**Name of Project: R.O.O.T.S of Sunflower County**

**Date of Interview: June 22, 2016**

**Location of Interview: Indianola, Ms**

**Name of Interviewer(s): Nick Warren**

**Name of Interviewee(s): Lindsey Ray**

**Name of file used for transcription** (audio and/or video file): Video File (Lindsey Ray)

[0:05] NW: Tell me a little bit about yourself. Just your name and give a statement, describe yourself as a person and everything like that.

[0:12] LR: Well my name is Lindsey Ray and I’ve been a deputy with the Sheriff’s department here in Sunflower County for 3 ½ years. And uhm I patrol out on the street and I’m here at the court house. Uhm, a lot of things that I would like to see changed is you know we have a lot of homeless people and I don’t like that. I would like to see a change in that. I would like to see more business come like the way it was when I was coming up. Because the whole Indianola area downtown was together. It was stores you know and different places that’s not open now. We had a supermarket up here piggly wiggly but it closed down and it needs a whole lot of work to see it get up and going and I’m hoping that that happens. Uhm, I hoping to see a lot more houses built because a lot of people don’t have places to live. You know and some of them have like shabby houses and stuff. The streets and stuff here in Indianola are not altogether. The way it was a long time ago there were nice streets. And I would like to see the roads and stuff get re-done and everything.

[1:35] NW: Can I ask you a question? Describe the youth that are here in Indianola Mississippi and sunflower county. The kids, I know they come through the court house and everything.

[1:46] LR: The children around here they have no leadership. They have nothing to do, nowhere to go when school is out. So they tend to get into a lot of trouble and I don’t like that. And I would like to see someone be able to take control of the youth here. And give them something to do that’s productive. You know what I’m saying? To keep them out of trouble. A lot of times it’s not where you go or who you know it’s what you do. We have youth court. When I was coming up we didn’t have youth court. Youth court monitors our youth. Which is really… It’s not really doing any good as far as the youth the way I would want to see it be done. To give them a sense of change uhm a better way of living. to keep them occupied. We don’t have any programs for the youth and I don’t’ like that. We need to have more games…

[2:56] NW: Something to do around Indianola, MS.

[2:56] LR: yeah un huh. Then just walking being on the corner.

[2:59] NW: Yeah I understand.

[3:01] LR: Anymore questions?

[3:03] NW: Uhm, Anything you want to suggest that we haven’t asked?

[3:06] LR: No you’ve done a good job asking questions and I’ve done a good job with talking you know have you here all day.

[3:15] NW: One other thing I wanted to say. Describe your childhood. How you grew up then now kids growing up around here. Describe your childhood and something that went on in your home.

[3:25] LR: My childhood was happy. It was fun. You could out and play and you didn’t have to worry about getting shot or getting jumped on or getting introduced to drugs stuff like that. Now days it’s not like that. If you don’t hold on to your children you’ll lose them out here in the streets. Cause you know they got the little gangs and all that other stuff.

[3:58] NW: If you had one powerful thing to say about your mother what would you say about her?

[4:00] LR: My mother did a great job with me. Because if it wasn’t’ for her I wouldn’t be who I was today.

[4:10] NW: If you were the president, What would you want to change?

[4:15] LR: I promise you don’t want to know (laughs). I promise you don’t want to know.

[4:17] NW: Can you tell us a little bit? Just give like one thing you would change that you see around Sunflower County. One thing you see-

[4:20] LR: Poverty.

[4:24] NW: That’s powerful thing.

[4:31] LR: The homeless. People that don’t have.

[4:32] NW: Yes ma’am. Give back to people.

[4:34] LR: Yeah because the way I’m looking at I the rich get richer and the poor stay- they never get helped. Because of the way that it is now days.

[4:47] NW: Yes ma’am.

[4:47] LR: (Heavy sigh)

[4:50] NW: You’re right.

[4:52] LR: I hate stuff like that I really do. If I could change what’s going on. There wouldn’t be homeless people. If I could help it.

[4:57] NW: Yes ma’am.

[4:59] LR: There wouldn’t be poverty. The United States has so much good in it but we don’t get any good out of it. See what I’m saying?

[5:08] NW: Right. Yes ma’am.

[5:10] LR: We make our own money. We grow food. I mean we can build houses. We can do all of that. So why do we have homeless people? Why do we have people who don’t have food that’s starving? You see what I’m saying?

[5:24] NW: Yeah, you right. That’s a good question.

[5:25] LR: I just don’t understand.

[5:28] NW: Yeah.

[5:30] LR: I don’t like that. That’s the way it is though. If I could change one thing it would be poverty.

[5:45] NW: Living in sunflower county with the changes any everything like that. How was it when you were growing up? I think I already asked this but how it is now? You know what I’m saying? How the changing with the streets, you know? The places-

[5:44] LR: It has changed- it has changed tremendously since I’ve grown up. Well when I was growing up they had the black side and the white side which is basically still the same now but they don’t really say anything about it. But if you go on basically the white side, it’s a better community than the black. So I mean, but the mayor could change a lot of stuff if he wanted to because I mean the roads are bad and you know what I’m saying? I mean it’s terrible. Uhm, the houses are terrible. But on the white folks side- yes it’s beautiful over there. It’s clean and everything. The garbage is empty when it’s supposed to be.

[6:33] NW: So we need to come together as a unit and change things. I understand what you’re saying.

[6:38] LR: If we don’t come together, nothing will be accomplished.

[4:40] NW: Right. You’re right. I understand what you’re saying.

[6:42] LR: If we don’t coming together then nothing will be accomplished. One thing I will say and I’m aware of is that the whites gone help the whites. We not gone help one another. That’s where we keep falling at.

[6:50] NW: Right. I understand. I like that.

[6:52] LR: I’m serious. I’m serious. If we could come together and stop bickering over ‘oh he got a new car’, ‘oh he got a brand new house’. Those things are maternal- you know they don’t mean anything. See what I’m saying?

[7:06] NW: Especially young people.

[7:07] LR: Exactly. I mean you can’t take none of that stuff with you. We need to come together as a community. As one people. Black, white, Indian, Chinese, you know? And we need to try to make a change for the better. If we make a change for the better it’ll help our youth. Because they go one what they see us do. See what I’m saying. I mean my kids come up behind me to see what I’m doing. And they want to do what I do, but I don’t want them to do what I do. I don’t want them to be a LEO, a Law Enforcement Officer. Because it’s not good pay.

[7:46] NW: Yes ma’am. I understand. I understand. I heard you say you had children. Describe your children and how successful they are like their mother and one thing you would say about your children that would uhm change things?

[8:05] LR: Well, the way it is today, when my kids were coming up I beat butt. Now they have youth court. The difference between then and now. If you do anything that’s not dignified I’m saying to your child, they can lock you up. They not gone lock me up. See mine are grown. And they know what I say do that’s what you gone do. I always say birds of a feather flock together. So if you’re dealing with a bad crowd, where you think you gone end up at?

[8:48] NW: In a bad crowd, you right?

[8:52] LR: Right. In the penitentiary.

[8:50] NW: So you raised your kids the right way?

[8:55] LR: I had to because my mother raised me the right way and she beat butt too. You know what I mean? If it wasn’t for what she did by being all those beatings because I was terrible. I was terrible.

[9:09] NW: for real? Yea, we’re teenagers now.

[9:09] LR: I’m not mean I just don’t smile a lot. You know I really don’t too much hardly deal with people because people befriend you for a reason.

[9:19] NW: To take advantage of you?

[9:20] LR: To see what they can get out of you. What you can do for them? And if you can’t do either or then they don’t have no need for you. I’m serious. If you can’t do anything for me, or help me do something that’s not right – they are not your friends because you think that they are your friends. They befriend you for a reason. And I had a hard time trying to get my son to learn that. But once he did he found that what I’m telling you – friends, I mean a lot of times people say ok this is my friend. That f does not mean friend it means foe. It means enemy. That’s what an enemy is a foe. So you got to figure out which f that the guys that are befriending you—really.

[10:08] NW: They made a song about foes. Like friends turn into foes.

[10:12] LR: Yeah, find out what that f really mean. When a person walks up— ‘what’s up man’. Try to find out what they really really want because it’s not to be your friend. If they can’t lead you left, they definitely not gone lead you right. That’s why I don’t fool with nobody. I don’t deal with nobody because over my lifetime I haven’t always been the goody two shoes. So, I had to go through a few bumps and bruises to find out about – see what I’m saying?

[10:48] NW: About life?

[10:51] LR: I had to find out about the friends and the foes. You have to be careful. You have to be careful. I’m serious and you say ‘you look mean’. No, I just don’t fool with people. Now I’m gone speak and talk to you but to hang out—when people come to my house I’m outside. You aint coming in. because they come in and the look around and they scope out your house. And who do you think you get robbed by?

[11:15] NW: Your friends or your foes?

[11:22] LR: Which ever one you want to call them. Your enemy is not gone bother you because they don’t know anything about you. It’s that friend.

[11:33] NW: Yes ma’am. You have a very great powerful story ma’am . I really loved what you’ve been saying. You said some very interesting things. I loved it. I just want to say I appreciate the time you gave to us to interview you. I was pretty scared when I came up to you—you were like ‘ whoa I don’t know’.

[11:51] LR: No, I just—

[11:54] NW: Well you know the quietest people have the most powerful thing on the inside to say and I really likes that about you.

[12:00] LR: Thank you.