SESSION 2: OPPORTUNITIES FOR REPAIR

Conversation and reflection with Danita Mason-Hogans, Simona Goldin, and Burnice Hackney

Featuring the voices of generational Black Chapel Hillians:

David Mason, Jr.
Braxton Foushee
David Caldwell, Jr.
Robert Campbell
Clementine Self
Betty Geer
Patricia Mason
EARL BYNUM

Born and raised in Chapel Hill, Mr. Bynum developed a love history and photography at a young age.

The photos in “A Simpler Time” both preserve and illuminate history.
“What do you do with the fact that this house that they could not buy in Bergen County is almost definitely worth three-quarters of a million, or even a million dollars, today and your family doesn’t have it because of nothing more than racism?” - Tony Dokoupil

“I've been living in my house for 52 years. I have a right to live here.” --Betty Geer, Generational Black Chapel Hillian
“The speeches of Stevens and other racial leaders, in pamphlet form, along with the Bureau laws and regulations, the homestead laws and the Confiscation Acts, were sown thickly over the South; and the Bureau agents, the missionaries and the teachers, taking the cue from these, encouraged the belief in the ‘forty acres and a mule.’ The negroes were told that since their labor had produced the property of the South, they ought at least to share it. Lincoln’s second inaugural message suggests the same thought in regard to the origin of Southern property. Probably this belief that the property of the South was due to uncompensated negro labor was held by many Northerners and inclined them to favor a proposition to confiscate land. – Walter Fleming, ‘Forty Acres and a Mule,’ 1906”. P. 256
FIGHTING ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM IN NORTH CAROLINA

By Vonn R. Newkirk II
January 16, 2016

On an autumn afternoon in 1972, the people of Rogers-Eubanks, a historically black community just outside Chapel Hill, North Carolina, gathered beneath a tree to witness the end of a dispute. They were led by David Caldwell, Sr., one of Chapel Hill’s first black police officers, in whose back yard they stood. Before them was a delegation of local politicians,
including Howard Lee, Chapel Hill’s first black mayor. For the previous five months, the community had been at odds with the county, the city, and the state university over the placement of a new landfill on Eubanks Road. Now Lee made a proposal. In exchange for agreeing to the construction of the landfill, Rogers-Eubanks would receive some of the municipal services that it lacked—sidewalks, water and sewer connections, a community center. After the landfill reached capacity, it would be turned into a recreation area. Caldwell and his neighbors relented. They looked on as an agreement was signed. Chapel Hill purchased eighty acres of land and began development.

More than four decades later, the landfill has been expanded and there is no recreation area. A manhole cover near the site of the agreement serves as a symbol of services not rendered; many of the original residents of the community still lack sewer connections. “The most disgusting thing that I have with Chapel Hill was that it did not follow through with what I thought was an honest commitment,” Lee, who is now retired from public life, told me recently. “Unfortunately, when I left, they had amnesia.” Local residents have been fighting continuously to see Lee’s promises realized, first under the auspices of the Rogers-Eubanks Neighborhood Association (RENA), then with the Coalition to End Environmental Racism (CERR). The movement has spanned generations. David Caldwell, Jr., the son of the man under whose tree the original meeting took place, and who was present there as a boy, is one of today’s activists. “We had to learn how to fight,” he said.

The American environmental-justice movement began in Afton, a small town sixty miles north of Chapel Hill, ten years after the agreement in Rogers-Eubanks. In 1978, Jim Hunt, who would go on to serve four terms as governor of North Carolina, faced one of his first political crises. A local trucker and his sons had dumped thousands of gallons of oil on state roads, rather than disposing of it lawfully. The oil contained polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), a class of chemicals so toxic that Congress banned their production the following year. With the support of the fledgling Environmental Protection Agency, state officials—including Lee, who had by then become the secretary of the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Community Development—chose a site in Afton for a landfill to contain the hazardous waste from the cleanup effort.

Warren County, where Afton is located, is one of the most vulnerable counties in North Carolina, with a quarter of its population living in poverty. Like Rogers-Eubanks, it was a landing place for former slaves during Reconstruction, and it continues to have one of the highest proportions of black residents of any county in the state. Four years of litigation, independent scientific examination, and criticism in the local media could not dissuade Hunt and the E.P.A. from
Opportunities for repair

Housing & Environment

disposing of the PCBs in Afton. In 1982, as construction moved along on the landfill, organizations such as the United Church of Christ and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference sent in organizers to assist the protesters there. One of those organizers was Benjamin Chavis, a longtime activist in the civil-rights movement. “Warren County made headlines,” he said. “And because it made headlines in the media, we began to get calls from other communities. But you know that in the eighties you couldn’t just say there was discrimination. You had to prove it.”

In 1987, the United Church of Christ, through its Commission for Racial Justice, prepared a report, “Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States,” which provided the concrete evidence that had so far been lacking. The church’s researchers found that race was more strongly correlated with the placement of a hazardous-waste facility than any other single factor, and remained so even when they controlled for income and geographic area. The report also indicated that three of the country’s five largest commercial hazardous-waste landfills, comprising forty percent of the nation’s entire commercial-landfill capacity, were located in black or Hispanic communities. Subsequent studies of the health effects of living near such facilities have been indeterminate, in part because it is difficult to track residents through a lifetime of exposure. Nevertheless, a review of fifty epidemiological studies, published in 2000, found that increases in self-reported health problems were common, and that adverse pregnancy outcomes, such as low birth weight, genetic defects, and infant mortality, were associated with living near a landfill that handles toxic chemicals. Two decades after its initial report, the United Church of Christ published a follow-up, “Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty.” It found that little had changed in the intervening years; most of those living within 1.8 miles of a hazardous-waste facility today are people of color.

Rogers-Eubanks provides an object lesson in the political and regulatory difficulties that communities of color can face once a hazardous-waste facility is built. For three decades, none of the parties listed on the original deed of sale for the 1972 landfill—the Town of Chapel Hill, the Town of Carrboro, and Orange County—followed through on Lee’s promises. In the same time period, the county requested grants from the E.P.A. to extend water and sewer services to two mostly white communities in the same watershed. Then, in 2007, instead of closing the landfill on Eubanks Road, the board of county commissioners voted unanimously to approve a solid-waste transfer station as an addition to the already sprawling complex. Later, facing stiff opposition from the community and local media, the board backpedalled. According to the Reverend Robert Lee Campbell, the leader of RENA and CEER, local governments relied on the legal concept of extraterritorial jurisdiction, which allows municipalities to make decisions about areas beyond their official limits. Even though Rogers-Eubanks citizens could vote for county commissioners, they were politically excluded from Chapel Hill, the town that managed and used the land, and
neither the county nor Chapel Hill had any obligation to provide services, aside from places to drop off waste. “Most of the council members didn’t even know where [the landfill] was,” Campbell said.
In 2007, Campbell filed a claim with the E.P.A.'s Office of Civil Rights. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prevents government entities that receive federal funds from discriminating and provides mechanisms by which individuals can seek redress. But as Chavis noted, the burden of proving discrimination is extraordinarily high. An independent review of the E.P.A.'s track record, conducted by Deloitte in 2011, found that the agency had "not adequately adjudicated Title VI complaints." In its forty-five years of existence, the agency has yet to make a single formal finding of discrimination. It rejects the vast majority of Title VI claims before investigation. At the time that Campbell filed his claim, the E.P.A. had performed no civil-rights investigations in North Carolina since digital record-keeping began, in 1993. Ultimately, the agency rejected most of Campbell's claim, on the grounds that it lacked jurisdiction, because it had not granted funds to Chapel Hill or Carrboro.

RENA and CBEE continued their push. In November, 2009, representatives of the organizations were invited to the White House Clean Energy Forum on Public Health to present their case to the E.P.A., which had recently been taken over by its first black administrator, an Obama appointee named Lisa Jackson. CBEE activists also waged a grassroots campaign in Orange County. Residents learned how to perform land, soil, and water studies with equipment that they borrowed from university scientists. What they discovered—raw sewage seeping from yards, elevated levels of fecal and *E. coli* contamination in local water sources, toxic chemicals in the air—was startling enough to bring in investigators from the Orange County Department of Health, whose findings were even more serious than what residents expected. Less than half of all septic systems were in compliance with code, numerous sources of drinking water were contaminated with fecal bacteria, and nine out of eleven wells tested failed to meet health standards.

Finally, in 2012, soon after the E.P.A. announced that it would investigate part of Campbell's claim, Orange County yielded, pledging to build a community center in Rogers-Eubanks. The following year, county officials decided to extend water and sewer services. The community center was finished in 2014, and engineering studies are under way for laying down sewer and water lines sometime this year. Local, state, and federal officials are finally moving to keep the promises that were made forty-three years ago. Community leaders are pleased with the progress but not yet content. "I don't feel anybody should fight as long as we've been fighting to get something that's God-given," Caldwell told me. "It's not a temporary thing. You fight until the end. You fight until you can't fight anymore. And that's my goal, to fight until it's done."
Reflect on your own history with the land you live on now and where you and your family and community have lived over time.

What facilitated and/or obstructed that relationship and access or lack of access (i.e.: bank loans, zoning, wealth or access to wealth, etc.)?

What does your access to that land allow you and your family and community, and what does it obstruct or deny (i.e.: voting, schools, recreational activities, health care, clean and safe water and soil, sidewalks and safe places to walk, etc.)?
“In Orange County NC, 4% of white children live in poverty, but 25% of black children do. Poverty’s cruel array of inequities, including a persistent underrepresentation in decision-making, have all had a cumulative effect on Black children, piling atop the accrued effects of historical injustice in public education. Research and history show us that children who are born into poverty are likely to remain in poverty and extend that poverty for generations.”- Cultivating Our Capacities, Brightening Our Communities: Educational Opportunity for the Descendants of the Enslaved in Chapel Hill, North Carolina
HISTORY OF LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL
by
Mr. Edwin Caldwell, June 1973

The first known school for blacks in Chapel Hill was first called the "Free School," established sometime in the 1800s. When founded, Free School was located in 3 rooms in the Quaker Building, which stood adjacent to the St. Paul A.M.E. Church. The locality was in the vicinity of the current (1973) Main Street in Carrboro.

Training was geared for grades 1 through 7 and the school only held classes from October to March. The predominant philosophy/attitudes at that time was that this was more than enough education time for black children. The school year would end even earlier if/when the allocated funds ran out. This was a handicap to blacks only as the separate schools maintained for white children were better funded and maintained.

B.F. Hopkins was the school's Principal. Mrs. Mittie Kirkland and Mrs. Stella Oldham were the teachers.

Black parents of the community were understandably dissatisfied with the system and concerned that their children had no opportunity to be educated beyond the 7th grade. Their concern motivated them to organize and establish a private school, which was first named The Hackney School (after one of the founders). The Hackney School was located on the west side of Merritt Mill Road, between Bennett and Blockside, near the railroad track. Not too long after opening, the school was named or came to be known as Hack's High School.

Reverend Dr. Louis H. Hackney was the school principal as well as one of the two History Teachers. Other teachers were Mrs. Jessie O'Kelly/Domestic Science; Mrs. Amy Rogers/Music; Mrs. Carrie Jones/History and Mr. Jim Rogers/Arithmetic.

In 1916, the Chapel Hill District School Board of Directors consisted of Drs. Pratt, Mangum and Lawson and Professor Noble. Dr. Lawson approached Dr. Hackney with the idea of consolidating the County run Free School with the Hackney (or Hack's) High School.

Dr. Hackney accepted the proposition and sold Hack's High to Orange Co.37

The two consolidated schools then became the first Orange County Training School, with a Mr. Malone as the principal. The Training

See Property Deed from Deed Book 76, Pages 296–297, drawn 20 December, 1916.
School operated on the Hackney site until 1923 when it was destroyed by fire. 38

Concerned parents, residents and numerous organizations in the community came forward to help during this critical period in maintaining consistent, quality education for black children. Other schools opened their doors to some of the students; Some were taught and housed at the old Odd Fellows Hall (then located next to the property of Mrs. Alice Whitted Neal); Still others were taught in a large frame house on Rosemary Street, approximately near the Tiajuana Fats property, which was later occupied by the Council family.

Subsequent schools were opened such as the Carey Jones School on Roberson Street, a private school located at or near the current home of the Ernest Cordal family.

Pendle School, 2 room private school, was opened on McDade Street at the approximate site of Mrs. Tenny Edwards home, (perhaps better remembered by some as the site of the old Rob & Francis Snipes home).

It was these multiple efforts which maintained an educational system for the students until the County built a new Orange County Training School.

Mr. Henry Stroud, a black resident, donated Land for the new school site, deeding nine acres bordering McMaster and Church Streets. An anonymous white female resident contributed the largest amount of money needed for the construction. As was the norm in Chapel Hill, many citizens contributed in the effort, donating money and working to raise funds for the construction. Their job was made even more difficult by the fact that they had to continually battle the County School Board to prevent them from cutting back on the construction allocations for the new school. Construction of the new O.C.T.S. was completed in 1924 with members of the Masonic Lodge laying the Corner Stone.

First principal was Mr. B. L. Bosman, who is remembered for his aggressive and successful efforts to ensure that the school was built of brick rather than cinder block, as the County had planned. The new school was constructed using the Rosenwald Program, a then popular design concept which called for the classrooms to be built around a large central auditorium. The auditorium at O.C.T.S. subsequently became noted throughout North Carolina for its trademark, the three concrete posts in the buildings center!

38
Note that this paragraph contains some discrepancies when compared with the enclosed property deeds of 1916 and 1919/20 concerning the school.
Among the numerous principals who followed Mr. Bosman were Reverend Cyril Scott (from the Sanford area) for about one year; Mr. Frank Kennedy, who stayed on until about 1933, retiring shortly after the death of his wife; Mr. Harold M. Holmes, till 1944; Mr. J.M. Joynigan, 1944 through 1946. Mr. Joynigan is fondly remembered as the "rainy day principal" because of his practice of dismissing school early on rainy days to help the buses get the children home.

The sixth principal was Mr. C. A. McDougle, who arrived in 1946. Mr. Mac, as he was known, remained in that position until O.C.T.S. was consolidated in 1966.

Many changes took place in the structure of O.C.T.S. between 1924 and the present. A new addition was added to the front in 1935, which was perceived psychologically as being one of the best things that could have happened. Since all grades, 1 through 12, were located at this one building, the new addition enabled the school administration to divide the elementary from the high school. Every class looked forward to the day it could enter the double doors to attend high school.

This event was the first sign that one was maturing into young adulthood. Another sign of such maturing was the type of punishment one received for breaking rules. Two types of punishment one could receive was 10 licks in the hand with the black belt or shoveling coal into the boiler room. There was many a proud fellow whose self esteem doubled when the day came that he could shovel coal rather than face the black belt.

In 1945 or 1946 two more rooms were added to the school. Also during this time a new cafeteria was constructed, on the west side of the building. The construction of the cafeteria began to turn the tide in the first competitive battle between Mrs. Ruth Pope's school lunches and Mrs. Susie Weaver's nooyday specials, which consisted of hamburgers, George Washington pies, sour pickles and big pepsi colas.

Many a student slipped down to Mrs. Weaver's store even though it had been put off limits by Mr. Mac. To come back to the school grounds with your brown paper bag with a big juicy pickle was a new approach in challenging the school administration.

In 1949 a new black awareness had come about to the school body and the school administration. This was the year that we said we were tired of being identified as a training school, which, at that time, had the connotation of being a reformatory school. After much debate, the new name of Lincoln High was chosen. The class of 1950 was the first to finish under the new name of Lincoln High..."

39
See Susie Campbell, daughter of Della Hackney Campbell, next chapter.
Opportunities for repair

How have you and your family benefited from or been harmed by this school system?

How have you had access to or had access denied to educational opportunities for you and your family?

What do you believe was lost and what do you believe was gained in our children’s schools post-desegregation?

Do you and your children feel seen and respected in your schools?
“Race riots resulting in real property takings, like race riots themselves, are not as rare as they might seem. Quite a few incidents are infamous, but many others are relatively unknown, buried by decades of fear and secrecy. Although they occurred in different places, and different events were blamed as triggers, common threads exist among them. Generally, the takings happened after there had been substantial accumulation of wealth in black communities. The black citizens typically fled from their communities under threat of death, too afraid to return; their aggressors either seized their property without compensation or gave them insignificant compensation. As with Ocoee (Florida), white representatives were sometimes appointed to execute the estates of those who died in the riot. — Melissa Fussell, “Dead Men Bring No Claims,” 2015-16

Source: Federal Reserve Board, 2019 Survey of Consumer Finances. Figures display median (top panel) and mean (bottom panel) wealth by race and ethnicity, expressed in thousands of 2019 dollars.
SUPPORT BLACK BUSINESS

BUSINESSES

- A Plus Test Prep, Chapel Hill: https://aplushigherscores.com/areas/sat-act-test-prep-chapel-hill-nc
- Anna Tailor & Alteration, Carrboro: (919) 918-7688
- Ayankoya Taxes Unlimited Corp. (ATU), Carrboro - management accountants: http://atucorp.com
- Be Unique Hair Salon
- Bettye's Flower Design, Chapel Hill - florist: https://www.bettyesflowerdesign.com
- Black Star Strategies, Chapel Hill: http://blackstarstrategies.com
- Bobby's Hair Salon & Spa, Chapel Hill: (919) 929-2904
- Bull City Music School, Hillsborough: https://www.bullcitymusicschool.com
- Cake Mommy, Carrboro: https://www.facebook.com/therealcakemommy
- Carolina Car Wash & Detail, Carrboro: https://www.carolinacarwashanddetail.com
- Carolina Elite Studios, Hillsborough: www.carolinaelitestudio.com
- Chapel Hill-Carrboro NAACP: https://www.chapelhillcarrboronaacp.com
- Chapel Hill Training, Chapel Hill: https://www.chapelhilltraining.com
- Coalesce Beauty, Chapel Hill: https://www.facebook.com/coalescebeauty
- CommunityWorx, Carrboro: https://www.facebook.com/Communityworx
- Cut Above Barber Shop, Chapel Hill: https://www.facebook.com/124297577618614
- EmPOWERment, Inc. - non-profit affordable housing: http://www.empowermentinc.org
- Excellent Presence - digital marketing & web strategy: https://excellentpresence.com
- Fashion Tailors, Carrboro: https://www.fashiontailorsnc.com
- Foushee Tree Service, Chapel Hill: (919) 417-0587
- Garblana Business Services - clothing, imprinted & promotional products: https://www.catalogsportswear.com

Gates of Beauty Body Shop

Midway Business Center

Holman Family Dental Care
BUSINESSES

- Gates of Beauty, Carrboro - auto body shop: (919) 967-1526
- Harvest Learning Center, Chapel Hill - child day care: http://harvestlearningcenter.com
- Holman Family Dental Care, Chapel Hill: https://holmanfamilydentalcare.com
- Hong Kong Chinese Restaurant, Carrboro: (919) 942-0850
- K C Travel, Chapel Hill: http://www.kctravelunlimited.com
- Legacy Cuts Barber Shop, Chapel Hill: https://facebook.com/LegacyCutsBarberShop503530789680029
- Mary’s Hairstyling, Carrboro: (919) 968-6711
- Midway Barber Shop, Chapel Hill: (919) 942-6338
- Midway Business Center, Chapel Hill: http://www.empowermentinc.org/midway-business-center
- Ms. Mastic’s Crystals & More, Chapel Hill: https://www.msmasticscrystalsandmore.com
- Munroe’s Custom Window Treatments, Carrboro: (919) 370-8755
- Nanny Posse, Chapel Hill: https://nannypoasse.com
- Neecy’s Hair Salon
- NuGenesis Training & Fitness, Chapel Hill: https://www.nugenesistraining.com
- Pink Vanity, Chapel Hill - hair salon: https://salonlofts.com/salons/chapel_hill_village
- ReBFoR, LLC, Chapel Hill - glass cleaning and installation: https://rebfor.com
- Rose Fashions - alterations
- Rumors Boutique, Chapel Hill - thrift & consignment: https://www.shopatrumors.com
- Sharon Hill International, Chapel Hill: https://www.sharonhillinternational.com
- ShineBig.com, Chapel Hill: http://www.showroombigmobile.com
- Stretch Zone Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill: https://www.stretchzone.com/locations/chapelhill
- Styles of Elegance, Carrboro - beauty salon: (919) 933-1710
- Synergy - speaking and workshop facilitation: Owned by Theresa Merritt
- Tax Hive Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill: https://taxhivenc.mytaxhive.com
- The Coalition NC Self Defense and Fitness, Chapel Hill: https://www.thecoalitionnc.com
- Throne Party Rentals, Chapel Hill: http://www.thronepartyrentals.com
- Trevor Holman Photography, Chapel Hill: https://www.trevorholmanphoto.com
- Triangle Bikeworks, Carrboro: https://www.spokenrevolutions.org
- Triangle Focus on Healing, Carrboro: (919) 932-6591
- Vibe House 405, Chapel Hill: https://www.facebook.com/VibeHouse405
- Who’s Next Barbershop, Chapel Hill: https://www.whosnextch.com
Think about the businesses you frequent: who owns those businesses? Who is served by them, and who works in them? Reflect on how, and in what ways, you’ve considered these questions before today.

Think about a business in your community: What structures, policies, or incentives/disincentives might have supported its establishment and success? What structures, policies, and incentives/disincentives might have obstructed or challenged their establishment and success?
“It is estimated that in 1928 there was one hospital bed for every 139 white Americans but only one for every 1,941 black Americans, indicating that the average black life was worth only 7 percent of the average white life.” (220).

“Black life was so devalued in the nineteenth century that there was little hesitation about using blacks as objects of nonconsensual medical experimentation... The use of black bodies for medical experiments continued deep into the twentieth century.” 233
Think about what you know about your and your family’s access to... a doctor, hospital, pharmacist, health care coverage:

Do you have access to preventative care? Do you trust the medical system with your body and life, and with the bodies and lives of those you love?

Sit in this shared space and reflect: What would be changed if your answers were different to these questions?

Are your answers the same as others in this room to these questions? Have you asked this question before?
Our mission is to cultivate our capacities & brighten our communities through educational opportunities for the descendants of the enslaved in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

The Hannah Ruth Foundation is a community-based non-profit enhancing the quality of life for inter-generational populations in our community through service and advocacy. We are located in Chapel Hill and serve communities in Orange county.

E3 Camp (Empowering Excellence thru Exploration) mission is to provide African-American middle/high school students with hands-on activities, educational field trips and on site presenters in Art and STEM fields, necessary to become productive citizens in the 21st century workforce.

EMPOWERment, Inc. is a Community Development Corporation with the mission of empowering individuals and communities to achieve their destiny through community organizing, affordable housing, and grassroots economic development.
Chapel Hill Community Read & Conversation

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[Image of book cover]

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FROM HERE TO EQUALITY
COMMUNITY READ & CONVERSATIONS

Join us for a community read and conversation series centered on the book, From Here to Equality: Reparations for Black Americans in the 21st Century. Together, we will read, discuss, and debate the idea of reparations and repair for our community. All sessions begin at 7 pm at Chapel Hill Public Library.

FEATURING

William Darity Jr.  Kirsten Mullen

ORGANIZED BY

Danita Mason-Hogans  Simona Goldin

Authors of “From Here to Equality: Reparations for Black Americans in the Twenty First Century”

Co-Chairs, Equity in Schools Taskforce, UNC Commission on History, Race & A Way Forward

Thursday, February 9  Thursday, March 30
Thursday, April 6  Thursday, April 13

You can pick up a free copy of the book from Chapel Hill Public Library. Numbers are limited, so if you can, access the book on your own. Consider our Buy 1, Give 1 campaign at Flyleaf Books in Chapel Hill. We invite you to buy two copies of the book: one for yourself and one to donate for a fellow community member.

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