

# PARENTING DECOLONIZED PODCAST



## **Parenting Decolonized Podcast EP 60: Rethinking Genealogy & Releasing Ancestral Shame with Walter English**

Yolanda Williams: (00:00:00) Welcome to the Parenting Decolonized podcast. I'm your host Yolanda Williams, entrepreneur, conscious parenting coach and single mom to one amazing toddler. I'm on a mission to help shine the light on how colonization has impacted the black family structure. If you're a parent that wants to learn how to decolonize your parenting, you're in the right place. Let's do this.

Welcome back to the Parenting Decolonized Podcast. I'm your host Yolanda Williams, and today I have with me Walt English from the Brister English Project. Thank you so much for joining me today.

Walter English: Thank you for having me.

Yolanda Williams: I'm so excited to have this conversation, especially now where I'm at in my life trying to really reconnect with my ancestral roots as Walt is someone that I found via TikTok and he does genealogy work. Can you explain what the Brister English project is? And we're going to talk about it more in depth after that.

Walter English: The goal with the Brister English project is to show American descendants of chattel slavery, a history that is more than just slavery and dreams. So what we do is we do about 20 hours' worth of genealogy work free for black people to help them discover their ancestors, discover their roots here that has been hidden or not talked about for so long. And I do it for free. I have a long list right now, but we're working,

Yolanda Williams: It's beautiful work and the fact that you do it for free is even more amazing, especially since we should have this for free as reparation.

Walter English: Yes, 100%. I'll say when people donate especially folks of the light at you, it is reparations for research. Like just is to know where we come from is so big and I don't think a lot of people understand until it happens.

Yolanda Williams: That is like the path I'm on for a long time I resisted because I was just like, well I don't want these. It was for me, the DNA test was the first thing that I was like I wanted

to figure out my African roots and I was resisting because I was like, these places are, they can sell your information, blah, blah, blah. And then I was just like, you know what? I need to know. And I got my results back and it said 59% Nigerian. And I think there's what's, because they're not in front of me, Somalian and something else, right? But 26% European, I almost lost my mind. I lost my mind. I was not happy about that. And so when you start to look at these, especially something like that, that 26% I was pissed off because I was just like, we know what that means, right? We know I don't have to be a quarter European. It means that there's absolutely some rape happening in my lineage. And so it's scary for me to even think about doing something I don't necessarily want to face right to that. However, it is part of my history. So embracing all parts of our history to me is a huge deal.

Walter English: A 100%.

Yolanda Williams: How did you start this for yourself? Like is something that you were really interested in? Like how did this all start?

Walter English: I started researching my family in 2011 and I didn't know much. My parents were still alive during the time or at least my dad, my dad was, and he never talked about the family. My mom never talked about her side of the family. My grandma's a 100 years old, she's still here and she doesn't talk about it. I understand during the times and stuff. So I said, you know what? I want to look and I don't want to bother them and like trigger anything because they grew up in the south during segregation. And so I'm like, I'm going to just do it myself. I started back then ran into, I didn't have all the resources I have now, so I ran into a lot of roadblocks a few years back, I want to say about 7, probably 7, 6, 7 years ago, a friend, a historian friend of mine said that she has every bit of resource that she can help me out.

And so we kind of tagged teamed it and I found out a lot about my family. In 2021 I found a photo of my grandpa Robert, my great-grandfather, Robert English. Never seen him before. Like my dad always spoke about how his father was very dark and he said his daddy probably could have been the same way, never seen a photo of him. So once I saw that photo, I remember pacing around like my living room for like an hour just in shock. And after that, that's when I found the slave schedule with Brister on it. And then I found a slave ship manifest and I'm like, I want to give this information out to people good and the bad if you want to know everything. I wanted to share that with the community and I just know how much it costs to hire professional genealogists. Certain websites start off at \$3,000 and I don't believe, like you said, black people should pay for that. And so that's what kind of started it. I just, I saw those photos, saw all the history. I did the DNA test afterwards. Met a cousin, I met a few cousins actually at this point. So just that hit me having that feeling, I just want to share that, share that with my people.

Yolanda Williams: It's beautiful too because like you said, I don't come from a family that talk about these things. I have pictures right? But my family does (00:05:00) not talk about anything and I really am interested in, my grandmother's still alive. She just celebrated her 86th birthday. But my father's side I don't know anything about at all. I was told that even that he's adopted. So there's a big blank there. I don't know anything about that side of the family. Even on my mom's side of the family, I don't know anything really past my grandmother. And it's so funny because when I did the DNA test, I've been told our whole lives like, oh yeah, you know that whole thing, you know, black folks talking about we have Native American. And I was like no, we are definitely not. Now we have Native American lineage 6%, just 6%. Actually it may be 2.6% actually it's very small percentage.

But because of the way my family looks, it's assumed that it is Native American but it's not. And so this is European, that's what it is being a quarter being something like 26%, that's a large percentage of your DNA and that's going to come out in the way that our hair looks and our skin color looks and everything else. That's what that is. It's not native. And that's a hard pill for a lot of people to swallow. And I think that's the fear for some people getting into this. What am I going to find? How can people think about history in the way or genealogy I should say, in a way that sort of helps them get rid of some of the shame that they may feel as descendants of enslaved Africans in this country.

Walter English: It's a hard pill, like the kind of swallow where I tell people when looking back in history, you say you're 26%, I'm 10%, I'm mostly Scottish, I'm 10% or 9% Scottish now. Like I think 1% something Irish fell off at some point, but 90% of me is all over Africa. But that 10% and comes from my mom's side of the family, it's the Petersons. But they descended from McKibbon (ph) and that's a Scottish last name, and very Scottish, during my research and I found out the man who enslaved my family on that side was Scottish, was Thomas McKibbon. But not only that, when looking at the records and I think that when we view history at least, especially doing genealogy, you got to compare yourself for the worst. And a lot of people I don't think know the full spectrum of what the business of slavery was.

And so when I found Thomas McKibbon and I thought ancestry AI was messing up about his kids and my great-grandfather, my fourth, I think it was my fourth great-grandfather, Isaac McKibbon. So his son Thomas ran a breeding farm down in Butts County, Georgia. That was something I wasn't ready for. I knew that happened in places but I didn't think it happened to my family. I remember seeing that and then I'm looking, I'm like, okay, stuff is messing up, can't be right, trying to look at the records.

And then I saw that his son was still a, still was a slave to him. It wasn't, it was you were a slave. He made his son breed with his granddaughter. And seeing that that with black people having such a grasp of community and just love for like family like that, that did me in for a

little bit. Like I remember about to lead that whole side for a second, just that little part just to come back, just be like okay, I must have messed up somewhere. I'm going to redo all this. And it just kept coming back to the same and it's hard. I always say I love finding the photos of my family. I love seeing these cool stories of black people being firemen before we were even free and all this other stuff. But it's that dark side of history that we have to just be ready to see.

Yolanda Williams: Because the business of slavery was an ugly dehumanizing discussing vile business. It just is. And I was in in a read on Twitter today and someone was talking, you know, whenever I mentioned as far as like black parenting, my whole business is to help black parents specifically connect the dots between how colonization the practices that were used during colonization and enslavement and our parenting because they're there. And that's a lot of pushback. You know, I made a pretty viral thing that's still getting traction on a TikTok and I said that we haven't been able to parent our own children but for the last 160 years and people were mad at me like how dare you, we've always been parents and I was like black Americans have not been able to legally parent our children for a hundred, you know, but for the last 106 years I understand what you're saying, that back in the motherland we were parents. I'm not talking about that.

Once an enslaved African hits hit stolen land over here in Turtle Island, our rights as parents were stripped away. Now you can hate that all you want to, but that is a reality of the situation. And yes, we found ways to resist and everything else and also that has impacted how we parent and how we see our children and how we deal with their behavior. And we have to contend with that. But what I find is people need to just be like, no, no, no. What about Africa? And they do not want to talk about (00:10:00) like slavery out here. It's still so much shame involved. And it took me a long time to recognize the shame in me when I would talk about it, when I would talk about it and it's really just because of the way we were taught about it. We're not taught about the resistance, we weren't taught about the brilliance. We were all being taught. And we're not even, you know, when we talk about enslavement in school, it's almost as if, you know, these kidnapped Africans and African-Americans eventually were just rolled over just like, okay, I'm a slave now. Like oh, like no, there was so much resistance, there was so much resistance that you've never heard about.

And I found once I started really digging into our history from a decolonized perspective, from our perspective, it was really empowering. And I think that how we view even genealogy, you're going to come up with some feelings, but how can you use that to help you learn about yourself, about family pathology, just help you grow as a person and to find pride in yourself. Because I feel like that's a big part of what's missing in these conversations and really tackling like, okay, yeah, there's shame involved sometimes, I feel this, but the onus of that shame shouldn't be on us. It needs to be on the monsters who participated in this practice.

Walter English: A 100%. I think a lot of people believe that we just rolled, like you said, like people we just rolled over and said, huh, that's it. So many people fall. I like, I created like a database of resources to help people find the enslaved ancestors before and after slavery. And one of them is, I'm drawing a blank on the actual name right now, but it's about black people liberating themselves and there's thousands upon thousands of newspapers of us doing that where we're, we are the old fighter, we, we, we liberated ourselves. That's what I'm looking to say. We really liberated ourselves. And this goes back to slavery votes. Somebody I just worked with on the project, one of her great-great grandfathers, he traveled with a bunch of other black people during the war, during the civil war and they would go, they would do away with confederate soldiers and he made newspapers all over the place. Eventually, yes he got caught in what they do with black people. But, you know, he fought there's yes, there's shame. Once you get over there and you see like it wasn't a choice. It wasn't something they just accepted. So many of our ancestors fought for just for us to be here.

Yolanda Williams: Yes. And that's why I cannot stand that we are not our ancestors because you can never.

Walter English: Gosh, I hate that. I hate that.

Yolanda Williams: You can never.

Walter English: Oh God, I hate when people say that.

Yolanda Williams: But I feel like it's a lot of younger people. Well no, no, no. A lot of older people say that too. I feel like Gen Z because I am elder millennial right on the very edge and I feel like we are coming into a lot of realizations around the miseducation and disinformation that we've been fed our entire life around blackness. I also feel like the generational, like there's shame, a lot of it shame in trauma. A lot of it was rooted in an anti-blackness within like the older black community because of respectability politics just needing to feel safe, needing to be safe. So how do I assimilate, how do I not make ways to keep myself and my children safe? And then I think Gen Z though, which I think is your generation. Am I, are you a millennial? Which one?

Walter English: Oh, millennial.

Yolanda Williams: Okay. We're on the same page. But I think the younger generations are people who are like seekers. I feel like it's going to be much harder for a lot of people, a lot of the younger generations to feel fooled like how we were in Miseducation. There's so much information out there now and much easier ways to access that information. And I think a lot of parents who are my age are like, I'm about to, if they're not going to teach you, I'm going to

teach you. So we're trying to really be better about making sure our kids understand history. But what one of the things I want to work on eventually when I got a little bit more time on my hands is a sort of history project where we go back and we look at black parenting through the generation. I don't think people quite understand what we have had to do to survive that is not making an excuse for anything.

A lot of black parents have been really abusive in the name of keeping their children safe. But understanding the why and really looking at the fact that especially during like this instruction and that silent generation, how that parenting under such duress of all that racialized trauma of people being lynched right in front of you. Like really we could never because we could never is all almost say the stuff they had to endure. I don't think we would be cut out for that stuff and the things they've had to do to survive, we need to understand that. And I really want to do a project around like what that must have been like how that trauma affected each generation. Because after that it was like the boomers and then after that Gen X and millennials, you know, we're living through like the crack era and what that meant for black parents, for our boomer parents trying to parent us, you know, during the crack era is so much all the time. But understanding history is how we make sense of the present. That's how we learn I think to not repeat some of that we've been going through. I'm not sure where I was going with that.

Walter English: I feel it. No yeah, no I feel it. Oh like one thing (00:15:00) I learned was history is always to be remembered but not always celebrated. And one thing that I've seen, I forgot the exact name, I'm going to have to find it because I want to show people the exact paperwork of a plantation management like guy from, I think they found it in 1920s but it was an old plantation guy from early 1800s. And what it displayed was how to manage slaves and looking at that, it has a lot of what black parents are called parenting and the similarities between how you beat a slave if they do X, Y and Z, this is how you got to talk to them. This is how you got to yell at them. This is how you got to work. Like they used to teach that to kids starting off as young as five years old to their children. So just to see that and then to see over a hundred years later and things have not changed is really eye-opening.

Yolanda Williams: Because I know all of us, everybody wants to be like, don't generalize but let's keep it real. Most black parents are traditional "old school parents" most of us. And we have yet to really understand the detriment as a community, right? We keep trying to figure out how we can progress as a black community. We as a people love writing that out on social media. This is why we as a people can't do this that and a third, the moment that we center our children in the fight for liberation and center them and make sure they're safe, they're liberated from our parenting. Like start, stop seeing things as a social hierarchy within our family in a detrimental way and start partnering with them. That's how we get free. And but that's a hard pill to swallow for people who are spoon fed, you know, white supremacy culture traits and patriarchy every single day and think that capitalism is about to save us. That's why folks are

willing to invest \$10,000 to go sit up with Coach Stormy and not spend \$159 to go sit up at my conference because capital, they think capitalism is going to save them when really it's our children and not that they're going to do the work is that we're going to be raising up liberated people who will not allow themselves to be pushed around by these systems.

Walter English: Yes.

Yolanda Williams: So we're raising up revolutionary, we're raising up the people who will be like, nah we're not doing this anymore and top of these government. But we're not willing to put that work in into ourselves in order to do the work to change our mindset. And until we are we going to keep having these same ridiculous conversations on social media that really don't move any needle, keep us in the same place. I'm so passionate about this. And I think if we start looking back at history and I would love to see that document. So if you find it, please email it to me. I would love to in the show notes and we can really just start showing like stark examples of how parenting back during enslavement, how some of that is merit into now. And even when I show people talking about like black breastfeeding week, I tell people like half the children born since they died of malnutrition, they were weans at three, four months and said, actually said solids, okay at three, four months. And then we look at what happens now in a lot of black communities when they hit three months its put cereal in their bottle. That's a choking hazard. But we've been told that no this works. This is what keeps the baby quiet. They're not supposed to be quiet.

Walter English: Exactly. Yes.

Yolanda Williams: So why do you think they need to be quiet? Can we start forming dots here? Why do they need to be compliant and quiet?

Walter English: That goes back to slavery?

Yolanda Williams: Exactly.

Walter English: It goes right back to slavery, everything you're saying.

Yolanda Williams: Everything. It's scary when you start to think that. But then when you see it, you can start making changes and you can be like, I'm not trying to be nobody's NASA. I do not want to replicate that in my home. What do I need to do to change? Because you don't know what you don't know, especially if this is generationally been told how you raised a child. But when presenting this information and with these facts and this evidence, right, where you can draw conclusions, really clear lines between the two and you still fighting to be an oppressor.

You one of them black folks that Harriet tell me with a shot and I'm not going to sit here and wait for you.

Walter English: That's what I tell people. That's what I tell folks. And everything that you like you said, everything goes back to slavery because Brister, people think when I mentioned Brister English, even when I did like this magazine thing and I sent the guy up my stuff and I'm like, yeah, you know my second great-grandfather. He's like, you mean your third great-grandfather, your great-great-great. No, no, no. Brister was born in 1815 but he died closer to 1900 and a lot of stuff even going, well I'm talking about the patriarchy, seeing what would be killing me is seeing some of these, how these men talk to nowadays with the podcast and all that other stuff they got.

They are literally saying the same thing that got a lot of people's great-grandmothers and great-great grandaunts into what was known as mental asylums back then or insane asylums for the same reasons that they're mad, they're not getting, they're not getting any in any or they're mad that this one killed me. I've seen a black woman get it was in 1865, it was I think March of 1865. So right before we were "free" and her husband and brother listed themselves as her doctor and then they sent her to an Saint Solomon on her paperwork is said. The reason she was in there is she gets upset when people make her mad or something like something along those lines of that and they called it like a frantic mania or something like that (00:20:00). But like you keep, they kept messing with her so she got angry and so that was enough to send her to a state hospital.

So like to see all this stuff that comes, because that's what enslavers used to do if they were, if somebody was disabled for slave was disabled, they would still have to do all, all the stuff they had to normally do. But they normally get either sent to state hospitals or they'll get traded for goods versus money most of the time, most of the time. So just to see like it's so much of our culture that's, that stems from that, that stems from that. And it hasn't changed. A lot of stuff has not changed and we keep carrying it on and people like will you, you know, I learned that from my dad. He learned from his dad. Where did his grandfather learn it from?

Yolanda Williams: That's exactly what it is. We are not that far removed. You said second grandfather, right? So your great-grandfather?

Walter English: My great-great grandfather and then my grandfather Robert English, we don't know exactly when he was born. Like Frederick Douglass says a slave knew his birthday just as much as the cows and chickens did and he was born into slavery. That's as far as much as I know. His birth is, his navy car says one thing, the census say other things, but his grave site, gravestones say he lived to be 105 years old. He died in 1951, so guessing 40 around 46, 1846. He had 23 kids. But my father was born May of 1951, my mom, or 1952. My mom was born in

September 15th, 1951. He passed away three months after my mom was born. My grandma's almost 30. My grandma who's still alive today was almost 30 years old when a man who was born into slavery.

Yolanda Williams: I think even we can't grasp that, we're not that far removed.

Walter English: Not at all.

Yolanda Williams: Do you think that my grandmother's 86. That means that her grandmother was most likely enslaved. And that's only three generations. I don't think we even can grasp how that is not that far away, especially as further into the 2020s and stuff like that. It just feels so far. Oh, 1800. Really? You all do the math here. Well, you know, when people put like the fact that Harriet Tubman and Rosa Parks lived during the same era. I think Harriet Tubman died in 1919 and Rosa Parks was born I think in 1919.

Walter English: Who were the president around that time? Because he was alive too. Was it? Nick, was it Nixon or it was the president that was alive at the same time that Rosa Parks as well as Harriet was alive that, that that served during the time like?

Yolanda Williams: That was born during that time and then it served as president. I don't know. That's a good that's it was just far removed from it. I think all people, these we get tricked because everything is in black and white and it feels so far away and people don't really understand the economic impact of enslavement on this country either. So all of this stuff goes into the lie that it was so far away and we're so far removed and we're really just not because if the first documented kidnapped African was brought here in 1619 and through 1800s, you know what I'm saying? They work for free. That is a lot. That's a lot of people I think. Someone was saying there's there was about four, how many, the 14 million or 4 million enslaved, 14 million I think slaved people throughout, throughout the history of enslavement. That's a lot of people.

Walter English: Oh yeah.

Yolanda Williams: A lot of them were bred. And that's the thing, a lot of our ancestors, like you said were bred like it was chattel slavery and it was an ugly business. So as working someone gets started because, you know, I now have these funky fresh DNA. I'm telling you this DNA just got me and it's dizzy when you tell, it's English. Listen, so white, it's English, it's Irish, it's Scandinavian, okay and it's Romanian. I'm just like hella white. And I don't know which side it's from. I don't, you know, I took the test and usually I think it's a matriarch of the women's side, but the test I took, it doesn't really specify I'm going to take another and do 23andMe because I want to find some living relatives. All the, the relatives that hit are white, they're like

my second cousin. It's really alarming. It really messed me up. I could saying is one thing but kind of same thing.

Walter English: Yeah, that's all, that's, that is awesome.

Yolanda Williams: I would be considered biracial.

Walter English: Did you take it on ancestry by chance?

Yolanda Williams: I didn't. I did. I'm asking being cheap. So I did it on, oh man. I did not do either of the ones that people usually do put it that way. And the database that they have is very small and it's probably really, really white, which is probably why there's not one black person that shows up as a match for me. So I'm going to say through 23andMe because with 23andMe versus Ancestry, you can get the haplogroup.

Walter English: Yeah, you can get hap, yeah.

Yolanda Williams: And that you can be able to find close to the tribes that you came from. Because you know that whole Nigeria, all that stuff, that's a colonizers. Those are colonizer labeled, labels to Nigeria did not exist. It was tribal land just like out here it was tribal land. So I want to find what tribes in these countries that I came from. So I'm going to use 23andMe. People keep saying use African Ancestry and I was told not to, I was told it's overpriced. Especially since you don't get any kind of familial connection and that haplogroup you can what they use, which is what they use (00:25:00), you can get that through 23andMe, we haven't talked about that.

Walter English: So the haplogroup, just the like declare I found out my haplogroup, even though I went through Ancestry, I snatched my raw DNA results from them and like there's a third-party source that I use to figure out my haplogroup. But with the haplogroup you're going to go back about 18,000 years before the tribe or anything back to one woman in Africa and it won't give you like the full, hey, she was a part of X, Y and Z. It'll give you, they were most likely part of West Africa. They were so like my haplogroup is E so I'm one of the oldest. And then I did further research and see which ones broke off of me and who, you know, haplogroup E1, B, all this other stuff.

But the best place I say to check family, I mean if you did your DNA results and then any of these websites you can actually grab the raw DNA and upload it to a third-party site like GEDMatch or GETMatch. And with that you upload your stuff, you get a kit number, it doesn't matter what they use, you upload your stuff and then you can do a one-to-one match. And on their website people will list their email, their phone number, ways to contact them, they'll show

you how close you are that, you know, if you had second cousins or possibly fourth cousins GEDMatch is good and Ancestry just did an update which kind of helped me out a little bit where it split where my DNA comes from my mom's side and my dad's side.

So that's how I don't, like my dad's side basically stayed African, like all the Scottish side, all the Scottish stuff came from my mom's side, which I knew from the research but to see it in the DNA, but they do split it now from mom and dad. Trying to think of another place. There's a few sites out there, I think Genomelink but I wouldn't put too much on the haplogroup. They like, and they'll tell you where you originally that one woman in Africa, they're going, they're going get you right to her. But tribe wise it won't tell you much. You might have a general location like mine is mostly, I think it mostly West Africa, West African and South Africa. But mostly west going back, I think it's 18, 18,000 BP before present I think, I think it's around like that time. But yeah, I'm sorry I just went on a whole tangent.

Yolanda Williams: No. I think you would be super interested in like how can they, if they already have their DNA results, what can they do with them, you know, outside of them being on these websites, what can I do with them? So I love that you're getting your raw DNA results from that. And so speaking of that, so do I just go there and I request it? Is there an email like usually just generally speaking, is that what you have to do?

Walter English: I went through Ancestry and it was in their settings. I believe it's on probably my heritage settings as well. But there's a request for our DNA. You click that they'll have you check off saying once they give it to you, it's no longer protected by them. It's in your hands. And normally Ancestry sent me an, when I did the request, they sent me an email with a zip file and with the zip file and I don't know how it's with my heritage but Ancestry it is a little bit, they give you like instructions at the top of it about what's what. And when I put it into that other third-party system, I had to take that out of like the notepad because it wasn't reading my stuff. I don't know if my heritage does that, but if they don't upload it to again GEDMatch is the best one. GEDMatch is probably the best site that I've seen that just collect so many people. I have over 13,000 cousins so.

Yolanda Williams: I love it. And I have a big family on my mom's side. My grandmother had a lot of children and so I'm really interested in this. And then also just do you have any for black people specifically, do you recommend Ancestry over African Ancestry over a 23andMe? Because what I was told, you don't need to pay that much for your DNA results, especially if you're not going to get any familiar connections. If you're not going to, there's no database. They destroy your DNA, which means that they can't give you any familial connections to connect with. But it is a black-owned company if you want to support as it is. But it's like exponentially more expensive than any other ones out there.

Walter English: I'm not too familiar. I've seen them before. I do want to try them out eventually. So I have some experience with African Ancestry, but I know like, I think it's, they break it down to exactly where you're from so.

Yolanda Williams: They do.

Walter English: The benefit I say over something like Ancestry where they kind of give you, hey, you're Nigerian, you're this, they can break down the actual tribe if that's something that you care about. If you're just looking for like try to connect with cousins to find out more. Ancestry 23andMe are great if you want to do DNA test.

Yolanda Williams: And someone else said if you do want familial connections or if you don't want to mess with the haplogroup thing and use like a 23andMe, you start connecting with people who are in Africa. They can tell you like this is the tribe that we start talking to people who you, who are in the database and you just start like, we can give, give you more information. Like that's the whole point of making these connections that you learned about it. So they can tell you straight up, I'm from this tribe, this is who your people are.

Walter English: Yep. And like I said, if people are looking more so just to find family here, I don't think a lot of people know this tip. I try to get, I got to make a video about it eventually on Ancestry and I'll probably, probably also 23andMe and all these other websites that offer like hints and stuff and where people upload photos and you grab those photos there you can actually see at least on Ancestry, like I got a photo of my grandpa Robert and I can see who saved it and who has him on their tree. Then I contact them directly and that's how I met my cousin down in (00:30:00), down in Alabama. I didn't know I still had family down there. I did a video on TikTok. He saw the video and he messaged me, he says, you know, that land that you talked about in that video, we still have it in the family. So even just your cousins and you don't know who knows what.

So if you're looking for family now and you don't want to do DNA or anything like that, best thing is to start your tree on one of these websites. I use Ancestry and see who's out there. I like to click on I'll, I'll put in my family information into the search bar and then or to the search section and I can see how many people have him. Like my grandpa Robert, how many people have him on their family tree, his birthday? And I can just call if those people allow you to, allow themselves to be contacted. Some, if you come across some white relatives, some don't like to talk to us, but other black people who are doing this work, they want to find you. They want to find people and they want to connect and they want to figure out who their family is.

Yolanda Williams: Thank you so much for like all of this amazing information. The main goal of me having Walt on this podcast is to really help get the word out about the Brister English

Project. Like you said, he's doing this work that should be free for all descendants of enslaved Africans, but it is definitely not. And so if you're listening to this, we're going to have a link in the show notes for you to donate to this project. Especially if you are a listener and a follower of that is someone of European descent. I really hope that you will think about this as a type of reparation and give of yourself if you are considering yourself an anti-racist. This is the work, this is part of the work is financing things. Yes. Putting your money where your mouth is to help black folks in some of these endeavors. So we're going to make sure that all of his information is in the show notes. And also where can people find you?

Walter English: You can find me on TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, all under the name Waltway (ph) or if you Google form a local, I'll pop up everywhere.

Yolanda Williams: Okay, awesome. And again, thank you so much for your time and for this work. It's beautiful work. I'm on the list. Okay. I'm just like, when you're going to get to meet? Okay.

Walter English: What list are you a part? Because there's two lists. I don't know if I told the story about how TikTok our followers shut that website down. The original one. Because how they rushed it at one point.

Yolanda Williams: Oh, I'm on the second one then because it's whatever is on the link now.

Walter English: Gotcha. We'll talk, we'll talk.

Yolanda Williams: Thank you so much. And you all thank so much for listening. Please leave your writing review. Let me know what you think about this episode on social media and until next time, keep it conscious.