



like right here, down here in Midway. There's Black people and white people. Black people can organize and then white people want to come and we can organize together on how we want to live. And as time goes on, you will see more and more of that.

TFSR: Can you talk a bit about the community that you live in and some of the history of resistance there? Your interactions with the authors of of *Dixie Be Damned* and other essays that you talk about are really impressive.

MK: Well, I live on the coast of Georgia. And during the reconstruction, during the Civil War, this was a rice plantation area. And you had rice plantations up and down the coast of Georgia and up and down the coast of South Carolina. But even before the Civil War, there was a shift in the south, where big money was invested in cotton, cotton don't grow well down here. If you look at the Black Belt, that is a demographic area where there were large black populations before the migration to the north, you don't find the coastal areas included except in various places. But you'll find the use of those plantations in central Georgia, central Alabama, up and down the Mississippi on both sides and up into Western Tennessee and Eastern Arkansas. That's where, in North Carolina, South Carolina. But when the Civil War broke out, the market and rice were already gone. So the rice plantations don't look like the cotton plantations, the rice plantations were left alone and they worked down here. The owners only came as traders who actually traded that it didn't last so long during the Reconstruction. People just claimed the land for themselves. And then they didn't give any kind of acknowledgment to white ownership. And they just claimed that, that's why when Sherman came down, he issued Field Order #15, and he said that all of the land, from the ocean to 31 to 32 miles inland couldn't be claimed by the emancipated slave as their own. So they did.

So as the country grew and developed, there was an erosion of that ownership of land, but people held on for a while. I was born down here. When my parents came from central Georgia... And by the way, these people voted. They couldn't run for office in the South, because the state government didn't allow that. But they could vote for white people.

So I had all kinds of Gullah Geechee communities and all kinds of African retentions. And all kinds of independent, autonomous institutions. So that's who they were. The Geechee had a reputation of being a rice-eating, fish-eating, mean, recalcitrant, disagreeable person, short, black. And those are the people I grew up around. So it has a collective history.

