

Interview Log

Interviewee: Stevon Sample **Tape #:** MAAF/KF/VA/FTI/17/211/302

Interviewer: Kelly Feltault **# of Tapes:** 1 of 1

Date: 1/17/98 **# of Sides:** 2

Location: Exmore VA; in Stevon's living room

Topic: cartooning; chicken plant; political cartoons for plant; relation to personal life;

Corresponding Photography Log #: MAAF/KF/VA/PSI/17/271-285

Comments: File name: Vaft2l 1.doc. See Fieldnotes: FNO1.17.98. *Italics* indicate emphasis; [brackets indicate additional information not on the tape or asides by fieldworker]; "quotations indicate direct transcription."

I met Stevon Sample at the VA public forum for the project on December 6. He talked about his drawings and cartoons in relation to his work, religion and personal experience as an African American man. The cartoons related to his personal life reminded me of the many African American men that I worked with in the Richmond Detention Center as they awaited trial. All drew cartoons depicting the situations they were in and the choices they faced at the time of the crimes they committed. For them it was a personal yet community recognized form of communication and expression. Though Stevon made different choices in his life and does not have a criminal record, he made the same choices about how to express these feelings. I liken his cartoons to tagging or graffiti art.

BEGIN SIDE A

[slight banging around; but good quality sound; Stevon has a very deep voice]

BIO: name, date, born in Northampton county; began drawing as little child; began with cartoons and comic strips; God given gift; discovered God had given it to him; talks about first strip he did; copied some things at first; Peanuts his favorite;

OCC: 27 years old; worked as potato grader; worked since he was 13 or 14; works at Perdue now as Processing meat;

Subject MATTER: talks of some of the meanings of the images he likes to draw; comic book he recently completed; started it before living with Lena-his aunt who has raised him; based on his life experiences; early childhood; abused kid when little;

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Message the youth comics sends; issues he deals with in these; peer pressure; teen pregnancy;

Inspirational origins of his work; religion as major influence in his life; religious practices; done some work for the church: nativity scenes; etc;

Describes church services; describes church; only 3 on shore: Salisbury, Onley and Millsboro

Comic for Gizzard Gazette; newsletter committee member and did cartoons about working there; made jokes about plant and bosses; no longer doing it; explains jokes; dealt with safety issues at first;

Mural he painted in the front hallway of the entry to the plant; explains the entire process of what happens at the plant; talks about the entire process; what he does in his area;

Danger at work; changes they've made; when he thinks up ideas for cartoons at work

Starts explaining two characters in new cartoons; Sir Galahad and Taj Mahal; two opposite characters thinks they reflect life;

Materials; he uses; portraits; business he wants to start through his drawing and graphics;

Personal narrative about youth camp he attended; all kids had been in similar circumstances as Stevon when young; abused, etc; discovered several did cartoons and they all shared their work; story of one guy he became friends with;

Super hero theme in their cartoons; but based on their experiences; interpreting pop culture through his cartoons;

Comics were way to escape situation;

Learning about religion and Jesus; Lena taught him; being made fun of when in high school; when he got saved;

END SIDE A

BEGIN SIDE B

WAVES: group on shore for artists and crafts groups; small business operators;

Festivals and art shows he's attended; experiences with that;

Portraits he's done for community members;

Grant that he got for his work; people who've helped him along the way; places to show on the shore;

END TAPE