

Plenary - Joyce Ladner
SNCC 50th Anniversary Conference
Shaw University, Raleigh NC, April 2010
Transcript Video Recording #26
(Raw, unedited, no annotation)

Speaker 1 (00:00:17):

We're so delighted here at first Baptist church, 1 0 1 south Wilmington street in Raleigh, who welcome you into our sanctuary and to make use of our facilities today. Uh, we're so very excited for, for the SNCC anniversary and what it means, uh, for this nation and what it's meant for the world. And, uh, uh, we just feel honored to be a part of what you are enjoying these, uh, days. And we look forward to the program today, uh, with great enthusiasm and so fill it home today. And, uh, first Baptist is your church today. And, uh, you're welcome to come back on Sunday for worship <laugh>, But, um, but let us stand as we welcome presence of our,

Speaker 1 (00:01:10):

Into the state's journey, this with you, Lord, whom we live and move and have our being, we are grateful for the gift of another day. We're thankful for your amazing grace that sustains us. And we are grateful that we have one another, as we have been brought to this time to celebrate history, to celebrate your faithfulness, to remember, but also to be inspired, to continue the struggle, uh, bless, uh, this program today, as we gather together and we pray for each participant and we pray for the learners and we pray for the historical figures that are with us and among us. And we are reminded that underneath of those everlasting arms, the promise is low I'm with you always, even to the end of the age, we commit all to you. Christ name, I pray. Amen. Thank you. Uh, we not like to ask, are there any, uh, SNIC veterans with their children or grandchildren in the back of the audience? We'd like them to come up front? If, if, uh, right. Why don't we begin, uh, having, um, the sick veterans begin to, um, introduce their children and who would like to be, we invite you to,

Speaker 1 (00:02:50):

Um, invite you to, uh, come up and introduce your child and, uh, where we wanna start.

Speaker 2 (00:02:57):

Yeah, let's go start, start over. KA mic.

Speaker 1 (00:03:02):

The mic is here

Speaker 3 (00:03:11):

And this looks really, really beautiful. All of you out there. I just want to say that I'm Al I'm the wife of the former age program now Lu Jil Alleen. And this is our youngest son, Kyrie amine. Um, he's 22 years old, uh, and he's in law school now. Uh, I'm also an attorney and, um, we're just, we're,

Speaker 1 (00:03:55):

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Speaker
I'm

2 (00:04:06):

A little bit about

Speaker 1 (00:04:10):

Tuske graduate engineered with the tall. She, Um, I'm Chuck mcg and, uh, this is my daughter, Eva mcg, and, uh, she's a graduate of the university of Minnesota. Um, Hey, Uh, pardon? Uh, she's a graduate university of Minnesota, uh, a couple years ago. She works now as a HR representative human resource representative of target corporations are target in Minneapolis, which has been switched to a, a job at the target store, heading to resources in target in, uh, Irvine county and Irvine orange county, California. My name is char net and these are my children and they insist on speaking by themselves. My name is also Charles ne. Uh, my middle name is ne My family. I'm Kentucky state this year get my,

Speaker 3 (00:06:20):

My name is, um, I'm 14, well 15. So, um, I'm a freshman in Russellville hospital.

Speaker 1 (00:06:31):

Um, how My name is, um, Charles Del with Camaro Amani never. Um, I, my friend, the university of Louisville in Kentucky and I major in economics. My name is Charles I'm living. I say I attended university Andex and actually I'm going to just script, right? And I'm you And I introduce my wife in the seat. My name is Paul Watkins. I would like to introduce to you a young man. I'm well pleased <laugh> He didn't have the opportunity to graduate from all of these big name universities. However, he did graduate from a house in Atlanta, And he is currently living here in this area and is teaching high school To teaching high school is also track coach. So I, you and introduce my son, wife Was supposed to had another son that I don't think he made it. And, but wife, my, uh, daughter-in-law and grandchildren are back there in the bag. Thank My name is Eric Jones. And like Paul's The, My daughter Zora kettle co She's, 18 years old. Uh, and she's freshman at Colorado college in Colorado Springs. Who are you? My name is Charlie co And she's already showing some organizing skills and she organized the school to send her out here.

Speaker 2 (00:11:07):

<laugh>

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Speaker 1 (00:11:12):

And this is my not my

Speaker 2 (00:11:33):

It's

Speaker 1 (00:11:34):

Good morning. Secretary have pleasure

Speaker 2 (00:11:43):

You

Speaker 1 (00:11:44):

Equipment myther former stick secretary, and I have the honor and the pleasure of presenting on the one hand, Chinua AKI, Matthew, and go. And this family came here with one intention to offer Brad PR to Charlie.

Speaker 3 (00:12:23):

I, My name co I went to brand university, actually got to study with Charlie Cobb for little bit. It was awesome. And now I work for the federal defender of New York.

Speaker 1 (00:12:45):

My name Iswell, um, I'm a graduate of NYU, um, Tufts university. I'm going to NYU for graduate school. Getting a PhD American study is trying to my dissertation in September, October, and I just got offered a two year visit professor position at Allegheny college in history. So I'm gonna be teaching African American history, south African history. And

Speaker 3 (00:13:21):

Hi, my name is Mary Green, and I'd like to present to you the youngest of the green Brewton group. And this is CLA at Burg green. And she'll say that you were so Hi, I'm Clara. Um, I graduated from NYU last year, and now I'm working with the schools, which is where I'm originally from. Hi, my name is Nancy Stoler and the honor to present both my daughter haw and my grandson, Heidi van Shaw Miller. And, uh, I like the safety words, Heidi. Good morning morning. My name is Gwen boy haw. Uh, my parents, uh, met working in SNCC, uh, a romance blossom there. They named Gwen for Gwen Brooks and the

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Speaker

boys for w E boys. Um, I have a PhD, uh, from Stanford university and I'm a professor at the university of Pennsylvania. I teach American art and African American art, and this is my son, Ben, um, who just made the honor roll in sophomore year.

Speaker 1 (00:15:01):

My name is Peter ORs. Um, I'm not a field secretary, but, uh, an accolade of James Foreman, certain, uh, and pleasure that I worked with NIC and very formative for me. Um, in the time I did it, I was almost the youngest person on the, uh, Mississippi summer project house beat by six months. Uh, and it's just a pleasure to be here and a pleasure to introduce my daughter, uh, Tara, or, uh, she's a graduate student here at Salem college in North Carolina and a veteran of the, uh, group that brought in North Carolina, uh, for Barack Obama in the last election, no mean task. Actually

Speaker 4 (00:15:53):

I, a graduate student, I'm currently pursuing a master's in education with a concentration in history and working for a us named Ingham. And hopefully we're gonna make the state again into

1 (00:16:14):

My name is George. We, and as my colleagues from NIC upon point out, I travel

Speaker 2 (00:16:21):

<laugh>

Speaker 1 (00:16:24):

I wanna, I, you, I introduce you to my son, a beware. Who's also the son of Sandy and I ask him for, so

Speaker 1 (00:16:38):

Hello, how you doing this morning? Great. I just like to thank all the people that came before me that given me the opportunity to be here and the people that have taught me so much over the course of this weekend, it's been truly a wonderful and I hope of my changing experience. My name is akin BWAY. I studied journalism advertising in English, at temple university in Philadelphia. I started my own small black owned advertising agency last year. I'm also a hiphop artist and activists, and I have a coalition of performing artists. We perform regularly from singers, the regular artists, the hiphop artists, whatever type uncensored perform. I've heard people refer to, you know, positive and negative hip hop. But one thing that's important about the expression of young people is that it be free. So we perform uncensored in Philadelphia and it's been pretty successful and it's been some beautiful things. And I just like to, once again, thank everyone for the wisdom that I've got now from all this,

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Speaker 3 (00:17:53):

These SCC apples have fallen far from the tree, the break room. I'm Maria. I was the field secretary for, from 1963 to 67. And I have the great pleasure of introducing my daughter. I'm proud to be here, very proud to be here amongst all the names that I grew up hearing, meaning knowing, and who influenced me. I'm currently at the university of Southern California getting my second master's degree in theater. I'm in community theater for social justice and as well as a special education middle school teacher, and just working on trying to promote literacy and awareness through theater and art. Okay. I'm a substitute
Papa.

Speaker 2 (00:18:59):

Okay.

Speaker 3 (00:18:59):

Howard romaine. If you're in the audience, you should come down and introduce your daughter, but, uh, he's a little late on the bus this morning. So it's my pleasure to introduce the daughter of Howard romaine. And she will introduce herself.

Speaker 5 (00:19:16):

Thank you so much. My name's Rita romaine Raro and my parents are Howard romaine and Anne romaine, and they met in the movement. So I'm really proud of them and they've taught me everything. I know I was a special ed teacher for nine years now. I'm a developmental therapist and I live here in Raleigh. I ran for school board last year here in wake county and lost unfortunately, and I appreciate a lot of you all support, but I do plan to run again sometime soon.

Speaker 5 (00:19:51):

And right now, the struggle that I see around the country is that schools are becoming segregated, especially urban schools all over the country like Raleigh, the wake county schools are leaning towards that way. Cuz we have a new, very reactionary school board that was just elected and they just voted to do away with our diversity policy. So we're gonna end up right now. We have about two schools that are high poverty schools and when they get through with our school system, we're gonna end up with about 20 high poverty schools. So that's what I'm working on right now is I'm volunteer with great schools and wake coalition. You like more information go to great schools and wake.org.

Speaker 2 (00:20:38):

Hello? Hello,

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Speaker

Speaker 3 (00:20:41):

I'm Jean, uh, leaders. This is my Sonari and my grandson. Solomon, how are you? Introduce himself?

Speaker 1 (00:20:53):

Hello, family. I'm to reek I Smith. I am the son of Jean and Frank Smith And um, my son, so is here. We all, I don't really know what we're doing at this part about what we're, I'm the deputy director of community research for the center for aids health disparities research at medical college.

Speaker 3 (00:21:59):

Hi, my name is Peggy king YDA. I'm originally from Albany, Georgia, the daughter of attorney CV king in Carol King. I live in I'm an architect and I spent 10 years of my career in the city of New York, uh, fighting the government to save the African burial branch, which

Speaker 2 (00:22:19):

Is

Speaker 3 (00:22:28):

Very proud to, to say that because of that New York found out it's African history. Um, so thank you. Substitute mother number two, Uh, acting in, well, certainly you can't act on behalf, but introducing on behalf of Bob and Janet Moses, their daughter <inaudible> I Micha Moses. I have two brothers AWA, Moses and Thomas Seren, Moses, and one sister M Moses microphone check one, two, one, two, three, 2 (00:23:21):

And three.

Speaker 3 (00:23:22):

And Tyler has two children, Zu and Paris, and they will all be here later.

Speaker 1 (00:23:37):

Are there any other introductions to be made? Okay. All right. Thank you at this time. And, and we, um, we not only have great expectations of, of the young people we know at the, the, the next 50 years when they hold this event, they'll be able to introduce their, children's doing great things at this time. I'd like to ask, do Latner to come up, to introduce our keynote speaker for the morning.

Speaker 3 (00:24:26):

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The born and brothers and sisters, um, 50 years seems, have pass very quickly. And, uh, I'm somewhat overwhelmed to think that I was their age on. Yeah. And I'm here to introduce my younger sister, Joyce, who, uh, is the professor, the writer, the observer. And

Speaker 3 (00:25:08):

So, um, Joyce, um, was born in Wayne county. Mississippi was both where out where we both come from Mississippi, we were twins in a sense that we were very close in age and very close in spirit, um, to, um, has, um, participated in several, um, I would say, um, movement activities, which included being locked up in, uh, church in Albany, Georgia, um, and city get out, had called the justice depart to intervene to get them out. She attended a Galloway church in Jackson, Mississippi attempted to get, uh, visit Galloway Baptist church Methodist church in Jackson, Mississippi, and was arrested and was incarcerated several days. Um, she also worked very closely with, uh, Portland to raise money for the March of Washington and to organize all those buses and all those people that you saw who, uh, came to the Nathan Memorial in 1963. And, um, she went to the miss, said Delta. She was very, always very curious as a matter of fact, when I started school, um, I was old enough to go to school. She wasn't and she started crying. So my mother got annoyed and went and asked her trust if she could come to school to me. And he said, if you bring me a cigar.

Speaker 2 (00:26:55):

So,

Speaker 3 (00:26:56):

So George came and sat beside me and, uh, we've been together ever since, um, throughout our careers. And we used to stay close to each other. And, um, I want to go on say about my sister that, um, she, um, as a very active mind and, uh, she's an observer and a writer. Um, she did her the PhD at Washington university after completing, uh, her PhD degree at two college in 1964 and attended Washington university doing the, um, research on women's role and how women do control certain aspects of our dealer lives in Africa. She found the same thing and she's published maybe four or five books. I've lost count and she's written many articles and journals and testing one, two, she has two blocks going on at this time. Her mind is very active and, um, she keeps up with politics and I can't say everything about her, but I want to say that, um, she is an activist. Um, and a, so I wanna to you, your, we ls always big sister who up in the meetings just say anything that came their mind. And I was sitting back shy like, um, but our mother twin us at my birth. She dressed as a, like, um, she, I was three and a half when I started crying to school. So that's when I took the cigar to

Speaker 3 (00:29:08):

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Speaker

And mother said it was a month later that I got promoted first grade and we graduated VALIC. We went off to Jackson state and got together To tell me I just can't sleep while not people suffer. I didn't study until summer. I'm just gonna drop outta school. She dropped out three times

Speaker 2 (00:29:33):

<laugh>

Speaker 3 (00:29:35):

And education, you know, been we're first generation college. And it was such an important, uh, uh, treasure for us that I always stayed in school. And, you know, worked in movement, stayed in school, worked in movement. One time I dropped out with this boyfriend of mine and I stayed out several weeks cause he wanted be the working movement with him. Then I kept saying, I need to go back to school. I didn't over this thing is going, we were all so young, you know, relationships were just here and there. So

Speaker 2 (00:30:12):

<laugh>

Speaker 3 (00:30:17):

Young people tour. So I, I, um, went back to school and when I got back to the registrars office to go, Mr. Doctor, I said, I ly, I mean, I was like, but kinda scared. I said, I want to enroll again. He said, oh, just go. I said, don't have to go. Cause I know you, I knew you were coming back.

Speaker 3 (00:30:44):

Um, so it, it was throughout my life, but I was active and intellectual. Um, and I want to speak about, uh, two young people here today. And I, what I hope I can convey to you is where your parents came from and what, what formed you. I mean, it inform them and why, how, why and how is it that they got into the movement? Cause it is part of your own history. There's a picture and Alliance of the photographs taken out to the March on Washington and ended of a small group of people holding hands with crossed arms and singing. We shall overcome everyone else that seemed had gone home except those of SCC staff members today almost 50 years played that picture reminds me of the loneliness of the battle, small number of people who were really in the thick of the war against American part.

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Speaker 3

(00:31:41):

And they almost Des landscape that was around us for most of the time that we worked with movement. My has been said this week about who we were and what we did, we've discussed and dissected almost every topic at issue from every conceivable angle we've given and received many hugs and kisses told all war stories and we've been raised each other. And, and this is the love community that we used to believe in time and distance have not family, the enthusiasm we have for seeing each other. Again, sometimes even after half the century, I ran to one person that I hadn't seen in 45 years, but who, where it really, where did we come from and why was it that it and others that stepped forth to challenge the system? We were black southerners for the most part and many of our Northern transplants who were children, generations of men and women who had been Deni their basic rights and were the victims of wholesale violences or generations.

Speaker 3 (00:32:47):

We were in our adolescence at very young adulthood. Sometimes the Johns 14 year old kids would hang around snake office. We were 16, 17 nineteens. And in the early twenties, I remember the Bob Moses was probably the oldest, uh, sleep worker in Mississippi, early on terribly young people who had all tall ideas, bounce of courage, commitment, compassion for the poor and cl embryonic, but still clear cut ideas about how we wanted to see the shaped. It was largely our idealism courage that gathered us through those bruising ballots. We saw this raised to believe in an almost literal interpretation of the Bible and 10 commandments, the old Testament prophets, where our models for justice raised largely in small and rural areas with limited exposure to the ways of the Northernness and the big cities. Our world views were very different than the northerners who joined snake and sometimes created problems, not better or worse, but different because harsh segregation, laws and customs made us see the world that we've grown up in and very stark black and white terms with very few shades of gray family church and school constituted.

Speaker 3 (00:34:07):

Our worlds was tightening families. There are Orthodox Baptist Methodist churches and holiness churches, but our mother made us join. I hated said I used to get on the front row and church every time fall asleep because she took me out of my Baptist church, that I was very active in when she got converted to an apostolic church. And we were surrounded with that our church and our schools and our neighborhood, but our schools were short on facilities, but very long UN dedicated teachers who invested us because they wanted to see us replace them. As the leaders of communities, we imported the religious traditions to churches, to the movement, including the order of service, where we substituted freedom songs for HIMS.

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Speaker 3 (00:35:01):

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HES were rewritten as freedom sauce for prayers about the evils of segregation and the biblical morality of the arts harsh rules against evil on judgment date. So I said, right, was right wrong was wrong. And there was no situational morality. That is why preachers in the, the preachers in Snick, such as James bevel, Charles Jones. I'm not, I'm permitting some names. I can't recall. Many of us could easily fit into the movement and preach about a moral struggle and a triumph of right over wrong justice, over injustice and a good over evil. So the combination of our religious views, our youth really led us to become very deeply invested in our beliefs and why we should be in the movement. Our parents have lived through the great depression and as they saw things get better around them, but everyone else, they remained consigned. Their lots of life.

Speaker 3 (00:36:00):

The liturgy of the church became the structure about mass meetings. As I said, started with the song in then a prayer, the songs SNIC same saying came from the church and the liturgy at the songs such as God is on our side. Reemphasized reinforces the belief of the righteousness of our cause. We believe that God was with us and not with the segregations to the school of oppress black people. Our parents taught us to stand up on what we believed in. And we translated that to a certain righteousness and courage. The principles we were taught were translated into always being able and willing to hold onto your beliefs enough to give them up in the face of, of pressure.

Speaker 3 (00:36:50):

Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around was an Anthem that changed directly from our experiences. This is why we almost always went to the map on issues that involved our funding, the beliefs in what we were doing and the righteousness of what we were doing. But as it also reinforced our notion that we had to reject put solutions or expediency in moderation sake, a moderation and to reject negotiation, our moral impairment was what caused us to believe and behave in a manner that basic human rights could not be negotiated. We were also products of our time and the place in which we were born. Many of us were the daughters and sons and fathers who fought in war, world war II. And in some cases we had grandfathers and other relatives who were in world war I, Darren and I had a great uncle who uncle Archie, who was in world war.

Speaker 3 (00:37:53):

I, he regaled us with the stories of how he went to France. They, he saw so many, he described what he saw. It was a world vastly different. He used to say, I want you girls to go there. And we did first. And he also told us the story that made him very bitter. He said some of the French asked him if they could see his tail as in having a monkey tail and if humiliate, but it also angered him to preach to us that as we sat around on his back porch, listening to the fights of Joe Lewis, the brown bomb on radio bar, Jack Robinson stepped to that. He said, you girls have got to be the Jack Robinsons of your day. That was not

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lost on us. So when they returned home from these wars, they certainly observed the expansion of white middle class with America, the suburbanization of America. But none of that included men. They were so disappointed to come back after fighting that the markets have brought to this continuing discrimination. Our, some student in their bitterness most took on their responsibilities and roles they had as fathers, husbands members of their communities, but some also organized and joined the clandestine was out love. And then in Southern states and they started youth councils that nor I joined in 1958, it is not accidental. Then that it's our generation that organized to break down the barricades that had kept blacking, poor people, observing and over generations.

(00:39:37):

The other think that our parents instilled in us was a desire to achieve an education. My mother who went through fourth grade always said, if you get an education, no one can take it from you. And they talked about how their labor had been taken from them and been exploited and how they felt that if their children could go to college even are just finished high school, which was a goal for minute that in fact they would not go through the same faith. Our mother had nine children, mother and father had nine. Children and mothers brings were broader than most peoples I've ever met. She felt that through sheer willpower and her children could get an education. All of us went finished high school, uh, eight finished high school. Um, eight went to college, seven, went to college, wanted to either. So our brother Archie, which tells us I'm gonna live a life like I want to, we all have brother Archie and our family too.

Speaker 2 (00:40:49):

<laugh>

Speaker 3 (00:40:51):

Some of he's a wonderful brother. Most of our commitment, two activism did not begin with for many of us did not. Again, with name. As I mentioned earlier, we were very strongly influenced by the race men, the race women in our communities, Vernon Damer was an early mentor. His sister, a beard was a member of our church and her mother's best friend Clyde Kard was also a mentor. The three of them used to drive nor to Jackson to the statewide NAS in the fifties. And it was just, we were all struck to be there to see all these people. Um, and all we know knew was that we wanted to get bigger rights and was the, that we also met me Evers, who became a mentor and friend. And as I talked today, I want to all of you to be reminded that three of those men were Marcus. Why on until branch? And he was telling, described as the saddest, most tragic figure in civil rights, history, harder in history. So Damon looked like a white man, blue eyes, light hair. The sister looked the same, but because was a very slightly built select. We gone to the university of Chicago and simply wanted to enroll in Mississippi Southern college so that he could finish the education that he didn't get.

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What would behold, he ended up parting penitentiary died from cancer after Ross Barnett released him from prison. My roommate to John Trump, Howard Joan LAR stand up who, who was a freedom writer. John and I started campaign a national campaign that Larry still from jet magazine wrote about to get flat released, released from jail Gregory and others were also doing the same thing. Johnson publishing government played a major role in getting him released. In fact, Larry still the, the jet jet magazine reporter who covered the movement of the south in Mississippi always would always ask us, what, what should I write about what do you young people want us to tell them? And Clyde's case was one that he publicized. So the, the, as I move forward, what I want to say is that these early influences of our parents, the fact that we came out of the church, that they were post, we were postwar babies, young people that our parents had rising that were unfulfilled, led them to invest in us and want us to fulfill those expectations.

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(00:43:43):

By breaking down the barriers. Mother always told us that beliefs aren't worth worth very much. If you can't stand up for them, we learned this as well as, as, and all from our teachers and our churches, neighbors. Here we talk. We're taught how to survive with dignity, which is like walking tight rope in the face of overwhelming gods. The people around us told, do me that we could indeed stand, talk, that we could have the courage of our convictions and that we could carry ourselves and a dignified manner and always to look white people, especially the white men, dead in the eye, and don't blink. And in a way, mother and her sisters, hers, five sisters always said that this will keep white men from trying to attack you. Even though we lived in this very close to society with the one television station, which the news cast openly called black people niggers on this news, it was possible to get certain information into that closed society.

Speaker 3 (00:44:57):

Here's where role of another race man comes in. Our mother and father had a friend. We called him Dr. McCloud. He was an herbalist. What you called? Stay back. He called him, sold these potions from the back. His car from was strong. He used to come by our house and sit on the porch and talk to our mother. But then we found that one day he brought a copy of the Chicago defender that he subscribed to and was so interested. And then he began bringing us his copies of the Chicago defender, the Pittsburgh Curry, but him until was murdered. Dory wrote a letter to the Pittsburgh, cur they never published it. Every week. We looked at letters to the editor, hoping that we would see that. And what she wrote about is how frightened we were, how terrified we were that a boy, our age, that who, and we'd never known the boys to be list before a child of our age that made us feel as we were entering our own preadolescence or adolescents made us feel hopefully Terrified. And without power, we felt that those same men could Lynch our brothers, that they could, our father and the other men in our community when Mac Charles Parker was missed 15 miles from where we live in popular Mississippi. I remember how a mother, her mother's name by the way was Andrew. Her mother would bring close her sons and she would tell our oldest brother, Fred, Fred, stay home, come home. You've gotta get in before dark cause something might happen to you. And you imagine what black mothers went through. During that time,

Speaker 3 (00:46:50):

Perhaps rub sales describes best. What taught us. She said that my mother and father re resisted segregation on many fronts and my siblings. And I saw them speak up to segregationist, tried to push them too far beyond what they were willing to accept. I carried their teachings in my head and my heart when I joined the movement. And when I, after college rub, like most of us grew up observing our

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parents, maintained their dignity in the face of odds. One day, two investigators from the Mississippi state, sovereign commiss went to our father's job. He was a diesel mechanic. Auto company had

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Speaker 3

screwed and they told him, you better get your daughters out of that mess. That's what they called the civil rights movement. He said to us that without skipping the beat that I didn't got off the truck, I kept working on this engine.

(00:47:52):

And I told them, if you have something, you tell my daughters, she go and tell yourself I don't bring messages to them. And I don't care them from them to others. It took a lot of courage for them to say that other than it Lynch far less, but I shall always remember how our parents in the face of these terrible odds, continue to insist that we stand up for our dignity and not allow people to walk over us. That was where I prefer to those who came of age in this period. As the ETT, till generation, the study I did on ex activists, most could remember having seen the picture of Emmett Till's grotesque body of the cover of death magazine. And at ages of 12, 13, 14 years old, somehow faith said they vowed to one day all to the conditions that produced an image. Till years later, I saw in 1980s, I saw this, Mrs.

Speaker 3 (00:48:55):

May till at a conference in Atlanta. I asked her, why did you allow your son's face to be put on jet magazine? And why did you have open cast funeral? And her response was I wanted to world the world to see what they had done to my child, but that was the personification kind of the BLE emblematic, um, Clarion call for our generation to do something em, till it was our age, we were vulnerable. And I think, as I said earlier, they would do that to him. Then we felt we had to find way is to prevent it from happening to other people, paraphrase. Um, Juda Richardson SCC changed the way we saw ourselves and the way we saw our world, people who nurtured us in SCC, both the women and the men, the older and the younger actors made us feel that we could do anything that we had unlimited potential. And we only had to set our minds to, to do and think about strategists for what we wanted to do. We were young and always pushing back against limits. And she said, I felt as a woman that I could, as we used to say, call, and if I pushed hard enough, things would change not only outside, but within the NIC as well.

Speaker 3 (00:50:24):

CC was indeed transformative experience all our life. We were never the same people after we left. It changed us in many fundamental ways. Even today, ick still allows us to hold the most sacred trust in each other. Karen Spellman said that Snick gave her a life alone for, so I didn't have to go looking for friends. And when do we see each other, no matter how long we've been separated, we set the pick up

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where we left off. We don't have to explain ourselves to each other. There is unconditional acceptance, no matter what difficult another sleep member has been in. We don't forget old friendships that we bored with the call room of fighting against racism. All material Case of Hayden describes the SNIC that she calls her family. That NIC was everything to her SNCC tended to be family. We were closer to each other than we were committed by relatives. And she describes how painful it was when she was asked

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for the other whites to leave state. She said it was like leaving my brothers and sisters. And as a human emotion, I think all of you can understand that we don't think about the political side of

Speaker 3 (00:51:52):

CC transformed us in other ways to, And here, I want to point out a number of things that CC really taught us. I mentioned loyalty. CC taught us loyalty, how to stand with each other, no matter what the circumstances were. And if a SCC member got in trouble, we all always responded in whatever way we could think. Also exposed us to the wider world. Beyond our ham in cities, We became aware of the emerging and independent states in Africa, the Caribbean and Southeast Asia. This gave us an international on the planet human condition and how our struggles were interrelated. With those abroad. I would not have lived abroad twice east, west Africa, but able to teach my university students first and foremost, explore the world around them and become world citizens. Had I not been in the snake. Snake also taught us that the struggle is ever lasting and it started before we came on the scene and it will continue after our children and the long gone that each generation takes up. Whatever part of that struggle they can. And they take it to the next, like a relay race.

Speaker 3 (00:53:15):

SNIC also taught us the ability and respect, especially for local people. People who didn't have the education we recognized within them. That wisdom was extremely important that they had skills equivalent to and often skills that surpassed those of us. Those of ours, even though we had more education sticks taught us how to challenge the injustices and to be Lawrence tape said, Snick showed her and us how we are connected some by so many ties that are also cultural and political. And by certain circumstances and certain, certain consciousness, it helped us to preserve our edge here. Young people talking today, that's the, well, we had an edge way back then.

Speaker 3 (00:54:12):

And Clark said that it taught her that she would be a warrior to the grave. And I think that all of us who come here this week feel the same, cuz we are involved in things in our own areas. And we're not the serious reminiscing about the past. Even though I think that's very, very ick taught us courage. As we

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face down dragon, all of us learned how to cook with the most difficult conditions. Jean Willow Smith went to Philadelphia was one of the first people go to Philadelphia following the murder, the disappearance of James chain and who most of us are Mississippi. Uh, and Andy Goodman who was just arrived there before they went missing. She was not told that she couldn't go, go to Meridium where the office was because she was a woman. Rumor sales was present of Tom Toman, murdered Jonathan Daniels and critically wounded father.

Speaker 3 (00:55:07):

(Raw, unedited, no annotation)

Speaker 3

Richard Morris were in front of her and rub writes so eloquently. I asked some women to tell me how snake changed their lives. And what she said was that my 17 year old adolescent mouth clothed with the sight of John's murder body and father Morris wrote screams, screamed for water. As he laid in the dirt grid and Johns death and father Mao's blood solidly silenced. My 17 year old tongue, my tongue became as heavy as, as still as Mao's paralyzed spine yet local people and sleep members showed me through their actions. But you Don give up and come a broken way. You keep on struggling. You keep on believing. You keep on hoping you keep on singing. You keep on working.

Speaker 3 (00:56:05):

I want to close by saying that. Well, I hope that young people here have learned a lot about the backgrounds, the origins, the culture of your parents. I also hope that you've learned a lot this week from the sessions you've attended. And this is your world. We're just simply moving to the sidelines. You

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have to take the mantle as we did. We rested the control from those around us. If the NAAC people got stayed and said the enough to stay with those outside agitators, for those people who are living in the house together, the boys and the girls are staying together. You imagine that moral.

Speaker 3 (00:57:00):

We did a lot of that was the only, we had fun too. We weren't always serious. There was a lot of fun parties with almost nothing there to, for you to drink and, and, um, relationships we hooked up. We broke up. Uh, but the work seemed, as I think about it, collect a lot. The work seemed always to dominate everything. So the relationship could break up east if you sent or decided to go to another area to work state, but we did have fun. So you guys should be exactly, but you are entering a very different world than one, which we tried to your world is far more infinitely, complicated and complex than ours. We were fighting for very clear cut goals. First, it was the right to integrate into the public accommodations. Then it's a matter of getting the right to vote because if we get it, then we can unsee these people who are terrorizing us.

Speaker 3 (00:58:09):

Then the next step, I think our Waterloo came at Atlantic city when we were all terribly, terribly disappointed and in pain that no matter how much work we put into the work leading up to them, that we actually lost. And we didn't have a fallback position, but you should develop all back positions. And you're limited bit only by your tools and your imagination and your energy. You don't have to have a lot of money to do the work because activism really comes from a lot heart. It comes from your beliefs and your, and the ability to hold on to them and to organize those people, to find people who believe black people like we did your weapons to fight today, have to be very and complex as well. You have to global poverty, you have to fight racism worldwide. You have to fight environmental injustices. You have to fight against the pipeline from the grave. I mean the CRA to prisons and the grave to you have to fight against the scourge of drugs and other substances that have devastated decimated communities.

Speaker 3 (00:59:34):

You have to fight all of these things that have become so to the human spirit that it has damaged. The older life society is judged by the way, it treats youth as young and it's eligible. The society is not doing very well. When millions of Americans have prevented from making a decent wage when they not have decent power. Well, they have whole cannot have host of environments in which to raise their children cannot have basic safety when they cannot get marketable skills for these times and for changing economy, I won't, then we have to remit ourselves as older people and certainly give you all the support to move on the front line because this is yours. And

Speaker 6 (01:00:54):

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Thank you very much. The, the do the, the LA the twins, they're quite a dynamic duo.

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