—the Cowboys are television's number one content. Not

just sports, but television's number one content. More people will watch a Cowboy game than anything that they can put on all of television, yet only 7 percent of NFL fans have ever been to an NFL stadium. They live what's at the stadium and the team vicariously through the perception that they have on television. I always knew we were gonna have—we wanted another stadium. And when we built it, the wow factor needed to be there so that when people were seeing us play in that stadium in New York or Minnesota or California or Jonesboro, Arkansas, if they can't be there and haven't be there, they would have a perception. And I dare say out of a billion two hundred million that I spent, almost four hundred million of it was for the wow factor. The glass, the art, the architecture, the engineering, and the things that we can do in there, all of that are very important to the fan experience at the stadium, but not nearly as important as the perception goin' to millions of people that'll never come to the stadium.

[00:33:39] SL: You'll probably get a lotta tourists, whether there's a game there or not, won't you?

JJ: It may end up, other than the game, bein' our biggest business. We have almost three thousand people a day . . .

SL: Yeah. I bet that keeps . . .

JJ: . . . come through.

SL: . . . I bet that keeps growin', too.

JJ: They do tours. Tours.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And it's because they see it. They—it's visible to 'em. It's visible to 'em in Shreveport. It's visible to 'em in Florida. And so, when they are in this area or sometimes maybe even come to the area, then they get involved in it. I grew up watchin' Walt Disney make Mickey Mouse. And—I was of that vintage. When he built Disneyland in California, there wasn't anybody in this country had to ask where it was or what it was. We all knew. 'Cause he'd brainwashed us. And so, to a degree, with all the visibility that we have with the Dallas Cowboys and the interest, as it would turn out, whether it's misplaced or not, in the NFL and in football, then all of that visibility can be a part of the value of building this stadium. And that, again, had everything to do with why I spent the money I did on the stadium.

[00:34:51] SL: That's good. What was the most exciting part of building the new stadium?

JJ: Well, first of all, a part that in its own way was exciting but dicey was shortly after deciding to build it, we've entered into one of the most economic challenging times that this country has ever

seen in—by anybody that's on the planet. And it took the Dallas Cowboys to weather that storm. And at some of the most sensitive times over the last several years of the recession, we had three thousand people working out there, building that stadium. And there was no stopping. It's too visible. I might have other businesses that I could stop construction on a warehouse or maybe put off some plans on drillin' some wells. But you couldn't bui—stop anything as visible as building that stadium. Not that you would, but my point is that really was dicey. And I'm rewarded by the fact that we've been able to really, financially, do everything that we needed to do to have that stadium as complete and standing as it is. And I'd say that's number one. Number two, it was really exciting to venture out and architecturally and engineeringwise do some different things for a sports venue. And the Cowboys could get away with it. The stadium is contemporary. The stadium speaks to strength because a lot of the steel, but it has a certain finesse to it because of all the glass that is there, and that was very deliberate to do that. And so, the point is that when you think of, well, football, and you think of the physicalness of football, then we're injecting, with that stadium, a artistic, a architectural aspect of it that, to me, will speak to what the Dallas Cowboys

are about, and when we win a Super Bowl with that as our mantra, then we'll be able to say, "You can do it this way, too."

[00:37:22] SL: *[Laughs]* Now, you and Gene both had somethin' to do with designing that stadium, didn't you? I mean, you all were both very active in . . .

JJ: Yes, my wife, Gene, has, from the very beginning, been so involved in aspects of that stadium that people who build sporting venues have never been challenged or never been asked to address a competitive stadium in that way. Some of the areas that we have that—are the open areas, the huge glass doors that you come through at four different areas, the sliding glass doors that are across our end zones, all of those areas are—as you walk in from ground level, you walk and see directly through to the stadium and, if you will, to the field. Now, that took up a lot of oceanfront property. That's significant, valuable seating that is not there. Significant, valuable suites that aren't there. But it was done to create a stadium that, while it is retractable roof and enclosed and air-conditioned, it has the airiness of—as though it were an open-air stadium. And that was very important to us. It's the largest room in the world. It's 3 million square feet. And the arches that basically support the roof and the 600-ton digital board that we have through

there, that goes—each one of those arches are a quarter of a mile from end to end, and they go 300 feet up in the air. And you could sit the Statue of Liberty inside that and not touch the roof. [00:39:11] So we really do have the ability, with the way the stadium is designed, to have the openness that you would want to have with an open-air stadium, but yet at the same time, when it calls for it, for the elements, the heat, of the weather, we'll be able to have our fans have an experience that doesn't have 'em endure that.

[00:39:40] SL: Okay. We're gonna change directions here a little bit. She asks why did you choose the Salvation Army as one of your top charities?

JJ: Several years back, the Cowboys were winning Super Bowls, and yet, at the same time, because of some wrong decisions that a few of our players were making, we were getting a lotta criticism. I sat down with my wife, Gene, my daughter, Charlotte, and I said, "It seems like every time we sneeze around here, we're on the front of *New York Times*, or we're all over this country about what we're not. Let's think of something we can do with all this visibility, the aura of sport, the interest in sport. And let's see if we can do something for people that can't carry the ball themselves." [00:40:28] Within a month, Charlotte



had Steve Reinemund, who was the chairman of PepsiCo, in my office, both suggesting that the Cowboys use Thanksgiving Day, that literally goes to this country, and people are watching the game when most of the time they wouldn't be interested in football. Use that day and that halftime to kick off the Red Kettle Campaign for the Salvation Army. We got the networks to go along with us. They basically said, "We'll cut away unless it's a Super Bowl performance at halftime." I agreed to spend over \$1 million on that halftime. That was 12 years ago. Since that time, we've gone to an average of seventy-five, eighty million different Americans every Thanksgiving. The Salvation Army has told us, and we know it to be a fact, that, incrementally, that halftime has raised over \$1 billion from where . . .

SL: Wow.

JJ: . . . they woulda been had they not had that kinda visibility and recognition of those three and a half million volunteers that man those kettles and the great work the Salvation Army does. It's a organization that's been in this country 125 years. They inspire me. And so, like anything else, the more we put into it, the more we've become involved, the more we've gotten out of it. And it's probably, singly, the best thing that we've done since owning the Cowboys that really show that that visibility and

some of the things you get criticized for, high salaries, behavior of players, can turn around and help a lotta people that can't run with the ball themself. And so, it's an honor to be a part of the Salvation Army.

[00:42:19] SL: That's a really good thing for the Dallas Cowboys . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . to . . .

JJ: It works. Yeah.

SL: . . . do. Okay. We're at the bottom of this page. Any other comments you would like to make about your business accomplishments.

JJ: I think that the good fortune of getting to be passionately interested in what I've done when I get up in the morning has been, at the end of the day, the number one consideration that oughta be given to what you do with your time. And I have been so fortunate to have meld, if you will, or combined sports that I love dearly with my ambition, my financial ambition. As an example, I'd probably been a coach. But the coaches didn't make enough money, and I had enough financial ambition that I wanted to make more money. Now, had I known I was gonna be payin' 'em what I'm payin' today, I'd've probably been a coach. [SL laughs] But still, the culmination of putting those

things together, an area that you're very interested in along with the business challenges that come with it. [00:43:51] When I bought the Cowboys, I never thought that you were going to have some of the exciting challenges that I get to be a part of and have gotten to be a part of for twenty-one years. I'm chairman of our network for the NFL. We've been involved in the building of the brand of the Dallas Cowboys. We've been involved in all kinds of new business that involves the NFL. I really thought that I was gonna spend my time behind a projector and behind—and beside the coaching aspect of it. As it turns out, getting to be involved in the evolution of the way the National Football League has become content for television—and all you have to do is look at the business scene out here today, and you realize what an important role content and what a high value content has for all the mediums that are out here: satellite, cable, over the air. All of it begs and cries out for content. At the end of the day, that's what the NFL is.

[00:45:03] Where do the stadiums come in? Now, the stadiums have to work. You can't have our game—although most of the people watch our game on television, they'd know it if you were a studio game. You've gotta have the pageantry. You've gotta have the crowds that are involved, if you will, like the Colosseum

of Rome, and that has to come across when you're watchin' a game. So these—our stadiums and the building of new stadiums in the NFL and a stadium like we have right here are very much a part of puttin' the show on for television, which in and of itself has been a great experience from a business standpoint. So I've been pretty fortunate.

[00:45:46] SL: Good. Anything else?

JJ: That's all I got.

SL: All right. Let's stop . . .

JJ: There.

SL: . . . tape and stop recording.

[Tape stopped]

[00:45:52] SL: Now, you know, usually these things go a long time.

JJ: Okay.

SL: Usually . . .

JJ: Okay.

SL: . . . five or six hours. I know you don't have that much time.

JJ: Okay.

SL: So you and I probably need to decide pretty early on. If we're gonna have a chance to get back together with you later . . .

JJ: M'kay. Okay.

SL: . . . then I'll do a thorough thing here with the time that we've

got. If you think in—realistically that we don't have any idea when you and I will get back together . . .

JJ: Let's do it thorough and . . .

SL: Okay.

JJ: . . . then I'll extend the time that we have today.

SL: Okay.

[00:46:26] JJ: Let's stay here. What is your sch—how much—when do you have to be outta here today?

SL: I don't have—we're gonna go back to Fayetteville tonight.

JJ: What time is it right now? What do . . .

SL: It's . . .

JJ: . . . time do you think it is?

SL: What . . .

JJ: I don't have it on . . .

SL: I don't know what . . .

Trey Marley: [*Unclear words*]. It's probably two thirty.

JJ: But it's probably two—two thirty. Okay.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: Well, let's just—let's have at it here . . .

SL: Okay.

JJ: . . . and we might be able to spend two and a half hours here.

TM: Great.

SL: Okay.

JJ: Let's see what we got.

SL: Okay.

JJ: See how long we can . . .

SL: All right, all right. Are we . . .

JJ: . . . keep this goin'.

SL: . . . are we rollin'?

TM: Tape is rolling.

[00:46:50] SL: Okay. Jerry, the first thing I need to know is when and where were you born?

JJ: I was born in Los Angeles, California. And the—in 1942. And my dad and mother were living there because Dad was working in the aircraft plants during World War II. And I was born and named Jerral W. Jones—*J-E-R-R-A-L*—W. Jones. I was not a junior.

SL: Is that a Wayne?

JJ: Jerral Wayne Jones. Yes.

SL: Okay.

JJ: Yes.

SL: Okay.

JJ: So I was born Jerral Wayne Jones.

SL: Okay.

JJ: Dad specifically rejected junior. [*SL laughs*] He didn't want me to grow up bein' a junior.

SL: Okay.

JJ: But he was there to work in the aircraft plants there during World War II. He was ineligible to be in the service because of physical problems.

SL: Before we go on, the date is October . . .

JJ: Okay. I was born Jerral Wayne Jones. October the thirteenth . . .

SL: Right.

JJ: . . . 1942, in Los Angeles, California.

[00:47:56] SL: Okay. All right. Now let's talk about your dad . . .

JJ: Okay.

SL: . . . and the aircraft plants.

JJ: Los Angeles. My parents were there because my dad had left England, Arkansas. Lived in the Scott, really, the Scott area around England. And they had left and gone to California to have good work during World War II. My father was ineligible because of physical limitations to be in the service. And so, he worked in the aircraft plants there. And I was born. I have a sister, Jacquelyn Jones, who—the two of—that's my one sibling.

SL: Kay.

JJ: But while my father was working in the aircraft plants there, around 1945, the Japanese were interned into camps. And they were running a lot of the hothouses or the greenhouses, if you will, that grew poinsettias there in the Los Angeles area. Was a very significant number of poinsettias, and they were sold to the servicepeople as they would come in and—from their leaves—on their leaves, as they would come back and forth using Los Angeles as their departure or entry level. So that my dad made his stake selling poinsettias because the Japanese being interned left those greenhouses high and dry. He made a deal with the people that owned the greenhouses, a sharecropper-type deal, and through that was able to, after three or four years, save enough money that he wanted to move back to Arkansas and become a groceryman.

SL: So in England where your dad—was he born and raised in England or . . .

JJ: Brought up right there in the England area. England, Arkansas, area.

[00:49:54] SL: And were—what were his folks? Were they sharecroppers? Were . . .

JJ: Yes. They had land, but they also farmed more than they owned. And they were, of course, there and people of the



Depression. And so, those were very hard times in the Scott, Arkansas, area, the Bredlow Corner area of—around England, Arkansas. And that was the homeplace of my dad. My mother was from Nashville, Arkansas, and her family lived in a rural setting outside of Nashville, Arkansas. And her name is Arminta Clark. Her maiden name was Clark. But the—that was about halfway between Nashville and Hope. And so, they basically were from large families. My dad had eight brothers and sisters.

SL: Wow.

JJ: My mother had nine brothers and sisters. So they were from very large families. Met there in Little Rock. Married on their way to California and moved to California to pursue good jobs.

[00:51:01] SL: Do you know what the circumstances were when they met? How they met in Little Rock? What was goin' on?

JJ: Well, my mother was a very attractive young lady. She's a beautiful woman now, but she was very attractive. And it was easy for anybody [*SL laughs*] to see what the circumstances were as they met. My father worked in the grocery business as a young person there in the Little Rock, Arkansas, area. He worked for a early supermarket-type operation called Food Palace and got his experience but mainly got his ideas of how he wanted to pursue his career from his initial working as a young

person in those stores. Now, he was trained to build airplanes, and that's what got him out to California.

[00:51:54] SL: Well, now, how in the world did he get trained to build airplanes?

JJ: Well, at that time you could come to Dallas, Texas, and go to school. And thousands of Americans did that. And train you to be a part of quite a team that would put together airplanes there, as it turns out, in the Los Angeles area. So he worked in an aircraft plant there at—while he was also raisin' those poinsettias.

SL: Yeah, now, that's interesting that he took his supermarket and his rural background that he experienced in raising . . .

JJ: At that time you had—the raising of poinsettias and the raising of produce needed fertilizer. And everything was rationed during the war. And Dad's ability to—uh—trade his family's—uh—gas—gasoline rationing—uh—uh—certificates that they sent him from here—from Arkansas. His family sent those to him in California. He traded that for bonemeal, which was a fertilizer for those poinsettias. And it really was unique that he was able to get that bonemeal during that particular s—time in our history. So he had always shared that story with me, among hundreds of stories. [00:53:35] One of the real reasons that I've enjoyed



any success was my father's ability to communicate and his willingness and enjoyment in telling stories of his experience as he picked it up outta the dirt and built his life and his professional life. And so that I have always known that I have a equivalent of a Harvard doctor's degree in business and entrepreneurship by virtue of sittin' around the dinner table and breakfast table with my dad and mother.

[00:54:18] SL: Well, now, did you get to know your grandparents on your dad's side?

JJ: Yes. Yes, I did. Good. Yeah.

SL: Well, let's go ahead and ta—I wanna get back to your father.

JJ: Okay.

SL: But I wanna talk about your grandparents on both sides. But let's talk about your dad's parents for right now. And do you member what—or know what their names were?

JJ: Yes, very much. My dad—my father's dad was Joe I. Jones that lived in Sheridan but moved over to the England, Arkansas, area in the late—in the [19]30s. And . . .

SL: Do you know what the *I* stands for?

JJ: No, I don't.

SL: Okay.

JJ: No, I don't. But the—and my mother's—his mother's name was

Lucy Watson—maiden name Watson. And her dad was John Watson.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And consequently, my dad was named John Watson Jones.

SL: Okay. There we go.

JJ: And so, his nickname, though, that he went by all of his life, given to him by his mother, was Pat. And so that when, to get ahead of us a little bit, when he initiated his career into supermarkets, it was always called Pat's . . .

SL: Pat's.

JJ: . . . Super Market.

[00:55:42] SL: Okay. All right. Well, what do you remember about your grandparents on your dad's side?



JJ: Well, they were farmers. My granddad was a basic farmer that had land but also rented through the term sharecropping. Rented a lot of land and worked a lotta people. At that time, you had manual cotton picking. Cotton was certainly prevalent in that area. And you still, remember, and I member it well, you still were cultivating and still growin' crops with mules. He had some early, antiquated tractors, but it was an exciting time, really. I would, as a young boy, would go down there, specially during the summers, and be a part of 50 or a 100 workforce that

would pick cotton. And I wasn't king of the cotton pickers, but as a seven-year-old, eight-year-old, nine-year-old, draggin' your sack and puttin' some cotton in it was a part of it. I had a first cousin and his—he was named after my grandfather, Joey, and one of my duties—I was a little older than him, but one of our duties was to take cold water to the people that were working cotton picking. And there was one guy that was a little sassy and playin' a little rough with us there. And he kept saying that he ate dragonflies. [SL laughs] And of course, we would question that, and I'd question him about him eatin' those dragonflies. And what started off in a little fun, fair play ended up gettin' a little more serious. [00:57:33] Well, I'll never forget the bucket had ice in it, so it was cold. And so, he came over to get his dipper, and I was in charge of the ice bucket. And just as he got up over that bucket, I took that bucket and poured that ice water in him. And my cousin and I ran like we have never run before in our lives [laughter] to run from him. And he was probably a twelve- or thirteen-year-old, but I can remember back then I could take just so much of that BS.

[00:58:04] SL: Uh-huh. That's funny. That's funny. Well, so do you member much about the farms and your grandparents' house?

JJ: Yes, I do. The home, it seemed very large at the time. But it was modest. And—but it was large enough so that my grandfather and grandmother could live there with eight children. So it could handle that, although many of them slept in some of the same rooms. And I remember right down through the middle of the house—it separated the bedrooms from other bedrooms in the kitchen area. There was just an open hall that had screen on it but basically cold in the winter, as you could imagine. And of course, going from one of those bedrooms over to the other side of the house could get real cold when you had just gotten up. And as a matter of fact, looking back on it, I believe he built it way—that way just to get everybody [*SL laughs*] good and awake so they could get started early in the morning.

SL: That feature was ordinarily a—what they call a dogtrot, right? I think . . .

JJ: That's exactly right.

SL: And was really to help keep the place cool in the summer, I think, to have that cross ventilation . . .

JJ: Goin' down through there.

SL: . . . going . . .

JJ: I didn't know that.

SL: . . . going down through there and—did they ever stack wood in there?

JJ: Yes. And of course . . .

SL: And kept that dry.

JJ: . . . course, they, you know, they didn't get electricity until—in that area for—I can remember when there was no electricity. I can remember when you had the lanterns. And—but it came, certainly, by the time I was ten years old.

[00:59:50] SL: Mh-hmm. Did they—were they—did they have running water? Were they on a well?

JJ: They were on a well. And . . .

SL: And . . .

JJ: . . . we . . .

SL: . . . did they . . .

JJ: . . . we pumped the well. We'd go out and get the water and pump the well. Eventually they did get running water, but my initial memories of being there and bein' around that atmosphere was you'd go out and get your—go out and get your water and bring it in.

[01:00:14] SL: Yeah. And you probably—they probably didn't have a telephone until after electricity.

JJ: No. No. No phones. I can member a radio. Period. Of

anything that—the first thing I can remember about the electricity, other than a light, woulda been a radio.

[01:00:29] SL: Uh-huh. So did you listen to the radio a . . .

JJ: Yes.

SL: . . . lot growin' up?

JJ: Oh yes. Oh yes.

SL: What's some of those early programs you remember?

JJ: Well, I can remember vividly the interest in country music.



[01:00:45] My early years were—I lived in North Little Rock on East Broadway. It—at that time there were—you did not have your freeway system, your interstate system, like we have it today. And so, the basic, main artery coming into Little Rock from Memphis was East Broadway. And my dad built his store in the middle of a cotton patch but reasonably close to development there on the east side of North Little Rock. And we lived, my family, above the store. And we lived in an apartment above that store. And there were, like, six other apartments up there that Dad had built and rented out. But—so that during my years of grade school, I lived in—above that store. [01:01:49] And I always worked in the store. No matter what time football practice was over or no matter what time baseball practice was over, I always had a coupla hours in the store. That was the



deal. And it might be stockin' the shelves. It might be doin' produce. And this was from a very, very early age. And I, later, I asked my father, who was valedictorian of his high school, as well as my mother—valedictorian of hers. And I ask them both why they didn't make me do more homework. And my dad said, "I wanted you to spend your time getting used to working." He said, "I'm concerned that your generation may not understand how important it is to have those work habits." And he said, "I want you to grow up not resenting working, and so, no matter what you're doin', I want you to be involved in sports"—and he loved me to be involved in sports. "But when you're through, you're gonna spend two hours in this store." And I did that, and of course, it was—really, I grew to have that as a part of breathing or as a part of just your everyday makeup. It was a good thing.

SL: That runs through almost all—most all the interviews I do.

People work extra work. They were just expected to work. Just whatever it took.

JJ: As young—as youngsters . . .

SL: Yeah, as young . . .

JJ: . . . yeah.

SL: . . . as youngsters. Uh-huh. And I suspect that your mom and

dad probably saw your smarts, anyway, and they . . .

JJ: Well, mothe—one of the things that—Mother likes to tell the story, and I can recall it through just hearing the story.

[01:03:42] When I was about nine, Mother used to put a bow tie on me. And I would greet the customers as they came through the door. And I would say, "Welcome to Pat's Super Market." And then there were certain of those customers that would like for me to push their basket around and might give you a little tip. [*SL laughs*] Well, I had rivals for those jobs because the guys that were needing the money more than me, probably supporting a little bit of a family, they liked to push those baskets around there, too. But I know that a very early age, my parents were havin' fun with me or enjoying incorporating me in that mind-set. And it was a point of pride for me. Very early on, maybe as early as twelve, thirteen, fourteen, my job during the Christmas holidays was to really manage—well, maybe not totally manage—but manage the Christmas trees. And so, that—it was exciting. I had a feeling of proprietaryship, and . . .

SL: You had a department.

JJ: . . . it was back before Optimists. It was back before your charities really were involved in the Christmas tree business. So

Christmas trees were commonly bought at the grocery store, at a supermarket. And so, it was a process of not only showin' the tree but a process of making a wooden stand for it and spending a lotta time doin' that. So it was some nice work. Spent a lotta time doin' it. But to this day I can't get in the Christmas spirit unless I go in a supermarket and smell the fruit and see the bristling activity that's a part of a grocery store—not a department store, not a clothing store, but a grocery store—and smell those smells and kinda feel that atmosphere that I can get the Christmas spirit.

[01:05:44] SL: That's good. That's good. Early on, giving responsibility, business responsibilities, around the store.

JJ: The—you had seasons. You had summers, of course. We would do ice cream, the kind that you have with Dairy Freezes and those and make that ice cream. And so, my parents were real good at picking areas out—on hindsight and look back—and that created some pride with how well you did, how much ice cream you sold. How many Christmas trees you sold. As opposed, let's say, to sacking the groceries. [01:06:32] So there was always, and I don't know if it was by design, along with the work, an accountability, a scorekeeping, of how well you were working. And I think that that probably really was a motivating

thing. And I could get as much pri—matter of fact, I was rewarded. I might get a extra few bucks durin' that time. And I would go right up to Christmas Eve. Let's say during the time—during the Christmas season when you were outta school. I'd go right up to Christmas Eve, get my money, and then I would head to Main Street in Little Rock, walk all the way down Main Street on one side [*SL laughs*], walk down on the other, and then come back and buy my mother and dad's Christmas present. That was just as—that was almost . . .

SL: Clockwork.

JJ: . . . a tradition, a personal tradition, of mine.

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: Let's—I wanna get back to your dad's grandparents.

JJ: Kay.

[01:07:33] SL: Do you remember any conversations that you may've had with his father, with your granddad?

JJ: Yes. Conversations about ethics, about signing notes and your obligation to pay a note. His attitude toward borrowing money was real close to "don't borrow money." Was real close to "that's not good to be borrowing money." My dad was the opposite, but my grandfather was real conservative about

borrowing any money. Everything was cash, and I'm sure he was influenced by the experience that he had in the Depression. He was very strict about drinking. And it was very common, and it was not frowned upon. And there were no such things as DWIs. It was a part of the makeup, in a lotta ways, of that culture. But he was real strict about that. And so, he spent a lotta time talking to me about those areas but principally character things that, candidly, were burdensome, in a way. Didn't do it in a way as though you were sitting there visiting with a preacher. But just my—probably a little early for me to really understand . . .

SL: To grasp.

JJ: . . . but as it turns out, he was right because I remembered 'em all of my life.

[01:09:25] SL: Yeah. Well, when you were visiting them in the summer, was church a part of the visit? Did they . . .

JJ: No.

SL: . . . go to church? They—were they . . .

JJ: No. No. Went to church, but it wasn't a part of—it wasn't a big makeup of my dad's family. Completely dominated my mother's family.

SL: Okay, well, we'll get to that.

JJ: Okay. But my dad's family, it did not dominate. They were God fearing, but it did not dominate their family practices. The thing that probably sticks out about them, my dad's family, my dad's dad, was the fact that he wasn't quite on the same page with my father's marketing and promotion mentality. He was more farming. He was more a agriculture-oriented person. And consequently, he probably had a little less interest in the direction my father went than he did with the directions of some of his other sons and family members. On the other hand, my grandmother's pet was my father. *[SL laughs]* And so, I grew up, through my father, hearing about Mother and the attributes of Mom than I did the attributes of my grandfather.

[01:11:25] SL: *[Laughs]* That's funny. Well, you know, don't you think that your grandfather—another thread that I see going through these interviews. During the Depression, agriculture-based families, families that had gardens, families that were involved in the agriculture end of stuff, generally did better through the Depression because they still had the ability to put food on the table and there was a community that would kinda support itself in just the basics to get by. And then the more urban a family was, the more they felt the Depression or saw the signs of the Depression, the soup lines and people out of

work and on the street. Do you think that . . .

JJ: The home that, the physical home, that my dad principally grew up in, and the only one I ever saw was actually my grandmother's house that was given to her by her father . . .

SL: John.

JJ: . . . John Watson, with a promise that she would never mortgage it. [01:12:35] My grandfather's family—Dad's dad—had a very nice home in England, Arkansas, and basically operated through—out of England, as far as a central place for his farming activities. They lost that during the Depression. Moved for the very reasons that we're talkin' about right here. Moved out to my grandmother's home that was more rural and really then got with the raisin' your own food and canning and everything that went with surviving durin' the Depression. And you are accurate when you say—I'd heard him say many times, "We moved out there to eat and so that we could make it durin' the Depression," as opposed to living in town at that time, England.

SL: So he got stung by the Depression . . .

JJ: Yes.

SL: . . . pretty hard.

JJ: Yes. And to the extent that he was concerned about my father, who was progressive as a young man. My father is—was—the



stories, his family stories, were about how he was the salesman of the family. He would raise rabbits to go sell. He would raise chickens to go sell. In England he would be selling chickens and rabbits and selling things from the garden, where the others in the family wouldn't. So he was very industrious to make some money and—to the point that he really hated the thought of living his life on a—the Delta-type farm that he grew up on. As an example, in his later life, he has—had a beautiful ranch in southern Missouri, and it's my mother's today. And he said, "If a cotton stalk ever grows up on it [*SL laughs*], I'm gonna torch the place it comes up from." [*Laughter*]

[01:15:07] SL: Well, now, what part of Missouri is this place at?

JJ: Springfield.

SL: Springfield.

JJ: Springfield, Missouri. Yeah.

SL: All right.

JJ: We'll talk about that.

[01:15:14] SL: Okay. All right, so your grandfather basically were giving you lessons in life, philosophy lessons, early on before you really knew what—before you could really grasp.

JJ: Yes, and they were good ones. They were good ones. But that was—there wasn't a lot of talk about ball. There wasn't a lotta



talk about hunting. There was not a lot between—the communication between my grandfather and me was more about being a worker, stories of—he would share stories about his children and Dad. But it was more of a character-building-type communication with me.

SL: Did he ever talk to you about his father? Be your great-grandfather?

JJ: No, he did not.

SL: I'm always tryin' to get . . .

JJ: Yes, get it how far back.

SL: . . . how—the oldest story that you—that you're aware of.

JJ: Yeah. My grandfather was adopted and lived in the Sheridan area. Grew up in the Sheridan, Arkansas, area. So we didn't—I didn't have a lot—I—my—goin' back to my great-grandfather would be the stories that my grandmother and dad told of her dad.

SL: Okay.

[01:16:42] JJ: But not my granddad's. His name was John Watson, as I've said.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And Daddy's named after him. And he was really into dressing well. And dressed and would make the effort, financial and

otherwise, to really have nice clothes. And Dad seemed to have really been influenced by him and influenced by that as he was growing up. But—because my father was really into clothes, and when he and Mother got married, the only bill that was there was about a \$300 bill for his clothes [*SL laughs*] that he had accumulated over a period of time. But he was a real dude. And his grandfather John Watson was the same. And he would show me pictures of him, and he would be immaculate with his shirts and coat and hat. And that really carried through. Made an impression. His grandfather was not an agriculture man but basically a commerce individual. And again, his beloved daughter, which was Lucy, my dad's mother—he gave her the home that they ended up and she ended up having the majority of her life. He gave her that home, and she was true. She never put a mortgage on it.

SL: That's good.



[01:18:19] JJ: And to carry this thing on through, when my father, to show you the influence on how he—what was important to him on his appearance was his complete dress. Dad was short of stature, and so, he always had very good selection, whether it be shoes, whether it be shirt sizes, what—they always had the—because there were very few men that had that size because of

his stature. Dad was five six but basically was immaculate in his dress. I don't recall, and our family doesn't recall, but a just a few times that we'd ever seen him come out of his bedroom not fully clothed. Handkerchiefs. French cuffs. Tie. Now, if he were dressing for—later on, he was into tourism and animals, and he would come out like that. You'd never see him come to the table in a robe or never see him come to the table unless he was ready for the day. My mother didn't see him. He would go in his bathroom. Get all dressed. You could hear him in there whistlin' and dressin'. [*SL laughs*] And he would come out. Now, when I was growin' up when I was in high school, we shared the same bathroom together, so I saw him. But he was really a serious—into his clothes. And when he died, he had over 600 sport coats and suits that he could wear, that were stylish enough for him to wear. And if you went to see him, he would look you over and say, "I think I've got a sport coat for you," because he would go in and buy the entire store out at the end of the season at a—and they'd just make him a price on everything. And it'd always have something for him because of his size. But I'm makin' this point. I'm gettin' way ahead of us, but he was into clothes. In his obituary when he died, we made a [*SL laughs*] nice part of that, talkin' about how—his reputation

for being well dressed.

SL: And—but his dad was kinda the same way. His dad was a . . .

JJ: No. His dad was not that much into—his grandfather, John  
Watson . . .

SL: Oh. Okay.

JJ: That was his grandfather. My—his mother's dad was that way.

SL: Okay.

JJ: But his dad was—that was not a point of emphasis with him.

[01:20:59] SL: Okay. All right. Well, now, let's talk about your  
mom . . .

JJ: Kay.

SL: . . . and her family. So she was a really good-lookin' lady.

JJ: Yes. Yes. Had, like, just two brothers and the other seven were  
sisters. Brunette, very beautiful figure. Really, very attractive.

SL: And very smart. Valedictorian.

JJ: Yes, and very ambitious. Very ambitious. And as—just really—  
not only worked as a very young lady. Graduated from high  
school. Neither Mother or Dad were college participants. And—  
but she graduated from high school in Nashville and moved with  
a coupla sisters to Little Rock and got work there before she met  
Dad.

SL: What kinda work was she doing?

JJ: She was trained as a beauty—beautician.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And—but she also did—was a retail person. So she could do both and work in store—department store work and a supermarket-type atmosphere.

SL: Multiple streams.

JJ: But very personable, very personable and, like I say, a real—very religious. [01:22:34] Their family's very religious. My grandfather, her dad, was very, very much a part of his life was the church.

SL: Baptists?

JJ: Yes. Yes. Both were Baptists.

SL: So . . .

JJ: Both families were Baptist.

[01:22:52] SL: Did she bring that to your house, growin' up?

JJ: Yes. Yes. And I spent my formative, young years—one time I spent it in summer school—in Bible . . .

SL: Church . . .

JJ: . . . school, as well as very active in Sunday school and church.

SL: So you guys would—you'd go to church on Sundays. Were you expected to go to church on Wednesdays?

JJ: We did not. We did not.

SL: M'kay. Did you participate in the youth groups in the church . . .

JJ: Yes.

SL: . . . or the choir or any of that?

JJ: Not the choir but the youth groups. The MYFs—if the equivalent of MYFs, Methodist MYF, but—and we're talkin' about the period of time of grade school and junior high. High school, those years there at the end of high school, got away from that regime a little bit.

[01:24:02] SL: That's not unusual. So I feel like we should talk about her parents . . .

JJ: Yes.

SL: . . . a little bit. Do . . .

JJ: Yes.

SL: Did . . .

JJ: Yes.

SL: Now, did you get to know them?

JJ: Yes. Very well. Well. Very well. Knew my—knew both sets of grandparents very well. Spent a lot, relatively speaking, spent a lotta time. Would visit with them for days at a time. My mother's parents were very religious, very active in the church. Came from very large families. They also farmed but not with the substance that my father's parents—parent farmed because

he was in the Delta, and they were over in the hill country around Nashville and Hope, Arkansas.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: So it was a different emphasis. They really didn't have the underpinning for really serious agriculture business . . .

SL: Right.

JJ: . . . that they have in the Delta. But still very rural oriented. [01:25:13] And her father was a teacher, plus had the farm that he raised their food on. But his principal business was a teacher.

SL: Grade school? High school? Do you know? Do you remember?

JJ: The entire . . .

SL: The whole . . .

JJ: The whole thing.

SL: . . . whole thing.

JJ: Taught in the one-room schoolhouses.

SL: One-room schoolhouse.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: Wow. So was her father a deacon in the church?

JJ: Yes. Yes. Not a preacher but a deacon.

SL: Right.

JJ: And Antioch—Antioch Baptist Church. About a mile from Hope,

Arka—I mean, from Nashville, Arkansas.

SL: What was it—what was . . .

[01:26:04] JJ: [*Unclear word*] I had a classmate, Bill Dillard.

SL: Bill Dillard?

JJ: Yes.

SL: Yeah?

JJ: So . . .

SL: That's fun.

JJ: . . . and that family was in that area and the—there was Tollett, Leland Tollett, that was up at—with Don Tyson . . .

SL: Absolutely.

JJ: . . . is a cousin.

SL: I know Leland. Yeah. A cousin to your . . .

JJ: That's in relation to my mother.

SL: Wow.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: Small world.

JJ: Yes. Yeah, younger cousin from my mother. Yeah.

SL: Wow. We get a lotta that, too. These interviews . . .

JJ: Oh, I bet you do. I bet you do. [*SL laughs*] Yeah. Yeah. Well, have to.

SL: I kinda got chills just thinkin' . . .



JJ: Yeah. Have to.

SL: . . . about that connection.

JJ: It's amazing.

SL: That's good.

[01:26:48] JJ: It's amazing. And I know that it's there. It's just like Gene's mother, my wife's mother, and Mack McLarty's father had eyes for one another [*SL laughs*], and as a matter of fact, his mother, Mack's mother—now, Mack's a partner and great friend of mine and everything else . . .

SL: Yeah, he's a great guy.

JJ: Came up to Gene one day and said, "You were almost my daughter." [*Laughter*]

SL: That's good. I'm gonna ask him about that.

JJ: Yeah.

[01:27:24] SL: Now, let's see. That's good. Well, you know, we will get around to talking about Gene and how you all met and stuff . . .

JJ: Okay.

SL: . . . and, you know, in doing what little research I could do—had time for you—I didn't find a whole lot about your wife and I—so I'm very interested to . . .

JJ: I could have directed you. There's a . . .

SL: . . . I have a feeling that she might be a . . .

JJ: . . . there oughta be volumes. There oughta be volumes, and we'll talk about her. But you're gonna really be surprised. Her lineage.

SL: Well . . .

JJ: It's unbelievable.

SL: . . . it could be that we need to come back and do her story, too.

JJ: And look at that.

SL: Do her story. Just interview her.

JJ: But certainly it needs to be a part of my story because it has been a tremendous influence on me.

SL: Okay.

[01:28:08] JJ: Her grandfather was the most powerful guy in Yell County for—his name was Chambers. And he—Judge Chambers of the "Free State of Yell." [SL laughs] And then her other grandfather lived at Jonesboro, and his name was Gene Sloan.

SL: Okay.

JJ: The two people were 15 years—they were 15 years apart in their age. They both valedictorians at Vanderbilt.

SL: How is that? That's . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . so serendipitous.

JJ: Her Grandfather Sloan was one of—until Rockefeller moved to the state, mighta been the wealthiest guy in the state of Arkansas.

SL: Is that right?

JJ: But she has a tremendous background in terms of Arkansas . . .

SL: Well, you . . .

JJ: . . . lineage.

SL: . . . might give her a head's up that we might be headin' her way. I'd . . .

JJ: Kay.

SL: . . . I'd love to sit down with . . .

JJ: Okay.

SL: . . . her, too.

[01:28:53] JJ: But it's—but it is interesting in that I have spent, from the time that I was in school—we got married in—while I was in school, and we'll talk about that. But I've spent—I've had an—I would say almost an inordinate interest in her family and had a lot of time spent with her father. Next to my father, her father was the most influential individual—was next, as far as influenced me as a man. But anyway, we need to talk about that.

SL: This is a great story. We'll get to it.

JJ: Okay.

[01:29:25] SL: We'll get to it. Okay, so now, we're talkin' about your mom and her family right now. And it sounds like to me you were very blessed that you knew both sets of grandparents, which is not always the case, Jerry, that—you know, people died younger back then, and they didn't—people didn't get to have much time. Do you remember any conversations with her father, your mom's father?

JJ: Yes. And he was a—he was stern with me. And I had a lot of energy. And I remember that at, maybe, seven, eight, I was out helping him dig potatoes, new potatoes. And I was foolin' around. And I'll never forget him slapping me, actually slap me, and just sternly saying, "Now, you pay attention to our business here. Let's get in here and quit, you know" . . .

SL: Messin' around.

JJ: . . . "quit messin' around." The physical . . .

SL: That got your attention, didn't it?

[01:30:43] JJ: Oh, it did. [*SL laughs*] I'm still talkin' about it



today, at my age. Physical spankings were a big part of my life.

SL: [*Laughs*] Okay.

JJ: Really were.

SL: Okay.

JJ: Both from my father and—principally from my father, not my mother. But both from my father, and of course, those were different days, and people got spanked.

SL: You bet.

JJ: And you got spanked in school. And if I got a spanking at school, I got another one when I got home. That was the way it was. So there was no reprieve [*laughter*] for innocence there.

SL: Well . . .

JJ: But I'll never forget my grandmother, my mother's mother, lived to be a 105. And all of her family are very long-lived. And I'll never forget, I had my wife, Gene, and daughter over to see my grandmother, who at that time was almost—probably 102, 103. And my daughter asked her—says, "What kind of little boy was Jerry when he was growin' up?" And she looked up and just didn't even blink and says, "Jerry was a very mischievous little boy." [*SL laughs*] Didn't even blink. And I said, "Grandma, what in the world would make you say that?" And she looked up at me and kinda shook her head. But I was constantly into it and constantly gettin' torn up. Just really had—and it could be at family get-togethers. It could be other thing—but the real thing is that my dad really wanted discipline, and if he didn't get it, then I got it.

SL: I know most of my spankings, I probably had it comin'.

JJ: Well, there's no doubt I had it comin'. [*SL laughs*] There's not a question in my mind, and I'm not sitting here talkin' about an abused childhood at all.

SL: Right. Right.

JJ: There was nothin' abusive about it, but it was a real good tearin' up. And it made me—it worked. It made me—I didn't carry it through my children as much as my father did. But I carried it through some, too. But by . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . the time that my younger ones got there, I probably had really pulled back on it. But it just was not in any way a concern for a teacher to give somebody a whippin' when I went to school or, certainly, a parent, a good one.

[01:33:27] SL: Is there any one instance that you would feel comfortable talkin' about?

JJ: Yes. We—this'll give you an idea. We were in Nashville at my grandmother's home. And she had a cistern . . .

SL: Okay.

JJ: . . . that had the finest-tasting water, and I was with several of my cousins. [01:33:55] And we found a turtle, not a terrapin. And so, I took that turtle and dropped it in the cistern. Well, of

course, it was almost as though the home had been blown away [SL laughs] if you [laughs] basically mess up the cistern. Well, that's what I had done. Well, I don't mind tellin' you my dad was there with my mother at that time, and I got to walk down that little lane down by the outhouse, and I flat got it put on me real good. But that was a little bit typical of my [laughter] activities. By the way, my cousins wouldn't do it.

SL: It was left up to you.

JJ: I was at—we were at my grandmother's home—my dad's mother and grandmother. And my dad would tell stories about when he was a boy as we were driving toward his home.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And I remember my mother used to say, when he would tell somethin' and laugh about what went on, she would say, "Now, Pat, you got some big ears in the back." [SL laughs] Me, knothead, in the back. And, boy, he'd turn around. And he said, "Now, son, that doesn't go down here with this." [01:35:09] Well, he was talkin' about turpentinin' a dog. And that's takin' a corncob and rubbin' their little heinie and then putting turpentine on it. [SL laughs] And so—but he stopped that real good. Well, we get to my grandmother's house there at Scott, Arkansas. All I did was be able to hit the ground runnin', and my cousins came

out, and we get one of Grandmother's nice, little dogs. And so, we took—and "Wait," and I said, "Now we got to get away from the house." [*SL laughs*] So we took him way down to an empty—equivalent of a shotgun shack, where people literally lived and worked on the cotton plantation or cotton farm. And of course, I rubbed him real good there, and my cousins were sittin' around watchin' and put some turpentine on it, and nothin' happened. And the dog just kinda looked a little awkward and a little wimpy as he kinda moved down through there. All of a sudden, that dog started howlin' as though it had been shot. He howled. His two behind feet spread out. His heinie was draggin' on the dirt road. And I'm tellin' you he was goin' up through there with his front legs carryin' the whole show. And of course, he headed right for my grandmother's house, right underneath the house. My dad didn't even have to look back. [*SL laughs*] The minute he heard it, he knew exactly what was happening. And needless to say, I got one of those real good spankin's. [*Laughter*] A real whippin' for that after him tellin' me, "Don't even think about it," when I got outta the car. Well, that was kind of typical. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well. Oh, he probably—there was probably a part of him that was kind of tickled about that, too, I'll bet.



[01:36:57] JJ: Well, he knew exactly what had happened, and that's why—one—again, we're getting into those areas that—around my grandparents, but . . .

SL: That's good.



JJ: . . . but I remember a time when I had just started driving . . .

SL: Okay.

JJ: . . . and literally was using the car for the first time—or first or second time. And my father just became infuriated as I was leaving about m—payin' attention, driving properly, you don't hurt yourself, but more importantly, don't hurt the friends that you're with, and really pay attention. And he became so worked up—I looked—I told him, I said, "Dad." I said, "You know"—and I wasn't bein' sarcastic at all. "This doesn't mean that much. It really doesn't. And let's just stay here and watch TV, and I can forget this." And he said, "Son." He said, "Gosh," he said, "I'm just getting upset when you're supposed to get upset."

[01:38:02] He said, "You know I'm gonna be with you if somethin' happens, but I just don't want you to be wrapped around a tree with a friend out here someplace because we didn't put the right kind of emphasis."

SL: Yeah.

JJ: The facts are that I did get in the ditch. Really got in ditches,

and then from a figurative standpoint got in the ditch. When I got there, the guy that was the toughest on me goin' out the door was the guy that was there to help me the most and not with, "I told you so," but, "Let's just work to get outta this." Now, there was punishment and responsibility when I got to the house, but the guy that was always there when it hit the fan for me. And that carried on through to—my dad died when he was seventy-seven. He was always there.

SL: That's what dads are for. That's good.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: Okay. I wanna get . . .

[01:39:15] JJ: Let's go back to grandparents.

SL: It—yeah.

JJ: I'm gettin' you off the subject.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: Excuse me. I know this happens to you a lot.

SL: Oh, no. [*JJ laughs*] This is . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . this is fine.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: We're doin' fine. I'll spend this whole day talkin' about your grandparents if you want to.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: It's . . .

JJ: Well, but you're coverin' it pretty good. The real facts are that they had influence. They had influence because they were a gathering point for each family. And they were included.



[01:39:44] I'll never forget when—at those years, when we got a new car, and it seemed as though the—be ab—to get a new car was maybe more important than it is now when families get a new house. It was that big a deal. My dad had gotten this new station wagon and ask his dad and mother and br—there were some brothers and sisters involved. And they all came to our home that at that time was there at our store. And everybody was admirin' it. And Dad had one of the guys that worked at the store take it across the street to fill it up with gas. And so that when he gets over there, the guy that owned the gas station moves the car with the door open and tears the door right in front of our entire family. Tears the door—really doesn't tear it completely off but pushed it back up against the car. We were in horror. And we were on one side of East Broadway, Highway 70, and the station was over on the other. And I remember everybody lookin' at my dad and said, "How could that guy be such a idiot? How could he be so careless? How

could he have done that and done that to our new car?" I'll never forget my father lookin' over to everybody, including his own mother and dad, and sayin', "Y'all know I can go over there, and I'm so sick, and I can go over there and give that guy the riot act and make him feel bad. Or I can walk over there and tell him that I know he wouldn't have done that for love nor money. I know how sick he is about it. And across the street from us and my store, I'll have a friend for the rest of my life." So he did that. I can't tell you how many times that I have told that story to not only young people but my players, certainly my family, that that type of sensitivity about dealing with people and their pain is very rewarding and can be very rewarding.

SL: Sounds like he had an ability to put himself in that guy's shoes.

[01:42:22] JJ: What—to not get ahead of you—but while those—my grandparents were center areas for family, my relationship with my dad and my relationship with that—with—through—and with my mom, but certainly with him, was so prevailing and so dominant and so significant growing up, that that relationship, combined with sports and the feeling that I had about coaches, those were the influences for me. Now, obviously, we all know our parents are center front. [01:43:13] And the knowledge of the background and where they came from and to have that

good family background and then to involve—but the way that I knew my grandparents was through my dad's and my mother's stories of their family times. That's really how I knew them. And I was fortunate. And I, as you said, I knew them and knew them well. They would come to Little Rock relatively frequently, especially my dad's father and mother. And so, I got to have dinner with them. I was born on my grandmother's birthday. We have the same October the thirteenth birthday. And so, we always shared a birthday night together when she had her birthday, so . . .

SL: Is that your . . .

JJ: . . . it was . . .

SL: . . . dad's side or your m . . .

JJ: Dad's side. Dad's side.

SL: Dad's side? Okay.

JJ: So I had very—I did have real proximity. We lived within the state, and of course, they're living in North Little Rock and Scott. You're real close there. But it came through. [01:44:29] I've had players that really had very little touching from their parent, certainly a father. They had very little touching from them and literally were raised and totally influenced by their grandparents. And that happens more often than not with a . . .

SL: That's ?right?.

JJ: . . . lot of our players. And I know of other people that [*unclear word*]*—*that was just not the case in my life. I*—*it was by and through my parents in a big way and they just*—*for that reason, I don't remember being around my grandparents at all when my mother and dad weren't there.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: It was just that part ?of the deal?. Whether it be a family get-together, whether it be Christmas, whether it be a visit they had, they were just always there and a part of my relationship with my grandparents. So I don't know what that means, other than it just was*—*they embellished. They'd tell stories, tell stories and have it confirm*—*or have it affirmed by*—*about when they were kids and have my grandmother or grandfather on either side remember those stories and remember the funny incidents and remember how some of that works. But it was full, and it was very, very, very effective. It makes me know more about them than I really got from them. It makes*—*I got it from my mother and dad.

SL: Well, family was important.

TM: Excuse me, Scott. We need to change tapes.

SL: Okay. Change tapes.

[Tape stopped]

[01:46:12] SL: Jerry, this is tape two. We're still tellin' grandma and grandpa stories.

JJ: Well, the problem with this exercise is that the longer I talk and think about this, the more the real good ones come up, so it's fun.

SL: All right. Good. Well, you said you had a couple more that we hadn't got to yet.

JJ: I do. It was another trip to my dad's mother and father at Scott, Arkansas . . .

SL: Okay.

JJ: . . . bout twelve miles from Little Rock, fifteen miles from Little Rock. Well, he was tellin' me about how good a arm he had, like throwing rocks, that a lot of the people that lived around him were actually leery of him because my father had such a good arm. And my grandmother actually said that she had seen him hit a bird on a tree limb with a good-size rock one time. And he said to—"We used to play hospital," him and his brother Paul, and they had a little red wagon, and Dad would take the corncob, and the chickens would be runnin' out across the barnyard, and Daddy could take that corncob and hit that chicken in the back of the head, and the chicken would sit there

and do the funky chicken and kinda knock him out, and then they'd take him and put him over in the water trough for the cattle and revive him, and off he'd go, and so—but without really damagin' the chicken crop. [01:47:43] So course, the minute we landed, I got one of my cousins, and we found us the equivalent of a little red wagon. We gonna go play hospital. But the only problem was is I don't have the arm and didn't have the arm my father had, so I had to use a little more sturdy type—somethin' to throw. And when I was hittin' 'em, they were down for good. [SL laughs] Well, we ended up with several of 'em layin' on the ground, and so, we buried 'em in my grandmother's oat bin that they had for their cattle. And of course, later on, not that trip, but later on, they found 'em. And it was back to the woodshed for little Jerry with [SL laughs] my father Pat, but again, I think I really had a pure heart. It was just my dad's stories that he'd tell when he was a kid down there. But it was a great time. Great memories.

[01:48:34] SL: You know, it sounds like to me that your dad had some mischievousness in him, too.

JJ: Dad had a zest for life. And he really planned and worked at having a good time. The difference is that he used that imaginative brain that he had and also did real well



professionally and did real well as a businessperson, too, so it wasn't all just about having a good time.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: But certainly that was alive and well when I was being—I was growin' up in our family. And I'm told by my grandparents that he was quite the entrepreneur, as he would go into England with all kinds of raised rabbits, chickens, and do a good job sellin' 'em back in those hard times and really, frankly, help with the finances there at his home.

[01:49:36] SL: And that's another theme during the Depression.

Everyone chipped in—had to chip in and contribute to the family as a whole. It wasn't really one person out there for himself. It was—families would take income from kids and . . .

JJ: The—I think the ethic that carried through that generation—or those generations—those of us who had articulate parents, those of us who had parents that were imaginative, small-business people were very fortunate. Those of us that got to live, be a part of that, hear those stories. Dad told me about his dad's reluctance and disdain for borrowing money. My grandfather.

[01:50:32] But there was a very prominent farmer in that area called Reuben Bredlow.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And he was well known and well known in the Little Rock area. So that Dad would tell—told the story of the time that he borrowed \$2,000, which was a very significant amount of money. And his own father didn't and couldn't do that and was critical of him for doin' it. But he went up to see Mr. Bredlow, who had back problems. He was a big man. And he said—I'll never forget. He was laying on the floor, stretched out to get some relief from his back pain there at Bredlow Corner. And reached up—Dad's note from the Twin City Bank of North Little Rock—and reached up there and signed that while he was laying on his back. And it was really a testimony to my father because Mr. Bredlow had actually been critical of my dad for playin' cards and playin' poker with a lot of the people that worked up around his cotton gin. *[SL laughs]* And so, he had criticism of him but thought enough of him. Wouldn't let him go out with his daughter, I'm sure, but thought enough of him that when he asked him for a loan for his business, he believed in him.

[01:51:51] SL: Isn't that great that back in those days, it was a real community? People really knew each other. You know, you were talkin' about gettin' in trouble at school, gettin' a whippin' there and comin' home, goin' to the shed when you got home. I bet—I've also heard that if kids were doin' somethin' on the way

to and from school and a neighbor saw 'em actin' out or doin' somethin' wrong, why, they'd be callin' the parents and tellin' 'em, or they'd spank 'em there on the spot, you know.

JJ: The neighbor would have the talk and possibly even go as far as a spanking but certainly a correction. And I can't tell you the time that I've had my folks's neighbors, and in that sense my neighbor, too, do that and not tell my parents. And consequently, that was quite a endearing but a bonding relationship that you had there. And so, to some degree, you really felt like if you weren't responsible, you were letting more than just your immediate family down. You were letting several people down. And it's—it was a very important, I think, dynamic that helped a lot of us have a better chance.

[01:53:23] SL: Any more stories that your father told you on the way to the grandparents' house that prompted you to go ahead and get in trouble once you got there? [*Laughter*]

JJ: Well, my dad was the known favorite of his mother. And so, he was very conscientious about bringing her things, whatever it—all the time, not just at Christmas, but bringing her presents. And I'll never forget him telling the story of when she passed of him going to her trunk and seeing so many things over so many visits and, in some cases, just in mint condition. That she just

prized those gifts to her, apart from a birthday or a Christmas gift. And again, I think that, without a doubt, that through my parents that I was able to really get a sense of the impact that their parents had on them and their families had on them, and it was a good thing. And it was a bonding thing. [01:54:41] And throughout my life both Mother and Dad's brothers and sisters were intermittently advanced through my dad's and mother's businesses, whether it be through jobs or whether it be involving them in types of partnerships. Because again, he—they were a business. They did have the need to have people working, and so, there were jobs there. But it really was a very big bond. My father had a—his brother Jack Jones lived in College Station . . .

SL: Okay.

JJ: . . . with his family. He was the only white family in College Station, and he had a grocery store there in College Station. And my belo—my cousins are beloved to this day and are contemporaries of mine. But Jack and Myrtle Jones, the only white family in College Station. [01:55:58] Dad, when he left his home at England, lived in the back room of that store in College Station. Dad's first step out into the world to go apply for a job was walking through that entrance into College Station today, right by what is Adams Field, and walking right up

through that row of fruit storage and storage—st—built storage there. And walked right on up to Main Street and started his quest for his career. So I can't tell you the times that I've been in the car with him and them, and we'd drive down—drove down through that turn, went into College Station, and spent days in College Station. Within the last ten or twelve years, there was a, maybe longer, there was a huge tornado that really hit College Station. And I took Troy Aikman, and I took Herschel Walker, and I took the best players we had, and we went down there, and we raised money, and we took those players into that devastated area at College Station. Many of the people that live there remembered my aunt and uncle and my cousins were there. And frankly, there were a few that remembered me as a young boy over there visiting in College Station.

[01:57:33] SL: Now, is this—are you talkin' College Station, Texas?

JJ: No. I'm talkin' about College Station, which is right there at Adams Field.

SL: At Adams Field up in Little Rock.

JJ: Which happens to be the highest crime in the state of Arkansas.

SL: Okay.

JJ: It's all black.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: The only white family at College Station, which is—College Station is right outside the Little Rock city limits . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . but still in Pulaski County.

SL: Mh-hmm. Okay.

JJ: Well, that was my dad's brother's family. That was the only white family there at College Station.

[01:58:03] SL: So you were saying that your dad's store—now, your dad's store—your family's store was called Pat's Grocery Store?

JJ: Pat's Super Markets . . .

SL: Pat's Super Markets.



JJ: . . . and there was one at 3209 East Broadway and one at Eighteenth and Pike . . .

SL: Okay.

JJ: . . . over in the Levy area there in North Little Rock. And then he had one at logo—Lonoke. [01:58:31] And they were the equivalent of supermarkets. He was—you had evolving in the grocery business. You had your general store. Then you had exclusive shops, the meat market, the produce place. You went to produce, or you went to—for hard goods you went to someplace else. Supermarkets brought that all back in under one roof. And so that my dad initially had a store that had a

bakery in it, had a meat market in it, had a produce market that had produce in it and was one of the first stores that you bought toothpaste and things like that you normally got from a drugstore at that particular time. And he was a competitor and competed head-to-head with some of the real giants of the food industry, like Kroger.

SL: He saw it comin', didn't he?

JJ: And—but he was, like I said, he was a very creative entrepreneur. He had a—they had a—passed a blue law that you couldn't open on Sunday . . .

SL: Sunday.

JJ: . . . unless your religion changed that. Well, to open on Sunday, he joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. [*SL laughs*] Closed on Saturday and opened his stores on Sunday. When people would drive—hunters would drive to Stuttgart, Arkansas, and come out East Broadway and go toward England for Stuttgart, Arkansas. He had tremendous buys on loss leaders like shotgun shells because he wanted people to come from all over the greater Little Rock area and come to that store to do their stocking up to go to their hunting cabins down there.

[02:00:17] SL: What I find really exciting is that your dad's enterprises were also a gathering place for y'all's extended

families. You mentioned how they provided employment or opportunities for the rest of your cousins and aunts and uncles, and I think that speaks of highest regard for your . . .

JJ: Well, it . . .

SL: . . . mom and dad

JJ: . . . it does. It shows the bond. But they were the best employees. They had a higher responsibility. And they had a great appreciation, you could tell it from talking with 'em, for the opportunity to be working along with him in those enterprise. And they appreciated him 'cause he was the risk-taker. He was the mover. [02:01:14] And he—one of our favorite stories is that he had a little roadster, and when he first built the supermarket there at 3900 East Broadway, we lived above the store. And he took my mother down to about Main Street in North Little Rock, drove her back, and there on the right-hand side, right as you get to the intersection goin' to England, looked up there, and there was Pat's Super Market. And he said, "See, honey, I always told you I'd have your name in lights on Broadway."

[02:01:53] SL: [*Laughs*] Oh, that's good. I like that story. Well, Jerry, we—I feel like we're kinda shortchangin' your mom a little bit. I don't feel like we've really talked to her—about her a



whole lot. And before we start talkin' about her, I gotta make sure I've got her mom and dad's names.

JJ: Okay.

SL: Their . . .

JJ: Dolph and Nora—*N-O-R-A*—Clark.

SL: *D-O-L-P-H*?

JJ: *D-O-L-P-H*.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And Nora—*N-O-R-A*—Clark.

SL: Okay.

JJ: Her maiden name is Clark.

SL: Okay.

JJ: What we probably haven't done is—it'd be easy to diminish her role because of the strong, aggressive ambition and personality that my father had. But not in any way to take away from her physical being involved in what it took to make their life a success. She worked all the time that I can remember, all the way through my high school days. She worked in accounting. She worked in cashier. She really had a complete involvement in their business. But make no mistake about it. He, my father, was the personality, and he was the one with the ideas and the drive and the will to affect them. And he had good ideas, but



Mother so often had to execute 'em. [02:03:46] One of my favorite stories was—my father had decided to give away a Shetland pony as a promotion for shopping at our supermarket there in North Little Rock. And it was fall, and it was time for the state fair, and it was time to have the annual parade that began over in North Little Rock. Ended at MacArthur Park there in Little Rock. And you'd go across the Main Street Bridge—the parade would. Well, they had me fixed up. I had just had a little growth, and so, the Shetland pony, when I got on him, my legs were hanging down a little too much. And I held this sign and rode through that parade. "This pony can—is gonna—can be won at Pat's Super Market." Well, Shetland ponies were prized. They were rarer than they are and more in vogue. But to anybody that knows them, they have some mule in 'em, and they're stubborn. [*SL laughs*] And so, I rode that pony all the way from the viaduct there in North Little Rock over to the mai—over to MacArthur Park. He wouldn't move anymore when we got there. My mother had a little Plymouth convertible, and we tried every way in the world to get that Shetland pony to turn around and go back to his trailer that we'd gotten him there in, and it wouldn't work, and so, my mother took the backseat out of the little Plymouth, yellow convertible, and we pushed that

Shetland pony up in the backseat [*SL laughs*] of that Plymouth convertible. And so, he was standing in the backseat with me holding on to him. We drove that Shetland pony back out to 3900 East Broadway. We stopped trucks. It stopped the traffic. It had everybody hollerin' and carryin' on. And on hindsight we shoulda had that pony in that convertible all the way through the parade. But we had a big time with it. But it gives you a little idea how my mother could think on her feet.

SL: She was kinda "where the rubber met the road" on that deal.

[02:05:53] JJ: But we—Mother was certainly involved in my school. I have a sibling, my sister, Jacque, that's two years younger than me. And she was always very involved. Didn't compromise our life together, as a real mom. Very seldom missed Little League baseball games or missed dancing recitals or—just very involved, as you would expect a mom to be there. And they were always tryin' to get me to be something, and I was for bein' somethin', but they—maybe more than was there. I took tap-dancing lessons with my sister, and we danced together with tap dancing. I took—she and I were involved in skating, and we had a skating rink that was very near us out where we lived. And so, we took a lot of dancing, skating, lessons and had competition and would get in those skating lessons. Between

that and my piano lessons for years, Mother invested a lotta time in me and had a lot of aspirations for an old boy that ended up bein' more interested in sports and football.

[02:07:11] SL: So did y'all have a piano upstairs at the store?

JJ: No, not at the store. But after we had moved away from that and moved into a house that was—my father bought right beside the store. Expanded his parking, expanded his store. And then we lived there until my high school years. And we did have a piano there.

[02:07:37] SL: So do you member anything about Los Angeles?

Were you an infant when they moved back to Arkansas?

JJ: Yes, I moved back when I was, like, three and a half, so no . . .

SL: So you don't have any Los Angeles memories there.

JJ: . . . no memories of those times.

[02:07:54] SL: So I would assume—well, first of all, your mom musta been a great partner with your dad.

JJ: She was very tolerant. Dad had this flair of showmanship.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: Enjoyed—not enjoyed—but was very ambitious in creating relationships. And—but he also liked to socialize, and he had this band. [02:08:21] And Mother tells the story about how they were havin' trouble paying vendors, but it'd cringe for her

to write that check to that band. And he called it the Pat's Super Marketeers. [*SL laughs*] And so, that band would play for events as a way of promoting the store and was very popular and very often called upon. But he also enjoyed a good time. And so that if he would be out late when the band that was there quit, he would bring in the Pat's Super Marketeers. Now, he couldn't sing a lick. [*Laughter*] But he didn't know it, and at that time of night, I don't know that anybody else knew it or not. But he was very well thought of in the North Little Rock area. And to this day, at a certain age of people, when I see them, I'm known as Little Pat. When I was a Razorback and I would go to my hometown at North Little Rock, apart from the people that I went to school with, everyone called me Little Pat.

[02:09:27] SL: That's interesting. What kinda music did your dad play? Did he play guitar or . . .

JJ: Oh, he didn't play a g—an instrument.

SL: He just sang.

JJ: He just hummed and sang. [*Laughter*] Now, dance, could he dance. [02:09:40] He, at a time before my mother and he were married, he toured for Arthur Murray.

SL: Is that right?

JJ: And so, he had great rhythm and was just a natural dancer. And

so—but he obviously enjoyed music.

SL: Gosh, how'd he get hooked into the Arthur Murray? Do you have any idea how . . .

JJ: Well, he was just interested and had that knack and was interested enough to wanna learn how to do some of the, I'm sure, contemporary dances, and in doin' so, they invited him to work for 'em a little bit.

SL: [*Laughs*] That's amazing.

[02:10:25] JJ: He and they were very active in civic affairs in North Little Rock as I was growing up. Very active in my grade school and very supportive. And were very much interested in my sports endeavors. And the only thing that that couldn't compromise was the continued emphasis on work ethic and havin' responsibility and havin' a job to do. And in football one of the most grueling times, especially in those days, that you can have to participate in football is what they call two-a-days.

SL: Absolutely.

[02:11:18] JJ: And two-a-days, of course, require you to practice twice a day beginning in August, and it is a tremendous test of desire, will, whatever. And in between those practices, as the days wear along, this is a time when all you wanna do is get in some type of relief from the heat, drink nothing but fluids, and

basically get ready to go for the afternoon. Never did I have a two-a-day, but what, in between the practices, I worked in the store.

SL: Oh my gosh.

JJ: Now, the store was air-conditioned, and I will say that. But . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . was the cashier, the checking, the stocking, and things like that. And what's really, I think, important here is that I didn't think anything of it. It was just the way it was. And I didn't resent it, and I didn't ever look over and say, "Dad, I need rest. I'm really hurting." And it was—I looked at it as a little respite. You were in air-condition. [02:12:30] But I tell you he was a big influence there. I don't wanna get too far ahead of us here, but I had a chance to—when I was a senior, I was selected to play in the high school all-star game. This will give you an idea of impact or influence. And my father was away from home quite a bit at that time. He was not—at that time had gone into the insurance business from the grocery business. They moved me, to change my position, moved me to guard. And I went in as a running back. And I was really down and out, as well as beaten up. I quit. I went in the dark of night. I just got my bag, and we were all at the medical center there on Markham in



Little Rock and practicing there around the War Memorial Stadium area. I went home and slid in the bed over in North Little Rock. [02:13:28] My dad came in, and Mother told him how down I was and that I was really physically whipped and depressed. He comes in, and he said, "Jerry, what're you doin' here?" And I told him. I said, "They're beatin' me up pretty good over there and I—my heart is just not in it." He said, "You like to play football?" And I said, "Yes, sir." And he said, "Let me say this to you. If you decide you don't wanna get up and go back over there, we start in the morning. I've got work for you to do. But if you decide you wanna go and they ask you not just to be a guard, but if they want you to carry the water, you pour it on 'em. Straighten up and get back over there." And I did. And I know that was tough on him. Certainly, my mother, who was cryin' when she told him. But, boy, was it good for me.

SL: Yeah. He made the right call. No question . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . about that. Jerry, let me ask you this. You may have to think for just a minute. [02:14:37] What is your earliest, earliest memory?

JJ: While my dad was building the first building for what was to be his first store, we lived about a block and a half away, and we



lived in a little apartment in a feedstore. And it was close, and we lived there because he wanted to be there daily, watching everything that was goin' into the store.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: It was right at the junction of the Broadway and 70 that went to England, Arkansas. It was right there. There was a window that was almost at ground level, and my sister was two and a half years younger than me, so we're talking three and a half to four. And I had pushed her—she was sitting in the window, and I pushed her out the window on her back. And I can remember that we all thought that was certainly not to be tolerated and— but I can remember the concern and angst that both my mother and dad had. Now, my father just would not have anything that would touch my sister. He was—there was no question about his sensitivity about her. And I was, like I said, I was very active, and I was very mischievous, and so, I had a lot of probably overzealous play with her.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: Well, I pushed her out, and course, we made a big deal outta that. As it turned out, she was not injured at all but could have been because I probably hadn't thought about whether that was a two-and-a-half-foot drop-off out the back of that or whether it

was seven-foot drop-off out of it. [02:17:27] But those are pretty vivid. Those smells, those feedstore smells, that you had when you went in the old-timey feedstore, well, that permeated our little apartment there. And this was not a long-term deal. This was maybe a year and a half that we lived there.

SL: Yeah. That's interesting.

JJ: So those smells, those situation . . .

SL: That's a good . . .

JJ: . . . that kinda—that's about as far back as I have an image.

SL: That's a good—those are good images. Very descriptive. So most of your earliest memories, then, would be at the store and living above—at the store.

JJ: Yes. It was—Dad's work and Mother's work were our lives. And until I went to school and started creating experi—or having experiences and creating those memories there. Then those were pretty much—I can remember Dad, Jacque, and I—my sister—up in the bed with him. And him telling stories, fantasy to some degree, but really not fantasy, but tellin' us of how when we got older, we were gonna go to college and how much fun we were gonna have and how good it was gonna be. And we were gonna really enjoy and have those kinds of things in our life. [02:18:59] And when we lived above the store, there was



a—the traditional restaurant that served food and beer and setup on trays that literally was right across the parkin' lot . . .

SL: Kay.

JJ: . . . from where our store was. And so that when you went to sleep at night, you heard the music that were on loudspeakers. You heard that music as it came out across that little parking lot, and it literally was maybe seventy-five, a hundred feet away. So that being played for the people sitting in the cars, having drinks, literally havin' drinks, setups, and beer or eating cheeseburgers, those kinds of things there on East Broadway. Then you heard that, and so, some of my, really, fondest memories, and it's why I'm a fan of it today, were some of those great songs of the, frankly, late [19]40s and early [19]50s, and the Patsy Clines and some of those that we now know as country music really back before that was really as vogue as it became. But it was ri—you lived right there, and so, that music, that atmosphere, it was a, really, an adult-type atmosphere. [02:20:35] At that location the—with few exceptions all of the people that lived there were black. And the largest clientele for our store was black. And after school some of the—like, first grade, second grade, third grade—after you left school, obviously they weren't in school with you, after you left school

and when I went home, those were my friends that you played with. And you had an area that was just a block or two away that was called Dixie Addition that was out on East Broadway.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And that area, of course, were our best—probably one of the best customer bases that our store had. But there were young people involved. And so that while I didn't ask the obvious, "Why aren't we in school together," there was the reality that outta school, that's where you spent a lotta time up and down the Washington Avenue, Broadway, the other street that splits those called Second Street, and that was my world in there. And as I was in that early grade school period of time, apart from probably halfway being responsible with my work because I always had work around the store—I told you I was a little mischievous, so I was always tryin' to figure out a way to get out and do a little something extra . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . that had a little fun on it that a seven-, eight-, nine-year-old would like to do. So those are very vivid memories of that activity during about a four- or five-year period. We moved away from that location when I entered the ninth grade, so I lived there in that locale up until the ninth grade.

[02:22:43] SL: So I'm tryin' to get the picture of how this store is situated, and there's a restaurant that serves setups and beer, and across the parking lot, it almost sounds like a strip mall kind of . . .

JJ: No, it was . . .

SL: . . . setup or . . .

JJ: . . . it was—there—you had the parking lot. Picture the store and then picture about three rows of parking.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And on the back of the third row was this restaurant. And that restaurant, then, around that had cars that would sit there, and they would have waitresses come out to the car and literally serve soft drinks as setups, and people would sit in the cars and have drinks, or they would drink a beer, or they didn't have to drink liquor at all, but they would certainly eat cheeseburgers and hot dogs, and I can smell 'em and taste 'em today, and they were wonderful. But my point is that about a story above that, a good commercial story above that, literally right across about four rows in a parkin' lot, was where I slept. And I don't wanna make it sound like you're sleeping on the street because I wasn't. But I was 40 feet from the busiest highway in the state of Arkansas, the Memphis highway. And across the way was

our—was that restaurant. And down below was more action than you could shake a stick at [*SL laughs*] because everybody was in that supermarket goin' to town.

[02:24:22] SL: So . . .

JJ: And it was a neat, really, experience.

SL: . . . so they just piped the radio . . .

JJ: No, they piped—they played records.

SL: They played records.

JJ: And they had the contemporary, best records. Country music is really what the clientele and customers wanted to hear, and that's what they wanted to hear. And they could then—don't have the same rules you have today. You could sit there and drive and get a setup and have a drink and pull out and drive. You could sit there and have a drink for three hours and pull out and drive. You could sit there and have music going up until it closed, the last man left. And so, you could have that all night, as well. But again, I've gone to sleep so many times listening to that music, and it was not disruptive.

SL: Ah, that sounds great. So the area that the store was at this—and this was going on—was predominantly black. [02:25:23]  
And so . . .

JJ: Correct.

SL: . . . both clienteles for the restaurant and for your store  
were . . .

JJ: Well . . .

SL: . . . were more black than . . .

JJ: . . . you had—the store wa—though, had real serious customers that would drive there from not only the entire area south and east because it was the most significant grocery store in the area, but also had people that because of just the way my father marketed it, presented it, and the way he did his advertisin', they'd drive from Little Rock to [SL laughs] come over there and shop. But he was continually—and it was a very high-volume store. As a matter of fact, Kroger, which at that time was well respected as they, over the years, have maintained and become, Kroger put a competing store out there with Pat's Super Market and later closed it. Couldn't compete with it, with their concept. So it was rough competi—and Dad was really a competitor.

[02:26:26] And I've told the story about how—but I'll tell it again. He was drivin' through Forrest City, and he heard this guy that was very entertaining, and he got him, moved him to the area we lived in, moved him to North Little Rock. Set his broadcast booth up in the middle of the store. Had live broadcast. He's one of the most renown broadcasters in the



history of Arkansas. His name is Brother Hal. And how he started was Dad gettin' him in a car and drivin' him up, puttin' him in business in the middle of the store, havin' the live broadcast. And then about three nights a week, they'd have amateur talent and—be singing amateurs. So you'd watch him live, spin his records on the radio and talked, and then you also had live broadcasts. That was in the middle of the supermarket. And you were liable to walk in there and hear people playin' fiddles and singin' with guitars.

SL: Wow!

[02:27:26] JJ: But it was a real—it was a—bordered on genius promotional ability that my father enjoyed and practiced. And it was with just a continually promoting to get his name out and to create interest in comin' over and shopping with him for his groceries. And I'm asked today where I get a little of this marketing, a little of this promotion. And there's no question. I literally grew up sleeping on it and bein' included, not involved but included, because, again, my parents were very good conversationalists, really articulate, and really did a lot of discussion around their children, my sister and me.

SL: You know, your dad embraced a pretty serious technology in order to pull that off, to put the radio station right there in the



middle of his store.

JJ: Yes.

SL: That's some doin' . . .

JJ: Yes.

SL: . . . to get that done and . . .

[02:28:45] JJ: Yes. He—Dad enjoyed a great reputation as a businessman in the, certainly, the North Little Rock area but really in the immediate, greater Little Rock area and was well respected. [02:29:04] And I'm often—people say, "Well, you know, Jerry Jones came from nothing and is just self made." And that's just not right. [*Clears throat*] There's no way that I could ever accept the Horatio Alger Award because I didn't [*clears throat*—it didn't happen for me without very significant input and coaching. And I had a confidence level by the time that I got to college that was a product of both sports and participating in sports and gettin' knocked down, gettin' up, as well as having been an eyewitness and a minor participant in the evolving of my dad's career and my mother's work and I—the combination of that gave me tremendous assets.

SL: I—yeah, confidence, comfort level for stretching out and making stuff happen.

[02:30:45] JJ: Well, and experience and the—my father's—he had

to do it, and he did do it, but he had to do it on borrowed money. He didn't have money. Now, I did it on borrowed money, too.

SL: Yeah.



JJ: Because as it turns out, as successful as my father was, he wasn't in a position to finance me. And one of the proudest things I ever did was when I got the scholarship to go to college, he could use the money that he had set by—aside to take—for me to college, he could use that in his business. But that is infinitesimal input of financial help compared to what I got from the being involved in a real entrepreneurial mindset. And I saw that be very successful. In other words, I saw it reinforced by success. And so, I had—by the time that, literally, I was eighteen or nineteen years old, I had some—a confidence level that would let me talk to somebody fifty about their estate and selling them insurance or let me go in and sit down and visit with someone about—we'll get into that—but I also sold shoes while I was at the University of Arkansas. Sold insurance and shoes. Sold tickets, too, to the games. [SL laughs] But we'll get in—we'll get involved in that. We're gonna have to have another session. I can see that [SL laughs] right now. [02:32:37] But the whole point is—where? First of all, the drive to want the

financial reward, but then, secondly, the, at eighteen and nineteen and twenty, the being able to ask for the order or the be able to approach. Those kinds of things right there. That usually takes some real time and takes some pretty serious—you've gotta overcome the fear of bein' told no.

SL: That's right.

JJ: And that's harder to do when you're young. And I got past that fifteen years before I was supposed to have.

[02:33:39] SL: How many times have you been told no?

JJ: Well, I've—literally thousands . . .

SL: There you go.

JJ: . . . relative to selling. Relative to aspiring to do this, be on the first team, be on the second team, be the starter. That's sports. Relative to goin' out with the one I wanna go out with [*SL laughs*], a lotta nos.

SL: Yeah, I—my point I was tryin' to make was that the best salesmen have been told no more times . . .

JJ: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . than anyone else that they're able to recover from that.

JJ: And it—it's not necessarily a natural—it's not a natural thing. It has to be really developed, and it has to—and it's frankly one that there's not really but one way, usually, to develop the thick

skin to do it. [02:34:55] This is—I was recently—not recently but within the last few years, I was able to talk to somebody about what made a great salesman. And said, "There are five things. One: Ask for the money. I've forgotten the other four."

[*Laughter*]

SL: Oh boy, you got me.

JJ: But it is—if—again, I go back to a combination of things here.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And as we move forward here—confidence. I was taller. I was—always had enough height, but I was very slight in build up until I was a senior in high school. So there was a lot of overachiever. There was a lot of—for that game and to be involved in football, you were certainly not of the physical structure to really excel. And that got you a lotta nos. Just simply steppin' out there and blockin' or tacklin' somebody, you got ran over—run over a lot. And so, the same thing. Same thing holds true.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: But I was very proud of that and would, very early on, volunteer for anything relative to bein' a part of a team, bein' a part of the physicalness of football. [02:36:53] Football was much more physical, much less sensitive about injury, fifty years ago than it

is today.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And so, you really did have to get up and—when you been told no—on a physical basis at that time. Equipment was much different, but certainly what coaches believed made football players. [02:37:27] My coach at junior high died bout three or four years ago. And in his—I was reading—I just happened to—he was a junior high coach, Gene Blenden, and in his obituary he—his son told the story of one that he was very proud of, and it was of me. And it was when I was in the eighth grade, and we were playing a football game there in the Little Rock area. And he said, "Jerry shied away. And I immediately pulled him out"—when I was in eighth grade. And he said that I came up to him and said, "Coach, if you'll ever let me get back in, I'll never do that—I'll never shy away again." And his statement was, "And he flat never shied away again." But the—but just my point is that it's kinda bein' told no. How many times have you had, just in the activity of sports, how many times have you had those disappointing things in yourself? 'Cause you—we have a saying back here when we look at players and evaluate players. And they can be, both of 'em, outstanding players. Outstanding. And they're both worthy of playin'. But that one, as opposed to

that one, that one really has to call on himself to do it. It's not a natural thing that he likes to tear somebody's head off. He has to call on himself, whereas that one doesn't have to blink. And the one that has to call on himself can be the better player and the one you want. He's just had to make himself do somethin' that he doesn't want to do. [02:39:14] You know the name Jim Lindsey?

SL: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

JJ: Jim was a great—Jim was a really top special-teams player after he left the University of Arkansas . . .

SL: That's right.

JJ: . . . for Minnesota. And special teams enjoy—go down on the kicks. He was talkin' about blocking a kick. And Jim could make himself mentally do anything. He said, "I couldn't make myself block a kick." He said, "Something in me just wouldn't quite let me reach it, runnin' back there to block a punter." He said, "Something would just"—he said, "And they're rare that can naturally just full blown—something happens in a human being that makes them protect themselves."

SL: Yeah.

JJ: We've thought in the NFL, to avoid head and neck injuries, about takin' the face mask off because with the face mask on . . .

SL: You're . . .

JJ: . . . you have false courage, and you'll lead with your head. If you didn't have that face mask on, nature will make most of us ju—go to the shoulder.

SL: Yep.

JJ: Well, you take somebody without a face mask that's willin' to stick it in there, they've called—have usually called on themselves somehow. [SL laughs] Anyway, they're ?gettin' down?.

SL: Yeah. That's interesting. That's an interesting observation, though. That's . . .

JJ: But my point is, bein' told no, there's a certain amount of that dynamic. You—you're callin' on yourself, and then you get to where you can call on it easier and easier and repetition, and then all of a sudden, you've developed a way to handle rejection, and then you can go to s—for that activity.

SL: Yeah.

[02:40:53] JJ: [*Voices in the background*] Now, there's a—there's just the willingness to take risks that is also a big part of this whole equation. Risk taking. And we've gone into that, but there's no question that to have walked and been down the road I've got, you've gotta be willin' to live and take risk. And you

have to be able to live with it. And I mean, say, "Well, okay, live with it. What does that mean?" That means that you've gotta be every bit as charmin' or more charmin' when you've got huge risks than you are if you've played it safe.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And that's hard. I mean, people's voice break [*noises in background*]. They—when they have a risky situation. And I'm talkin' about really mental risk as much as anything. But you can look at, "Why here?" "Why there?" "Why there?" And by the way, those people may end up bein' president of the United States that can't handle risk. They ca—that doesn't mean that they're not very successful people. You're just putting a square peg in a round hole if you try to take a risk-taker and put him in a job that he knows he's gonna get the money at the end of the day, no matter what.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: You won't get the most out of him. Whereas if you put the round guy in the square one and tell him he's not gonna know whether he's gonna get it or not, he can't handle it. He's got to know. And then he may outperform everybody.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: I'm—so I'm not sayin' they're not performance oriented.



Anyway, we're gettin' into philosophy here.

SL: That's okay.

JJ: Let's get back on some . . .

SL: Okay.

JJ; . . . some good meat.

[02:42:38] SL: I wanna talk about your—when you were growin' up, about the dining table. And did you guys—did you experience—what—let's say th—dinner or the evening meal. Was everyone always in attendance at the evening meal? Was there ever a meal that everyone could not miss, that you had to be there?

JJ: No. Our family worked through, many times, through the traditional time to eat. Consequently, we may eat, even when I was young, at eleven o'clock at night.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: Or eat at seven the next night. No regular time to eat. I've—my father has come in at three in the morning and, when I was in high school, and gotten me up and Sister up and Mother up and have 4 or 5 buddies and all get up and eat breakfast together.

SL: There you go.

JJ: And Mother'd be a little [*SL laughs*—Mother was called an angel because she'd get up and fix . . .

SL: And do it.

JJ: . . . breakfast . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . but still, no, there was no set time that we sat down. There was no set communication, sharing of ideas, this idea of, "Well, let's all—everybody be quiet, and Jacque's gonna give her thoughts. And, Jerry, what're your thoughts on this opinion?" There wasn't any of that.

SL: That's unusual.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: That's unusual.

JJ: Yeah. Yeah.

[02:44:14] SL: I've never—in all these interviews, there's . . .

JJ: Kay.

SL: . . . usually at least a meal a day that was required attendance . . .

JJ: That everybody's sittin' around. Yeah.

SL: . . . and you know, grace was said, or . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . someone did dry the dishes. Someone washed the dishes . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . you know . . .

JJ: Got out early. Everybody got out early the times growin' up. Different times. Lunch wasn't a big issue. But we enjoyed game. Ate a lotta catfish. Ate a lotta squirrel. Ate a lot of deer, venison. Dad did enjoy that. He grew up with that, and consequently, we enjoyed it. And to this day, it's a very significant part of my diet. And . . .

[02:45:09] SL: Well, now, when you had your opportunities to be out in the country, did you ever fish or hunt or . . .

JJ: Da—he'd—with my father, yes. I stopped that when I went to college 'cause it conflicts with football. But with my father, we went hunting from pretty—very, very early age. What we did—now, we had the—some wonderful food because we had a supermarket. And a supermarket—when something has a little coloration, then its market is—becomes limited.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: But it's the finest meat. It's the finest produce. It's the finest anything. So we ate like kings. But it wasn't uncommon at all for Mother and Dad to finish up, especially Dad. Come in about ten thirty or so. And he enjoyed cooking. And Mother enjoyed—they enjoyed cooking together a lot throughout their lives. And if we had already turned it in, we'd jump up and eat.

SL: [*Laughs*] That's fun.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: It was a lotta fun growin' up . . .

SL: So . . .

JJ: . . . with my—with our family. A lotta fun. It was . . .

[02:46:25] SL: So the guys that he'd drag in at night, were those the band members from the band or . . .

JJ: Buddies. Some buddies.

SL: Just buddies.

JJ: One guy, Fred Caple, could play. His son, Donnie, is one of my beloved, lifelong friends. Contemporary, same age. And, boy, they'd have, not at the apartment but later as we moved to a house, have this great piano, and he was the singin'-est and the piano playin'-est, and they'd get in there and sing those songs.



[02:46:55] When I was—as I moved on to high school, my senior year I was determined that I wanted to improve my size. So I began about 155 pounds. And I started eating wheat germ.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And my mother would fix on those nights if I were home, Dad wasn't, I would eat as many as two meals. And I did weights, which was uncommon then. People didn't do weights back then. And by the time that I was a senior, I was a 215-pound runnin'

back, and that's how I got, at that time, my scholarship to the University of Arkansas. I went from 155 to 215. Well, Dad might get in late. He'd holler back at me, and I'd come in and lift weights for his buddies. [*SL laughs*] He was so proud that I had kinda not only developed, and so, I might be in there—I wouldn't lift 'em for an hour, but I'd come in there at whatever time they got in, and I'd do a few presses and a few jerks for 'em and have a big time. And it didn't bother me. I mean, I wasn't a bit upset. But I was ready to—I wanted to see 'em. I wanted to visit with 'em.

SL: Yeah. This is way, way before anyone ever even thought of a weight machine.

JJ: Oh yeah.

SL: These were dead weights.

[02:48:19] JJ: No, we didn't do it . . .

SL: These were barbells.

JJ: . . . we weren't into that big at the—on an organized basis at the high school level either.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: A guy named Paul Dietzel at LSU when I was a senior in high school was the one that really got the weight thing goin' with Jimmy Cannon and—Billy Cannon and that bunch down there.

When I got to the University of Arkansas, we weren't big into weights my entire career up there. We did agility drills, but it was never an emphasis there. Now you cannot compete . . .

SL: Oh yeah.

JJ: . . . on any level . . .

SL: It's totally integrated.

JJ: . . . without the . . .

SL: Yeah, very specific.

JJ: . . . without that emphasis.

SL: Almost position specific.

[02:48:53] JJ: But the point is, at that time, after we had moved away from living at the top of the store. Had a house. Moved in our house in a place called North Shore, which was in Rose City, North Little Rock. That was out in the southeast part of North Little Rock. Well, gosh, I had a huge air-conditionin' tower with a tire hangin' off of it, and in my spare time, I'd throw balls through that tire till I couldn't move and just continually involved in athletics. But at the same time, would—course, finishin' school and high school and doin' our stuff in the store. But I le—make no mistake about it. Without exaggeration, we are talking about one happy boy. [02:49:52] I was so happy at my home that where I lived, if I had friends that wanted to spend the

night, almost 100 percent of the time, I would have them come to my house because I didn't even wanna go across town in North Little Rock and spend the night in another house. And I was—it was just happy. I just enjoyed bein' around my home and my family. If I would leave and go someplace, for whatever the reason, be gone away from my family, I'd sleep on the side of the bed closest to my house. [*SL laughs*] I'm not exaggeratin'.

SL: That's somethin' ?else?.

JJ: That's somethin', isn't it?

SL: That is somethin'.

JJ: But it was just really—it's just a—just how great a growin' up period of time that I had. And they did it—my parents and—did it in a working environment and a getting-ahead environment. [02:50:58] And my father was just a ball. He was serious. He was accomplished. He was smart. But he was articulate and fun. My friends could be—could mesmerize 'em. He could talk to them from that point up till he was seventy years old. He could hold court and tell stories. And . . .

TM: We need to change tapes. Excuse me.

SL: Ah!

JJ: . . . and just mesmerize, mesmerize, my friends all the way up

through my college associates or my business associates. I was  
up here at their new stadium the other day . . .

SL: Okay, now, wait a minute. Wait a minute. Let him . . .

TM: I hated to break that.

SL: . . . let him change tape.

JJ: No, that's fine.

[Tape stopped]

[02:51:41] SL: Yeah, I—we were—I forget where we had to cut you  
off at. What were we talkin' about?

TM: Well, we were just wrappin' up the . . .

Joy Endicott: Dad entertaining friends.

SL: How happy . . .

JJ: How . . .

SL: . . . your childhood was.

JJ: Yes.

TM: Yeah.

JJ: Yes.

[02:51:55] SL: How you loved to stay at home . . .

TM: He was happy there.

SL: . . . and how your dad could tell stories to all your friends, hold  
court all the way up to seventy years . . .

[02:52:03] JJ: I had—the other night we were out at my new



stadium. Have a gorgeous owner's suite. We can have a 100 in there. [*SL laughs*] And there's a bar there that would serve the 100. And I have Jerry Lamb—I'm tryin' to think who else, but there were 3 or 4 that knew my father. And I somehow had eased behind the bar, like a server. This was just last weekend.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And Jerry all of a sudden moist up, and he said, "I just can't believe it." He said, "This is *déjà vu*." He said, "You look just like your dad."

SL: Oh.

JJ: And I was doing the talking. And I was sittin' over there on the other side of the bar. Well, that was Dad's way. He would sit on the other side, give all of us our drinks, all the way up through the time we were seniors in college, all the way up through when he almost passed. But it was that kind of thing. And just a great storyteller and basically, you know, obviously impacted—was having quite an impact. [02:53:22] He—when we were seniors, Jerry Lamb got married.

SL: Kay.

JJ: And to give you an idea of Dad—and at that time to have a child, the whole ribbon tied and everything, was about \$5- or 600. Very significant amount of money since the best place at

Fayetteville, Arkansas, was \$65 a month, to give you an idea of the difference. Well, Dad basically was able to, in a very acceptable way, give Jerry the 600. Well, the—and of course, Jerry can't even tell the story today without tearin'.

SL: Well, sure.

JJ: That was his first child, with it down the way. [02:54:09] And so, he became, after we got involved in school, he became my friends, and the people that I had that were relatively close to me at those times, he really got to know them well. People like Billy Moore, guys that I played with, those contemporaries.

SL: Sure.

JJ: Just good friends of mine but also characters in their own right. [SL laughs] And so, they became so knowledgeable about Pat. And of course, they all appreciated Mother. But my point is he carried on through and was involved in at least eleven or twelve years of my twenty-one years with the Dallas Cowboys and got to see that, plus my, you know, my other part of—up to forty-five years. But great—was self effacing but still very—maintained a—all the respect you want but could be very self effacing about jams he'd get into and how he had to really work out of it at every part of his age, all the way up until he [laughter] passed. But just enough to make guys wanna double

over, and women, too, just double over. [02:55:32] But yet he has a beautiful place, and Mother's got it today, but just a gorgeous place up in . . .

SL: Springfield.

JJ: . . . southwest Missouri. Just something out of a book. And it has a gorgeous landscape. You know, about five thousand acres up there and it—he had over, turns out, about 5,000 wild animals that people would come through and look at those wild animals. So he is getting a big honor up there this weekend. He's—we—we're both in the Missouri business hall of fame. And he was really considered one of the founders of the Missouri tourism association, and so, he really was big into tourism. We're gonna—he—I wrote him this letter, and it was about 1975 when I wrote it. And it was—and I'm so glad that I wrote it. But it was about how much respect that I had for him, about what he had accomplished as a younger person in the grocery business and how he literally founded the new insurance industry in Missouri and became a legend in Missouri, a legend of success and a legend in the insurance business. And then turned around after he left the insurance business and became a prime mover and named—really acclaimed up there now as one of the top people that's ever been in the tourism business. So he had, in



my lifetime, he had three significant careers. He was very focused, unlike me. He was tunnel vision. [02:57:26] And it really bothered him that I was—that I could juggle [*SL laughs*] or would attempt to juggle as many things. He was far more at having a big front door—a lot in. And a small back door—as little out as you can have it. I'm a big front door, but I let more out than he did because I juggle too many balls and am not the detail that he is. And consequently, he focused more in it. He could not—like I was tellin' you, ambiguity? He couldn't function if he had ten things goin' and couldn't pay attention but to five of 'em and there were five being dropped by the wayside . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . or what have you. He couldn't handle it. It just would drive him nuts. I can handle it. And I can, and I look for the best ones, to a fault, and can live with the bad ones while they're goin' on at the same time, to give an idea between the two of us. [02:58:34] But his emphasis on the revenue and his real education to me on watchin' your expenses is why I'm sittin' here. The two, you don't see very often in the same folks. It is very difficult to be as progressive, and I could give you things that I'm doing right now out here. I just agreed to have Pacquiao, considered by many to be the most attractive fighter

in the world—I've never done a fight in my life. I just guaranteed him and Mayweather 25 million to fight in that new stadium.

SL: Golly.

JJ: To fight in that new stadium. And I really don't have a handle on how many and how much they'll pay to come in that new stadium. This is not Las Vegas.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: We do not know where the market is. You go with that. And the other thing is I don't have a handle—we just opened up seven months ago—on where your expenses are. Yet instinctively, I know that that will be a very significant feather in the cap of that new venue that I want to become the Madison Square Garden of the world.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And so, I'm interested in that type acti—Dad would have had to—forget the relative dollars but just to make the commi—he's got to have it buttoned down more than that, or he'd jump. And so, there you can say, "Well, you didn't have as hard a time as your dad did. You weren't in the Depression. You were just gettin' here. If you'd've been through that Depression, then you might have a little more appreciation for that." So my point is

I'm just givin' an acquai—and I can't tell you the times that I been makin' decisions, look over there and make a comparison between how he might've handled it and how am I to handle it. [03:00:43] When I signed Deion Sanders, that's been maybe fifteen years ago.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: I went back over to where our home was there in Little Rock—I mean, North Little Rock, out there in North Shore, because I was gonna guarantee him \$13 million bonus. And it was shortly after the Cowboys—about three years after the Cowboys—just to make sure that I hadn't just completely lost track of everything and just gotten completely distorted with numbers. I went over before—literally hours before I did it. Went over to Little Rock. Got out there at Adams Field. And where I grew up is almost right at the end of the runway, but it's on the other side of the river. Went around over there. Walked down the street that I—was there when I was in the ninth through the twelfth grade. I actually saw a telephone pole that I had my initials on, right down there near the little old bitty park that was down there. Walked down that street. Walked those same houses that I delivered circulars to and everything else. Got in there and went up to that house. It's run down compared the way it was

there—and kinda got it. Went back over and got on the plane, flew back to Dallas, and signed him. Said, "I don't have but one time to go around." So . . .

[03:02:04] SL: Well, where do you think you got that?

JJ: Well, I'm just saying I think that's a product of—I mean, I know this isn't true confession here we're talkin' about, but it's—I think it's just a product of having had parents and had a father that was, to a degree, a risk-taker. Might not have had the safety net that I've had.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And so, that might have been a big factor in his willingness to take risk. You say, "Well, where is your safety net?" Well, there was no safety net in buyin' the Cowboys, now. He was—it was beyond any family help if you'd screwed that up.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: Or a lot of the things I've done. But the point is that I think that I got to see at a very impactful age this type of behavior, to some degree, and this type of ambition and this type of, "Well, is it, you know—whoever made that worth that? How come it means that much that you would put yourself through that?" Well, somethin's got to cause you to want it or it mean that much to you. There's a lotta people that wouldn't give two—ten

dollars of their money to sign Deion Sanders and agonize through that right there. But I'm just saying it's got to have been made—in other words, the success has got to be big enough that you'll put—you'll do that. The accomplishment, whether it is or not, in your mind has gotta be big enough to make you do it. The reward has to be there for you to try to move the mountain, so to speak. I saw that growin' up. I saw that. I saw that how much that meant to my dad and mother to have success in certain ways. And then I saw it, and I saw it pay off, and I saw it rewarded when I was at the University of Arkansas when I played on those Razorback teams. And I saw what success could mean for you. And there's no doubt in my mind that that experience, that success, that bein' around the young Jim Lindseys, the young Frank Broyleses, and then enjoying real success. There's no question in my mind that that helped me have enough you-know-whats to step out there and go drill a well. [03:04:42] I mean, why—you know, basically, there has been a point for a long time here to where anything I want to lay down on or walk into as a house or drive as a car or fly as a plane, that's been with me for a long time. I don't have to do anything to get that. Well, then, why do you keep—why would you dare go out here [*SL laughs*] and build and spend a





billion two hundred million dollars, and by the way, do it right in the middle of what may be one of the biggest economic problem times in the history of this country? What would make you—what is it that you're tryin' to feel, or what is it that you're tryin' to do, to do that? Well, I think, candidly, I grew up with a level of that. Because there was a point that my father got to—and mother—where it sure wasn't about what they ate or the—how pretty a car they had. Mother had a little convertible we could put a pony in the back of.

[03:05:53] SL: *[Laughs]* Well, you know, your dad ha—put together the—what sounds like . . .

JJ: So I mean, if you're talkin' about ambition here . . .

SL: Well, and he saw the . . .

JJ: . . . and confidence.

SL: . . . he was thinking out of the box. He put all those items in the store, and it became a superstore, a forerunner to the superstores . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . that are everywhere now. And in some ways this stadium that you've put together is like a super stadium. I mean, I know there's things in it . . .

JJ: It is.

SL: . . . that—and things going on there that have not been tried before in a stadium.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: And you've . . .

JJ: Well, but you're right. [03:06:24] And so, the accomplishment—it goes back to maybe I said somethin' earlier in the first part of this thing. I can't tell you that goin' out and practicin' football, lookin' over across the way, and kids are goin' down the street in convertibles in the spring, and they're whistlin', and they're doin' everythin' in the book, and you're gettin' ready to go out there, this is spring practice, and you're gettin' ready to go out there, and in two hours you're gonna have the biggest headache, and you're gonna have the ba—worst feelin'. And in the meantime, you're gonna get bumped around pretty good, or you're gonna get—rather—let's say you didn't have to have it to pay your tuition. Well, you ask yourself, "Well, why?" Then you go to some big game as—and you hear all that fun goin' on and carryin' on, and you say, "Why?" Well, I'll tell you, though. If you should happen to nail it and be a part of winnin' that big game, and you walk out of that thing, that fe—that cocaine of havin' accomplished somethin' that's hard to do and nobody can do it, it's addicting. And—'cause long as we're ramblin' around

here, you ask yourself sometimes how come you see people that have had a lotta success and all of a sudden they lose it. It sure wasn't to get another car.

SL: No.

JJ: And then what? Well, it was a—it was acco—well, I think in their own way, don't get me wrong, it was more tangible and more a standard of living for my mother and dad than it was me, certainly early on for them. [03:08:19] But still, I think that that—when you see that rewarded—I was visitin' with this lady the other day. She's a psychologist. We have her for our players and anybody else, includin' me, that needs 'em. And we were talkin' about this player that had an issue. And I'd been rough on him. And she said, "Jerry, let me best describe him like this. If he's coloring, he's always colorin' out of the line. He's on the other side of the line, or he gets over the line. You got a bunch of guys back here that are perfect within the line. He's outside the line. And he's been rewarded for it. He is famous. He's got a heck of a—he's had success bo—on and off. He's talented. He's a—got a—highest IQ on the team. But he's been rewarded for bein' outside the line. When you've had those rewards and seen it happen, it's a difficult job to get him back in and colorin' inside the line 'cause they've had reward."

SL: Yeah.

[03:09:36] JJ: And so, all I'm saying is this doesn't happen if you sat there and watched your dad end his life because of failure.

SL: Right.

JJ: People don't—people are a little different in their attitude about things. So my point is that my background prior—as a young person and becoming an adult on the field and off the field and in—at levels of the rest of your life that you're thinkin' about, for whatever it was, I've seen it rewarded. I've seen some very—told no—and I've seen some very disappointing and very ?tough time?, but I have seen reward. And I got to see reward very early, and that's a product of what we been sittin' here talkin' about, of your parents and your deal. There's a difference if it spoils you. That you were part of some parents or a family or what have you that you had the silver spoon in your mouth. There's a difference. That might not cause you to go across the hall.

SL: That's right.

JJ: So that's why that anything about me, not only do you wanna have this, that's part of the way you go. But anything about me, I think, just has to reflect that the biggest thing that I carried to where I am now is I had huge influence and coaching.

[03:11:17] And now, by the way, I would search for it. I would read about people in the paper and go see 'em and not know 'em. And you'd be shocking as to their willingness to—if you call 'em up and say, "I live in such and such, and I wanna come talk to you." And I did it gettin' in the oil business, and we'd go talk to 'em. It's shocking at how people will really talk to you about . . .

SL: Open up.

JJ: Well, look at me. I'm sitting here talkin' . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . and openin' up. So you know, you've gotta have—somebody's gotta get the, you know, get the ball rollin', as far the will to go pursue it. [03:12:03] But I think, certainly, that we're gonna talk about before we're through, we'll talk about Gene and talk about her family. But we were very young. I was so young that—it was a very icy day in Danville, Arkansas, where my wife lived. I was—and so that Mother and Dad almost missed the wedding, but there were few Joneses there because they just couldn't get from the Little Rock area where they were up to the Danville area, which is halfway between Little Rock and Fort Smith. It's right outta Dardanelle.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And so, they couldn't get there. [03:12:43] Well, I was underage, and my parents had to sign for me to get married.

SL: Does that make you seventeen?

JJ: That woulda been seven—no, no, no. No, that would've made me—ah, it might've—it's—maybe it's eighteen, but it's right there. For a [*SL laughs*] ma—it's different for a boy than it is for a girl.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: Well, my mother-in-law [*SL laughs*], who was just as prominent as anything, she wasn't gonna have that wedding stopped, so that marriage license today has my parents' name on it, but she's—went down and signed it and filled out the marriage [*SL laughs*]*—and filled out the okay to go do it. And so, you know, actually, I've been now married almost forty-eight years. And it's illegal. I'm not really [SL laughs]—it's not official.*

SL: Oh gosh.

JJ: [*Laughter*] It started off in the veil of fraud.

SL: Oh man.

JJ: But the—but in visiting about me and talkin' about my story, beginning right then, I had serious involvement with my wife's family, father, mother, brothers, and were influenced a lot there. And so, apart from bein' married, my story needs to have that a

lot. He was a real great . . .

SL: Well, we're gonna get—we'll . . .

JJ: . . . he was a great friend of mine and a great proponent of mine and the—I honored him one time. He was a banker. And I honored him one time with my business.

[03:14:25] SL: Okay, now, this is Mr. Chambers?

JJ: John Ed Chambers.

SL: John Ed Chambers.

JJ: John Ed Chambers.

SL: Okay.

JJ: I wanna give you this so that you can see some background on him.

SL: Okay, good. Thanks.

JJ: Very prominent individual in the state, very prominent in banking.

SL: Kay.

JJ: And then his father was John Ed Chambers. And then Gene's other granddad was a guy named Eugene Sloan.

SL: Okay.

JJ: Very im—frankly, important people in the history of our state.

[03:14:52] And the—one story on him is I went to honor him with my business there at the bank. And I'm married to his

daughter. When we got married, he asked—I said, "Mr. Chambers, I think so much of you. What can I do? Tell me some—one thing I can do." He said, "Don't ever let Gene sign a note."

SL: M'kay.

JJ: She's never put her name on a note of any kind, anyplace. But so I had—it's not that I hadn't been to probably every bank in Missouri and part of Arkansas to borrow this 50, so I decided to honor him with my business and went in and borrowed \$50,000. And he basically gave the ca—and I explained to him why and where and what it was for. And he gave me encouragement. And it was, like, a one-year note. And I walked out and felt real good about it. Well, seven years later, I paid that note off. Seven. And I would work through the interest and that type deal. The note had been partially funded through the Worthen Bank in Little Rock . . .

SL: Kay.

JJ: . . . at that time. They miscued and sent the note, when I paid it off, sent it directly to me. Mr. Chambers had asked 'em not to do that. On the back of that note was his personal guaranty. Never told me.

SL: Yeah.



JJ: So . . .

SL: Now, his—was his—his bank is in Danville?

JJ: Danville. It's called the Chambers Bank holding company there.

[03:16:52] And his son is John Ed Chambers III, my wife's brother. But a part of this story needs to have them.

SL: Okay.

JJ: A part of it . . .

SL: We'll get to that.

JJ: . . . because it—you don't get here from there without, if you're me, without his counsel and, frankly, help along the way.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And . . .

SL: Now, how—is his son your age?

JJ: He's four years younger.

SL: Four years younger.

JJ: So that would make him sixty-three.

SL: Okay. Well, maybe we'll go talk to him, too.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: Get his story.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: Or . . .

JJ: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . he was real close to his dad and . . .

JJ: Yeah. The Sloans from up in the eastern part of the state are still very prominently represented in a major, big way up there.

SL: M'kay.

JJ: But his name was Eugene Sloan, her granddad there.

[03:17:47] But I think that if you take me—I want—I should talk about probably some—a little bit about my high school . . .

SL: Oh yeah.

JJ: . . . as we get into this.

SL: We're . . .

JJ: I have an annual . . .

SL: Yes.

JJ: . . . I have an annual. I've—if I can find it, I'll show it to you.

SL: Okay.

JJ: I have an English teacher.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And you know annuals. Annuals have, "You're gonna be the most successful" . . .

SL: That's right.

JJ: . . . "You're gonna be this" on it.

SL: That's right.

[03:18:25] JJ: I'll never forget. I walked in and had my English

teacher, who I liked . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . said, "Sign it for me." Right on my page, "What a waste."

SL: Oh. What was she sayin'?

JJ: Signed it right there.

SL: I mean, is . . .

JJ: It was a he.

SL: . . . she sayin' . . .

JJ: It was a he.

SL: Is he sayin . . .

JJ: It was a he. [03:18:46] He just said I didn't apply myself, and I didn't . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . I didn't give my education in high school . . .

SL: Its just due.

JJ: . . . the type of—and that's when I asked my mother and them why didn't they make me do my . . .

SL: I see.

JJ: . . . really be conscientious and say, "We're both valedictorians." And that's when he said, "Hey, I wanted you to have that work ethic more than that and wanted you to be involved in sports."

SL: Yeah.

JJ: I couldn't build a sentence when I went to University of Arkansas.

SL: Uh-oh.

JJ: I got all that straightened out fast and am proud of how I graduated there in a significant way. But I just had to get my mind—I realized when I went to school, I was—and I—it's business time. It's time to get down to business when I went to college. But that was in that annual there because I just [*unclear word*] . . .

SL: Well, we'll wanna scan that. You know, we're gonna want to—we need to scan as many old photographs as you can muster. I'm—we've got—the PR folks have sent a bunch of images about you and the Cowboys.

JJ: Yeah.

SL: But we don't really have anything about—from your grandparents or your parents or you as a child growing up or your sister. Any store images, early store images. Any farm images that you may have from your grandparents. All that stuff is—we usually scan that whenever we do these. We've usually got a couple of other people with us that are working on other . . .

JJ: Okay.

SL: . . . things while you and I are workin'. Also . . .

TM: We're comin' up—we're at about thirty minutes. We're comin' up on thirty minutes [*unclear words*].

SL: Yeah, I'm . . .

JJ: Okay.

SL: . . . I'm gonna kinda wind this up . . .

JJ: Let's do.

SL: . . . for you. The—yes, I'm gonna get you through high school. And usually I've—by now, we're pretty well through high school, but we hadn't really got to that yet.

JJ: I've wandered on you a lot here now.

[03:20:34] SL: I also wanna talk about this racial stuff and you growin' up with having blacks as friends after school and what you saw growin' up as far as the racial climate goes 'cause that's a—that's something that everyone has stories about and . . .

JJ: I'll tell you a story, a quick story, there.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And I'm—I just am so hard for you to deal with here on my stories but—I was a sophomore and, [19]57, and the coaches said in—and we had a huge—North Little Rock High School was the only high school in the town, just as Central was the only one at Central.

SL: That's right.

JJ: And so, this was the day that they tried to integrate Central. Well, the same day, they tried to integrate North Little Rock High School. And the—and we had a student body of almost three thousand people ourself. And the coaches had told us—and we, like, had almost two hundred kids out for football, for the team. And our coaches had said, "No matter what, tomorrow we don't know what it's gonna be there in the—at the front of the school. Anybody that's associated with this athletic program, you stay and come in from the back of the school. We don't want this—you bein' involved in any way. We've got—we're—we'd been together, now, since the first of August. The—of course, again, mischievous Jerry. [SL laughs] I'm a sophomore.

SL: Yeah.

[03:22:15] JJ: *TIME* magazine—*TIME* magazine has three or four guys that when the students came up to go in the deal, they've got—they're drawed back, and they are gettin' ready to hit 'em. This is North Little Rock, not Little Rock . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . when they went down the steps. This is *TIME* magazine. We have this.

SL: Okay.

JJ: We have . . .

SL: Good.

JJ: . . . this, okay?

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And—'cause it scared me to death ?right at the deal?. Not drawn back but behind—but you couldn't have here—was this boyish-lookin' knothed. I'm in the tenth grade, burr head, and I'm lookin' over shoulders, and I'm lookin' at—right there. I couldn't've been over three feet from it. You couldn't have gotten caught bein' where you weren't supposed to be [*SL laughs*] more than that right there, and it was the deal—and it looked like they'd almost drawn a circle around your head. Now, I wasn't, in fact, even, by—matter of fact, the people that were bein' that way, that literally, physically, with all of that gesturin', with all of that, weren't even students at all.

SL: Right.

JJ: They really were not a part of the school, but they were there.

SL: Yep.

JJ: But this knothed had my head stickin' up there [*laughter*] just bigger than a frog, just in time.

SL: Busted again.

JJ: But I don't mind tellin' you the coach almost threw me under

that high school and almost—he was so mad about it. But couldn't listen. Just had to go up there and see what was goin' on at the time.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: But those—that particular time, course, we did not have integration at North Little Rock High School and never, during my time there, ever closed the school.

SL: Right.

JJ: But it was—as you know, people of my age do have unbelievable stories of just how completely things were segregated.

[03:24:14] And I mentioned to you that, literally, I lived in the—I lived and our family lived in North Little Rock in the Afro American part of town.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And my uncle and his family were the only white family in one . . .

SL: In College Station.

JJ: . . . of the most complete Afro American areas that had more of the things that, crime and things like that, that were criticized there, too. And then, of course, the area that my dad grew up in were so predominantly black. And consequently, I have always had a very comfortable, easy chemistry with my players. Just—



it's just—it has always been just so natural. Now, I didn't play with Afro American players. That didn't come until well after I was gone in [19]64. But as far as being comfortable communication, bein' able to, frankly, be one of the boys. It was though it was planned. Just as comfortable as you can ever imagine. Barry Switzer's like that. Grew up at Crossett.

SL: Yep.

JJ: He's like that. And so, there's just—so anyway, that's—it's an area that we can . . .

SL: Yeah, we've gotta get into that . . .

JJ: . . . we can speak to, as far as the future's concerned . . .

SL: . . . and . . .

JJ: . . . I mean, as far as background is concerned. [03:26:04] I'm just—I don't wanna miss—there's the area for me that—I left right after my high school year and went to college. But that was exactly the time that my family moved from the Little Rock area, which was all that I knew as home—in the North Little Rock area—and my dad and mother and everybody moved to southwest Missouri. And my sister went to high school—finished high school up at Springfield, Missouri.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And so, that was a period of time for me that was unsettling

and, actually, really was a challenge for me to go off to school to begin with, but the fact that we had left, really, your roots, and where you'd grown up, was . . .

SL: Well, you didn't know what side of the bed to sleep on anymore.

JJ: . . . was even—exactly. Well, you got it. [*SL laughs*] You got it right there. Really that. And I had to have some nice, parental, fatherly tough love there, too, just to stay once you got there.

[03:27:18] The other thing is—don't let me get past in my conversation—is that they gave 60 scholarships a year to the University of Arkansas. I mean, a—on football. There were eleven of us left when I graduated. Eleven outta sixty. That was about par for the course. So that experience of seeing really topflight people and players, for whatever their reasons, movin' on down the line and never participating and never really, possibly, havin' the rewards. The real truth is the best players left. For whatever the reason, the best players left. It really was huge attrition. I'm not so sure that that wasn't a part of the plan is that—because—see now, you can't give but 30 scholarships, and you can't have but, literally, sixty scholarshipped at the same time. When I would go out for spring practice, we had thirteen teams of players.

SL: Golly.

[03:28:22] JJ: I—one year when I went out, it was my—at the end—it was the start of my second year. My jersey color was baby blue. When you play for a red team and you're baby blue, you're all the way down the pike. You talk about bein' told no. [Laughs] Baby blue. You can't get sent any far back in the pack than a baby blue. [Laughter]

SL: Oh, that's fun. That's funny.

JJ: So that period of time of . . .

SL: Yeah, I wanna get into the . . .

JJ: . . . it—I just—it just used to absolutely be so, so shattering to me to go down there and have been dropped from the third team as a sophomore, been dropped from the third down to the seventh, down to the eighth. And that would happen to you in spring practice or bowl practice or whatever. So that when I got to play and be a starter, I mean to tell you, that was a big thing to me. And it ultimately has become a—it became a big influential thing, as far as just life. I've often wondered—'cause the guys that you played with up there, boy, they were usually discipline driven, I mean, in their own way. Now, they were—quote—"the proverbial jock," but in their own way, they had championship qualities. [03:29:51] I've often wondered why such a low percentage don't have real success. Why? Because

relative to the population as a whole in school, these guys were really achievers. They were willin' to work. They were doin' a lotta things. What happened? And the facts are you can get the successful, real successful, athletes in a proverbial telephone booth and still make a call. There's just not . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . it just—where—what happens? What happened? Kept? Are you kept? Are you study halled? Are you gotten up in the mornin', made sure you make your class? Are you tutored? Yes, yes, yes. Are you all of those kinds of things? What does that do for you when you hit the world . . .

SL: Real world.

JJ: . . . out here?

SL: Yeah.

JJ: So there was a experience that I—that we were a part of.  
[03:30:54] 'Cause everybody's about the same. See, we—without integration there and the black athlete—most of us got a little spendin' money from home. It wasn't just all whatever you got. So you didn't need to hold up a liquor store.

SL: Right.

JJ: See?

SL: Yes.

JJ: You had—you really were usually sent—went home and got some clothes for Christmas.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And everybody's bout the same.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: There wasn't anybody that had a lot, but everybody was about the same. So you had a really great experience because you—all of you were kinda strivin' for the same thing. Now, a bunch of 'em fadin' off. Well, that whole area of my life—and I was redshirted, so I had five years. I was married two and a half of 'em. But that whole area of my life is important.

SL: Yeah, I wanna talk about . . .

JJ: When we get there.

SL: . . . not only the players and the friendships that you developed there but the coaches, all the different coaches and the trainer at that time.

JJ: Lon Farrell. Yep.

SL: And of course, Coach. We'll talk about Coach Broyles some.

JJ: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: But—and then after that, we're gonna start talkin' about your career, and I wanna know as much as you can tell me about your entrepreneurial endeavors . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . that you feel comfortable talkin' about.

JJ: Sure. Sure.

SL: And yes, we'll dive deeply into Gene's family, and we'll be set—we'll probably be settin' up to do somethin' with her, too.

JJ: It's been a huge—but her—and I've been hard, to some degree—I've been a little hard to, I'm sure, live with. [*SL laughs*] But—because I've just traveled a lot to make it work the way I wanted it to work. [03:32:50] But her interest in sports and then her—and she loves sports—and her—but—not willingness but getting involved. She's tremendously, tremendously involved. As involved as the ch—as my children are, in terms of anything that we've accomplished here. But there was such a meld here of common interests that involved sports. She hit eighteen straight free throws in the—she hit eighteen straight free throws in a state championship ball game. And she's a—instead of shooting like most girls do, she was a shoulder jump shot.

SL: Oh, so she's an athlete.

JJ: Yet a Miss Arkansas.

SL: All right. Well, definitely, we're . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . gonna—I . . .

JJ: So you're gonna enjoy . . .

SL: . . . she's gonna have to suffer sittin' across from me, too.

JJ: . . . you're gonna enjoy meetin' Gene . . .

SL: Okay. That's good.

JJ: Yeah, she's, if I must say so, she's a knockout.

SL: Well, that's great. Okay.

JJ: But she loves sports.

SL: Two other things. Joy is gonna come in here as soon as we're done, and she's probably gonna have some—a few clarifications to ask, if you can clarify, that might be a spelling. It might be a place. It, you know . . .

JJ: Yes.

SL: . . . probably a relative or—this is part of the transcription process, and it . . .

JJ: Yes, okay.

SL: . . . helps us get that done. [03:34:19] The last question I wanna ask you today is who is it that's givin' you the whuppin's now that you used to get? I mean, who gets mischievo—who ta—who puts you back in line?

JJ: Media.

SL: Media? [*Laughs*]

JJ: Seriously. Seriously. Media.

SL: Really?

JJ: You study this thing a little bit. For twenty years I haven't had a honeymoon here.

SL: Yeah, I know that.

JJ: And I'm easy to criticize. Don't—I'm my own, and always have been, my own general manager. In other words, I pick the players, and I pick the coaches. The traditional way is for the owner to hire a general manager and then that's done right there. [03:35:01] You really set yourself up [*SL laughs*] because the game itself is a mirror of what's off the field. And that is, there's a low percentage of serious success. Most of it is disappointment. You—the very game is that. But that success is just absolutely elating, and that's what you do it for. Consequently, if you have what we have and cherish, and that is passionate, involved fans, and we are the—we think those Razorbacks have involved fans. We have more of them, more involved, than any sports team in the United States. And we have the highest viewership. We have the most critical. And I am a lightning rod. And that has enhanced at least one thing—the entertainment value for our fans—that I'm such a lightning rod . . .

SL: Yeah.



JJ: . . . for criticism. And so, that's where it comes. I mean, I do—  
and am sensitive about criticism and on a personal basis.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: Very sensitive. I'm told and people have written that I am the  
best at understanding why it's there. And I've had people that  
just have absolutely have embarrassed and kill me. And if they  
lose a brother, on my plane, fly 'em home for the family. And  
I'm talkin' about writers and media.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: And mainly because one is one, not—and by the way, knowin'  
full well that they gain—they can't resist feedin' . . .

SL: The machine.

JJ: . . . feedin' the machine. And if—it's best that it's got some  
spice and controversy to it [*SL laughs*] than it is if it's positive.  
Or not positive—it can be positive, but it's gotta have some spice  
to it. Well, I get all that. And I get the value of all of the  
visibility and publicity. But that's who takes me to the  
woodshed, and it hurts. And it can really hurt. And it can be  
damning. It can damage.

SL: Sure.

JJ: You're sitting here building a stadium like we're buildin', and all  
of a sudden, you have adverse things bein' said. You make

yourself wonder what's that doin' to somebody you might want to sell your suites to or sell sponsorships to or that type of thing.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: So it can get over into that area. But, boy, that's the woodshed right there. [03:38:02] The other woodshed is there's a lot of pressure. Lots of pressure of makin' a right decision on a player, makin' a right decision on a coach, makin' right decisions around here. There's nothing like financial pressure. Financial. That other stuff is child's play. Readin' about how poor you are as a manager or how poor you are at this, how poor you are at that, and why don't they get somebody else, that's nothin' compared to the worry you have if you think you've messed up in the financial area . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . if you're in my shoes. If you're in my shoes. That's when you would've said, "What were you thinking?"

SL: Yeah.

JJ: To be—quote—"doin' the kinds of things you're doing," for what? The goal of winning and then all of a sudden to have dropped the ball back over there. That's when you just—you got lost. That's why I went back over to North Shore . . .

SL: North Shore.

JJ: . . . and walked that street where I grew up. That's where the financial—and financial pressure will just—as the old—as you hear about football—fear makes cowards of us all on the football field. Well, financial pressure will make that and other things out of you, too. And I have such sympathy for it. And when I see it—see it in people, read about it, see it happenin' to people. And I have a lot of empathy for that right there. [03:39:41] So those two things. And the areas that I'm involved in, if you—your friends can't help you anymore. Relatives can't help you anymore. When you mess up with enough involved, then it's all business.

SL: Yeah.

[03:40:00] JJ: The other thing is the higher profile you got, the more that it's tempting for people to pull the rug out from under you.

SL: Sure. Easy target.

JJ: And they kinda enjoy that. And so, you have to operate with a—more caution or you have to get what you want done with the idea in mind that you're marked.

SL: You've got a margin . . .

JJ: Yep. It's one thing . . .

SL: . . . a built-in margin.

JJ: . . . to have success financially . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . like being honored as a good businessperson or somethin', and I'm tryin' to diminish it. But on the way here, I have really pushed to build visibility, if you think about it.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: Well, hello, stumpin' your toe in many areas of your life when you got that kind of visibility. And so, that could be a hell of a woodshed comeupsmanship, right there.

SL: Yeah.

[03:41:05] JJ: If you got out here, well, there, I mean, we—you see—it happened to—certainly high-profile people, but we're seein' a lot of it with the politicians, the Tiger Woodses and the people like that. And I'm not sayin' it's that, but still it can be that.

SL: Once you're high profile, your . . .

JJ: You . . .

SL: . . . privacy's pretty much gone.

JJ: Well, the privacy's gone, but more importantly is your tolerance for your behavior has got a narrow window. Because you'll get really—really, they'll—they can take what was a misdemeanor and make a serial killer out of you.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: Quick. And so, that's the woodshed at this stage. And again, you look around, and you have—I have family, grandchildren. I have, obviously, children that I work with. And you would say, "Man, that—you've just—you've—we've gotta get this straightened up, or we've gotta be sensitive about that particular area." It's one thing, now, and I've had 'em cry when they're criticizin' me for football decisions and screwin' up the Cowboys on the field. But it's another thing if you've got off out in the areas—what if I'm buildin' this stadium out here two years ago when banks in this country were walkin' ever loan commitment, everything they had. I had three thousand people out here working, and I was already about 250 million in 1.2 billion prospect. What if I'd've had to say, "Stop." It's one thing for me to say, "Stop," if I were out here drillin' wells and had projects over here in south Texas or if I were building a building downtown someplace. But when you've asked for and gotten the visibility of the Dallas Cowboys and you say, "Stop," get ready. It's gonna be everywhere.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: So you've created the need to have to—you know, just because risks are risks and things in that area and, plus, it's always

gonna be interpreted in a negative light. Always, in terms of if it's half—got criticism . . .

SL: Right.

JJ: . . . criticism at all.

SL: Well, it's easier.

JJ: So that's it. You asked the last question. I've spent an hour answerin' it, but that's it.

SL: Okay.

JJ: Yeah, and it's the media. It's the public aspect of my life, and then second would be the pressure of not havin' a—a financial thing that could create a lot of pressure for you.

SL: Okay. All right. Let's stop tape.

[03:43:55] TM: What about . . .

SL: Let's stop . . .

TM: . . . real quickly, I mean, just end on a little different note.

What about this—you're in the middle of the playoffs, and how's that feel? I mean, to be where you are, and . . .

JJ: Okay.

TM: . . . that's gotta feel pretty good.

JJ: It's surreal for me to think that it's been as long as it's been since we haven't been in the playoffs. I can't . . .

SL: It is.

JJ: . . . I can't imagine it. When I was young, a boy, I could play for—all day, almost literally, by myself. And I could imagine hitting home runs. I could imagine scorin' touchdowns. So I have a good ability to overlook reality at certain points. So that now that we're back in the playoffs and goin' up here to beat Minnesota, I'm just gonna forget that it's been as long as it's been since we've been to the playoffs [*SL laughs*] and think we've been doin' this every year [*laughter*] and just smile and feel good about things . . .

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

JJ: . . . and forget the reality of it that we've had as long as it's been. You coulda told me 12 years ago that we wouldn't have been and won two or three more Super Bowls, and I'm not tryin' to be cavalier about it, but I woulda probably said, "I'll bet you the team" . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . "that we will have done better than that." But it's been—now, I'm not gonna—it's been more difficult. It's like Jell-O. It's hard to get your hands around it. [03:45:25] I'm not askin' for sympathy, but it is—consequently, it's great to not just technically be in the playoffs but have the team that we've got that's got a chance if we win two more games to be in the Super

Bowl. Now, that's exciting.

SL: It is exciting.

JJ: That's exciting. And so, consequently, this has been a great day for me to sit here with you. There's a lotta days that I'd be so [SL laughs] nervous or not as—not feelin' as good about things, and it'd be hard for me to sit here and have this much patience—or not patience but just this much reflection back on time.

SL: Well, I hope it . . .

JJ: Kinda need things to be goin' at least a little positive to really reflect back and be self effacing, to some degree, or remember back some things that weren't funny then but that are now.

[SL laughs]

[03:46:17] SL: Well, Jerry, I really appreciate your time today. I hope that in some way we've made it a good day for you.

JJ: It has been. Yeah. No, I'm surprised. I'm surprised that we've gone—that I've gone this long, and I appreciate you doin' it.

[03:46:30] And I see—I do—I wanna try to put together somethin' here that—'cause you said something that really meant a lot to me, and that is that you are going to get to have this, and your family's gonna get to have it, too. Now, they could go to the school and see it, but they're gonna get to have it, too.



SL: They'll have copies.

JJ: That got a lot of my interest right there . . .

SL: Well, it's . . .

JJ: . . . in terms of really getting in here and making this like it would be if they were sitting over here and sayin', "Dad, you know, that story and that story about that and whatever?" That would be a heck of an advantage for anybody to have heard all these experiences . . .

SL: Well, I may have to . . .

JJ: . . . but we're—you're gettin' 'em regurgitated . . .

SL: Okay.

JJ: . . . through me.

SL: Okay.

JJ: I mean, I'm into this thing, and we gotta get into it next time we meet. I've gotta get into it like that again, and I will probably have 90 percent of the ones they were wantin' me to tell.

[03:47:25] SL: So do you think you want me to call Marylyn, say, after the Super Bowl?

JJ: Let's see what—I might see what—what's next week like for you?

SL: Well, I'd have to look.

JJ: That's too early.

SL: But I . . .

JJ: That's too early. That's too early. Then . . .

SL: It may not be too early. It may be perfect.

JJ: I mean, this is a feel-good time.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And this is when I need to be doin' this.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And—but next week, you know, the longer we can feel good, then the more days we've got to . . .

SL: Okay. Well, let me—I can . . .

JJ: . . . probably talk about this.

SL: . . . I can call Marylyn tomorrow, and I'll give her my calendar. I'll let her know what we can do next week.

JJ: Okay, well, let's just see what we've got, and you know, I'm gonna be in Arkansas for that February dea

SL: February 12.

JJ: For that twelfth.

SL: That's right.

JJ: I wanna look at that and see if I could do anything for you there on your sche—you're there in Little Rock, aren't you?

SL: No, we're in Fayetteville.

JJ: Fayetteville, okay.

SL: Yeah. But we'll meet you . . .

JJ: Well, I may be . . .

SL: . . . wherever.

JJ: Shoot. When was it that—well, let's look at the calendars.

SL: When you gonna be back up in Springfield?

JJ: That's what I'm sayin'. Let's look at calendars.

SL: Okay.

JJ: And that's a good idea, too. That's a good thought, too.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: Springfield. Real good thought.

SL: That . . .

JJ: A lot of . . .

SL: It works for us.

JJ: . . . atmosphere there—I mean, a lot of what we've got here.

And [*unclear words*].

SL: And you know, also, gathering up the old photographs, all that old stuff. More of the . . .

[03:48:48] JJ: We're fortunate that I've kinda been involved the way we've been the last twenty years. This would be hopeless if I hadn't, but I've got a lotta good stuff . . .

SL: Well, let us preserve it.

JJ: . . . over the years, and I've had a lot of a—done a very good

job, I think, of aggregating the stuff before the Cowboys.

SL: Yeah. Good.

JJ: Yeah, we've got—I can't believe we've got the stuff we've got since the Cowboys. We've had—I've never had a time when you didn't have still guys, for instance. There hadn't hardly been a tea party that we hadn't had still guys poppin' 'em right and left. We've got thousands and thousands and thousands that I wouldn't take anything for it . . .

SL: Yeah.

JJ: . . . of those kinds of pictures. And of course, we got a lotta this, too, but—since the Cowboys. That's all Cowboys.

SL: Yeah.

JJ: I'm tryin' to think. I've got a heck of a tape that has some Razorback stuff on it.

SL: Okay.

JJ: I had it made and given to all of the teammates that I have.

SL: Okay. We'd love to have that. We'll—and we'll preserve this stuff. I mean, this . . .

JJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . this stuff is not gonna go away. We'll . . .

JJ: I've got some . . .

SL: . . . we'll keep it.

JJ: . . . we've got some stuff at the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame that's—some interesting things.

SL: Okay.

JJ: Okay, well, we've got . . .

SL: We've got some more work to do.

JJ: Yeah.

[03:50:13 End of interview]

[Transcribed and edited by Pryor Center staff]