Exploring the legacy of slavery

“There is an irony in speaking of freedom rising in the same place that slavery develops in English-speaking America, and that is part of what we want people to talk about,” said Joseph Jordan, director of the Stone Center.

American history taught from standard textbooks almost always begins with the arrival of English settlers in Jamestown in 1607, followed by the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock in 1620. These accounts of history became the stuff of national holidays honoring the country's past, said Joseph Jordan, the director of the Sonya Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History.

But the 1619 Collective Memory Project at the Stone Center, and the related Nov. 11 symposium, is meant to tell a different story, one that highlights the themes of freedom, a sense of place and home.

This story began 400 years ago, when an English ship arrived at Point Comfort, near Jamestown, with more than 20 enslaved Africans. They were sold as slaves in the colony of Virginia, home to founding fathers such as Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, who were also slaveholders.

“There is an irony in speaking of freedom rising in the same place that slavery develops in English-speaking America, and that is part of what we want people to talk about,” Jordan said. “Some people came to this place looking for a new beginning, while other people brought to this same place saw it as the ending of life as they knew it.”

Library to debut open access pilot with SAGE Publishing

The University Libraries and SAGE Publishing will enter into a pilot agreement enabling researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to publish open access articles in SAGE journals at no cost to the researcher.

Under the agreement, part of the subscription fees that the library will pay for SAGE content beginning in 2020 will cover the costs of open access publishing for a number of UNC-Chapel Hill authors in SAGE publications. This comes at no additional cost to the library and will preserve access to all content that the library currently licenses from SAGE.

“We want to make it as easy as possible for Carolina researchers to publish open access,” said Elaine L. Westbrooks, vice provost for University Libraries and University librarian. “This is also part of our strategy to forge new channels that will make published research as open and accessible as possible.”

SPARC, the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition, which promotes open access publishing, defines open access as “the free, immediate, online availability of research articles combined with the rights to use these articles freely in the digital environment.” Such uses include reading, downloading, linking, searching, printing and citing.

Articles covered by this agreement will be fully open and will also undergo the same peer review and editing process as other scholarly articles from SAGE.

“Researchers write to be read,” said Westbrooks. “At Carolina, we have scholars doing amazing work that can change the world and better the human condition. When they publish open access, they reach the broadest possible audience and have the greatest impact.”

Westbrooks said she is especially interested in supporting junior faculty members and graduate students — the emerging researchers for whom open access charges are often out of reach.

The pilot agreement will also allow Carolina-affiliated SAGE authors to deposit copies of their articles in the Carolina Digital Repository at cdr.lib.unc.edu/. The repository is an open-access home that the library operates to preserve and share work produced at the University.

“For a public university committed to advancing knowledge and bettering the human condition, promoting open access is core to our values,” said Westbrooks. “Making more work open is the right thing to do.”

— University Libraries
WHAT’S A TYPICAL DAY LIKE IN YOUR JOB?

It depends on the show that PlayMakers is working on. All of our theater staff and students work as one unit to build the sets and load-in the shows. We typically meet in the morning to prioritize jobs each day. Our team could be building scenery, prepping for a build, welding or loading the contents of a set into one of our stages.

HOW DOES YOUR WORK SUPPORT CAROLINA’S MISSION?

We are educating people about how sets are created and built for PlayMakers, from the moment drawings come down to the shop through each show’s opening. We are also teaching fundamental interpersonal skills that are needed in the carpentry workshop, which I believe can translate into great working relationships and many more transferable skills outside of theater.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

The people in our theater company are great and supportive. I’m a bubbly person and when I see people are smiling and laughing and having fun — that makes my day. You can see the fun side of everyone from our technical director down to our students. Keeping it light while maintaining our professionalism makes for a great work environment. I also enjoy teaching.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BECOME A MASTER CARPENTER?

One of the most important things you need is experience. Carpenters work with a lot of tools, and you need to understand how to safely use and apply them in many situations. There will be times when we are problem solvers as well. Being flexible in how you approach a project or set piece I find to be very helpful. If an approach doesn’t work, you adjust and find one that does. And I consistently learn from everyone around me.

WHY CARPENTRY?

I started as a kid. I grew up on the small island of Lanai in Hawaii with my family. I was exposed to carpentry from both of my grandfathers and my dad while growing up. In college, I attended architecture school at the University of Hawaii at Manoa understanding the general physics in construction. My introduction into theater was as an actor, and then I formally began work in theater carpentry in 2007. I have always been a hands-on person — building things is a simple joy in my life.

Carolina People is a regular feature in each issue of the Gazette that asks one of your fascinating colleagues five questions about the work they do for the University. Do you know someone with an interesting or unique job at Carolina? Please email your suggestions to gazette@unc.edu and put Carolina People in the subject line.
Every day, Carolina faculty members engage in groundbreaking research, innovative teaching and public service that impacts in our community and the state, nation and the world.

Tune in to Focus Carolina during morning, noon and evening drive times and on the weekends to hear their stories and find out what ignites their passion for their work. You can listen to WCHL at 97.9 FM or 1360 AM. The interviews will also be available anytime online at gazette.unc.edu under the Focus Carolina tab.

Focus Carolina is an exclusive program on WCHL, sponsored by the University.

UPCOMING FEATURES

ANDRA GHENT
Airing week of Oct. 28

Andra Ghent, an associate professor of finance, focuses on commercial real estate, including how investors decide where to invest and how those investments influence the cities they invest in.

PAUL LANIER
Airing week of Nov. 4

Paul Lanier is an associate professor at the UNC School of Social Work. He focuses on engaging and supporting low-income families with young children, particularly new fathers.

FOCUS ON
DAVID GOTZ

David Gotz creates visualizations from large datasets to make them easier to analyze. His work in the School of Information and Library Science helps physicians and researchers see which medications are working in specific patient populations, enabling them to make better treatment choices for patients. The associate professor of information science also is assistant director for the Carolina Health Informatics Program.

The idea behind visual analytics is to combine Interactive Data Visualization or ways to draw pictures of data on the screen. You can look at and see insights directly like a chart with underlying statistical analysis or machine learning, things that computers are good at, and try to pair those things together in such a way that helps people discover new insights from their data.

Gotz draws data in different ways, using bar charts and line graphs but adding additional kinds of visual representations that might be unique or more complicated.

We can look at people with a particular heart disease condition who take one of three different medications. If people go down a path that doesn’t yield as good an outcome, we can color-code them red for a kind of dangerous path. As we collect data for millions of patients and understand how people really experience their health over time, we may be able to come up with more personalized healthcare system that yields better outcomes by making better evidence-based decisions.

An information scientist, Gotz also sees himself as a toolsmith, a term used by Fred Brooks, founder of Carolina’s computer science department, to describe computer scientists.

Computer scientists often build tools to help people do other work. The ultimate output of my work, hopefully, is not just one discovery or another in health care. I’ve applied the same tools to other things including sports statistics where we compared Manchester United’s soccer season over time. We’ve looked at different things — career trajectories, security logs.

Gotz also collects dense information such as mobile health data from devices — Fitbit, smartwatches — that might help people with Crohn’s disease and ulcerative colitis.

The goal is to apply these same visual analytics technologies to understand patients over time using data from outside of the medical office. With more technology to put on our wrist and carry around in our pocket, we can gather more information about our heart rate, our exercise, our diet. We can do patient-reported outcomes where people respond to questionnaires outside of the doctor’s office and get denser view of, over time, how their medical condition is evolving.
Public service is at the core of Carolina’s mission.

Over fall break, nearly 100 faculty members and senior administrators journeyed across North Carolina to learn more about the state they serve, the issues North Carolinians care about and the people who are working to effect change. The Tar Heel Bus Tour covered more than 1,600 miles across North Carolina, from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the coast, with three buses traveling routes in the western, eastern and southeastern regions of our state.

The knowledge they gained will inform the work they do every day in Carolina classrooms, offices and labs. Several bus tour participants shared their thoughts on favorite stops and how they’ll use what they learned going forward.

CHEROKEE

The stop in Cherokee was one of my favorites. I had not previously known about the scale of the Cherokee-owned casino or how it has transformed the educational and economic opportunities for people in the Eastern Band of Cherokees. I learned that students from the UNC School of Law go to Cherokee every year to provide pro bono legal services, and I learned about current social changes from Chief Sneed’s engaging description of how the tribal community is evolving.

— Lloyd Kramer, professor of history, director of Carolina Public Humanities and chair of the faculty

ON A BUS

The west bus route took participants to the mountains and back, with stops in Kannapolis, Charlotte, Cherokee and Asheville.

ASHEVILLE

My field is not government relations, but I certainly think square-dancing with your legislators is an excellent way of deepening ties. And square-dancing bears at least one thing in common with public policy, in that the more enthusiastically everyone cooperates, the better the outcome!

— Rachelle Feldman, associate provost and director of the Office of Scholarships and Student Aid
GREENSBORO
While every stop was meaningful, our visit to Greensboro and The International Civil Rights Center & Museum impacted me indelibly. The issues we discussed at this stop — factors that precipitated the Greensboro Four’s 1960 sit-in at Woolworth’s, extant racial health disparities, the institutional and structural drivers that underpin racism — are grave, weighty and consequential to Greensboro and our state.

— Patia McGrath, assistant professor of strategy and entrepreneurship, Kenan-Flagler Business School

LUMBERTON
It was an enriching experience to see the flood ravaged regions of Robeson County where researchers and residents are collaborating on important initiatives relating to disaster relief and recovery, environmental justice and public health in communities such as Lumberton and beyond.

— Deb Aikat, associate professor, Hussman School of Journalism and Media

KINSTON
The discussion about revitalizing Kinston and all of the challenges that remain following floods and an economic downturn; it was an emotional and thoughtful experience. We have a long way to go in providing assistance to them and they have quite a journey as a community also.

— Bubba Cunningham, director of Athletics

ROCKY MOUNT
From our first stop in Rocky Mount learning about students in the MAPSCorps program and meeting TJ Walker, the 27-year-old, newly elected city councilman in Rocky Mount to the students benefitting from Greene Central High School’s STEM curriculum.

— Aimee M. McHale, assistant professor, Public Health Leadership Program adjunct assistant professor, health policy and management department, Gillings School of Global Public Health

At every stop, Carolina became more deeply connected to our North Carolina communities through fellowship and engagement. From spiritual dancing with the Lumbee Tribe to hiking through South Mountains State Park, to hearing high school students in Eden praise our recent alumni working alongside them with the Carolina College Advising Corps, our faculty and campus leaders experienced the unique cultures and customs of North Carolina. At the same time, we learned how we as a university can address and solve the critical issues of our state. Every mile traveled was a reminder of how Carolina can give back to North Carolina through increased partnership and collaboration.

— Interim Chancellor Kevin M. Guskiewicz
CALENDAR

OCTOBER 31

Craft a zine or a creepy button at Halloweenzine Open House in the Wilson Special Collections Library. Enjoy Wilson Library’s spookiest books about skeletons, ghouls, monsters and witches at this Halloween open house in the Fearrington Reading Room. From 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., come in your best book-themed costume. The event is free and open to the public.

NOVEMBER 1

Join the Carolina Asia Center and the Asian studies department to celebrate the Korean Studies Major Launch event and the bi-annual K-Pop Cover Contest. Come at 5:30 p.m. for a free dinner catered by Namu. There will be a Q&A with the Korean department to discuss the new major at 6 p.m. and directly after will be the K-Pop Cover Contest. The event is free and open to the public in the FedEx Global Center Auditorium. Come out enjoy an evening of music, food and learning.

NOVEMBER 4

Learn more about the Chicana experience by attending novelist Ana Castillo’s free public talk “Persistence as Resistance” at 5:30 p.m. in the Wilson Library Pleasants Room. Castillo is a leading voice in Latinx Studies and is known for her experimental writing style. Writing in both English and Spanish, she creates a hybrid of languages in her works that have been described as poetic and lyrical. The event connects to the content in postdoctoral research associate Annette Rodriguez’s course Literary Approaches to American Studies, which is part of The Reckoning: Race, Memory and Reimagining the Public University Initiative in the College of Arts & Sciences.

GOT NEWS?

The Gazette welcomes your story ideas and calendar announcements. To make sure your information reaches us in time for the next issue, please submit it at least 10 days before our publication date.

The next Gazette will be published Nov. 13.

To announce events occurring Nov.14–Dec.18, please submit your information no later than Nov. 4. Email us at gazette@unc.edu.
The project culminates with a symposium on Nov. 11 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Stone Center that will invite conversation around talks by two keynote speakers. Jessica A. Krug, a historian of black politics, imagination, gender and cultural practices, will discuss how and why Africans got to America, and how the arrival of the slave ship in 1619 set into motion the institution of slavery that would continue for more than 200 years. And author Neil Roberts will tell the story of “maroons” — runaway slaves who formed their own close-knit communities — “to encourage a closer examination of what the word ‘freedom’ really means,” Jordan said.

“Roberts argues that, if you really want to understand how the idea freedom as we imagine it came into being, you have to look at those individuals who were the first runaways and became maroons,” Jordan said.

The two talks will serve as the foundation for conversations to follow that will include participants who represent the point of view of the various communities “thrown together” as a result of the slave trade, including Africans, Native Americans and Europeans. The symposium is free and open to the public and an RSVP is requested.

Joining in these conversations with Krug and Roberts will be:
- Lynette Allston, chief of the Nottoway Indian Tribe of Virginia and co-author of “Dotratung New Moon: Our Story — Nottoway Indians”;
- Ann Chin, who in 2011 established the Middle Passage Ceremonies and Port Markers Project dedicated to honoring African ancestors who were packed onto ships and transported across the Atlantic to the West Indies;
- Pura Fe Crescioni, a musician, artist and activist who draws inspiration from her rich First Nation heritage;
- Freddie L. Parker, professor emeritus of history at North Carolina Central University and author of “Running for Freedom: Slave Runaways in NC, 1755–1840”; and
- Alice Rice, professor of English and American Studies at the University of Central Lancashire, Preston in England who has studied the “Black Atlantic” for the past three decades and was a founding member of the Slave Trade Arts Memorial Project in Lancaster.

Other aspects of the project include an art exhibit and a film festival. In DO or DIE: Affect, Ritual Resistance, artist Fahuma Pecou reclaims African rituals and imagery (Yoruba robes, cowrie shells) to link black identity to something other than death or trauma. The exhibit is on titled is on display in the Stone Center’s Robert and Sallie Brown Gallery and Museum through Nov. 21.

This year’s edition of the annual Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent film, called Collective Memory(ies): Our Diaspora, included over 20 films from across the diaspora. Many screenings were North Carolina premieres and featured commentary and appearances by the directors and local scholars.

Jordan said the objective of the 1619 project is not to impose a final understanding or conclusion, but to get people thinking and asking questions they may have never thought about before. “For us, this is an opportunity to grapple with the inherent complexities and contradictions of the American experience and to show how it came to mean different things to different people,” Jordan said.

“The people who were brought here from Africa had names. They had families. They had a way of life. All of these things were taken away from them when they were brought here and treated, not as human beings, but beasts of burden. This not only defiled their lives, but the lives of the people who took them and the people who bought them as property.”

In addition to the Stone Center, the project is supported by the Carolina Public Humanities; the Center for Dramatic Art; the Center for the Study of the American South; Chapel Hill Public Library; the departments of communication and of African, African American and diaspora studies; the African Studies Center; the Orange County Community Remembrance Coalition; the American Indian Center; the Center for Civil Rights; the Institute for the Arts and Humanities; the Office of the Provost; the Office of the Chancellor; the Stanford L. Warren Branch Library (Durham County Library); the Hampton History Museum; and the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art at the College of Charleston.

— Gary Moss, University Gazette

While students were away for fall break, Carolina’s faculty and staff took over the Pit and part of the Student Union for the annual Employee Appreciation Day on Oct. 18 (top). On the far left, Provost Bob Blouin and Interim Vice Chancellor Becci Menghini show off the busy schedule of the day’s events. Some employees signed up to perform, and Rameses (left) dropped by to DJ the dance party. And the Open Enrollment crew (above) got into the Halloween spirit to remind employees that the first day of benefits enrollment is just around the corner (Nov. 2).
Carolina’s libraries fill gaps in ‘Country Music’

The new Ken Burns documentary “Country Music” could not have fully described the origins of the musical genre and recording industry without the help of Carolina’s Southern Folklife Collection at the University Libraries.

“The Southern Folklife Collection’s holdings are among the foremost archives for researching country music and a significant resource for the filmmakers,” said Steve Weiss, the collection’s curator. “Our holdings extensively document the history of country music in all periods of its development, with a particular strength in the music’s formation as a commercial industry. The library was honored to help and contribute to this project.”

Burns, executive producer of the series, and Florentine Films sent a research team to Chapel Hill in 2016. Aaron Smithers, a former assistant in the SFC who now is the special collections research and instruction librarian in the Wilson Library Special Collections Library, helped them navigate thousands of digitized images across multiple collections. Smithers and Wilson Library’s Digital Production Center staff and audio preservation engineers helped two researchers who made reference images to take back to directors and producers. They also made notes from audio recordings, transcripts and manuscripts.

“I always like working with researchers no matter what the result might be, but it is exciting to know the result might end up in a feature documentary,” Smithers said. “The work was staggered over years. At times, as they were coming down to the deadline to lock in a picture, there was pressure to respond quickly with resources, scans or information to help secure permissions for broadcast, but the Florentine researchers make sure they commit time to do thorough research in advance.”

— Scott Jared, University Gazette

For the complete story on how Carolina’s libraries filled the gaps in “Country Music,” visit thewell.unc.edu/2019/10/17/carolina-libraries-fill-gaps-in-country-music. If you missed the original PBS broadcast of the documentary, UNC-TV’s Explorer and North Carolina channels are rebroadcasting episodes. UNC Passport members can stream all episodes through Feb. 28, 2020, and DVDs, CDs and books of the film are for sale. Find out more at unctv.org/watch/unctv-specials/country-music.

1. In a 1974 photo from Carolina that Ken Burns used in the “Country Music” documentary, Johnny Cash holds up an American Flag. (Hugh Morton Photographs and Films #P0081, copyright, North Carolina Collection, UNC-Chapel Hill Library.)

2. This publicity still of Grand Ole Opry comedian and longtime star Minnie Pearl was one of the images that Florentine Films researchers requested for the “Country Music” documentary. (John Edwards Memorial Foundation Records (20001), Southern Folklife Collection at Wilson Special Collections Library, University Libraries.)

3. This 1922 article in the Atlanta Journal announces Fiddlin’ John Carson and other fiddlers performing on radio station WSB. (Wilson Special Collections Library, University Libraries.)

4. Harmonica player DeFord Bailey, the first black member of the Grand Ole Opry, stands in a WSM radio recording studio in this publicity still. (Russel D. Barnard Country Music Magazine Collection (20484), Southern Folklife Collection, UNC-Chapel Hill.)

5. The first big country music stars, Jimmie Rodgers at left and the Carter Family (Maybelle Carter, A.P. Carter and Sara Carter), in one of 40 images from Carolina’s Southern Folklife Collection. (John Edwards Memorial Foundation Records (20001), Southern Folklife Collection at Wilson Special Collections Library, University Libraries.)