File Name: IGX_092917_PPL9
Event Date: September 29, 2017
Location: Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA
Participants:
PETER VARELA
MELODY GROSS
BEVERLY KAWALEC
JEFFERSON CURRIE II
ASHER HILDEBRAND
JANICE STROUD
Length: 01:14:02

Preface

The following conversation was hosted at the National Humanities Center, facilitated by jina valentine. Consent was given by the participants to have their conversation recorded and transcribed.

Readers should keep in mind that they are reading a transcript of the spoken word and are encouraged to refer directly to the original audio if possible as some interactions and utterances may not have been transcribed due to the nature of unscripted group conversations. The views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in the text belong solely to the roundtable participants and do not necessarily reflect the views of Black Lunch Table.

START OF RECORDING

PV: Is that it?

Unknown: All right, it's now recording.

PV: Is it showtime?

MG: Recording?

AH: All right, would you like me to pass these cards around?

BK: Please do.

AH: All right, I'll just take one from the top. Just pass them around.

[Pause]

JS: [Laughs]

[Pause]

JS: Favorite topic. I've got *Real estate development in the Triangle*, which is one of my favorite topics because I've just- I've read the book, *Evicted*, and--.

AH: Oh, yeah. I just read that, too.

JS: I--. It's so impressive and it's had me looking into all the statistics about our area and North Carolina--.

MG: You wanna state your name, so that way--?

JANICE STROUD: I'm Janice Stroud. And, um, [Pause] when a-a lot of these statistics compare only to the-the hundred largest metropolitan areas — so I've got two things to report about Charlotte and Raleigh, which made this list, is that it is the hardest place, among a hundred, for a child to move from the lowest 20 percent of the income distribution to the top 20 percent.

BK: Charlotte?

[Speakers intermittently agree]

JS: Yeah, Charlotte is-is number one likely. Raleigh is number ninety-six. And the book is based in, uh, Milwaukee, which is the fourth poorest city in the country, but it is at n-number thirty-nine in a way for a child to experience upward mobility--.

MG: Social mobility?

JS: And I think a lot of what this book has to do with is being stuck in poverty because of not having s- a stable home. It is just about impossible for very poor people to live in the United States, over time, in a stable home — which probably a lot of us grew up in. You know, you may not have lived in the same town all your life but--. I did--.

PV: Well, I tell y--.

JS: But not all my life. Though, in my childhood, I never once t--. I never knew that there were any homeless people, I never knew that the poor people would be evicted from their poor apartments because they had spent so much on, uh, on rent. And Durham--. I mean the research, Durham and, uh, well, and these other cities, have lost affordable housing over the last twenty years. We haven't gained any, we've lost (inaudible - 00:03:12) and rents have risen, uh, and incomes are stable. So, tell me about it. That's-that's the story. That's the real story of — I mean, part of the story of real estate in the Triangle.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

MG: I mean, living in Charlotte, um, yes, I agree with everything you just said because--. And we have the Opportunity Task Force right now and that's tryna to do something about social mobility, upward mobility, but, um, one of the things that they found is social capital. So, if a person — a prime example is myself, actually: so, I grew up in New York in a two parent home, but it was my grandparents'. So my grandparents raised me; my grandfather worked for General Motors, so he had a really good income, you know? Um, but I still grew up in an area where a majority of people there lived in poverty. You know, um, I was fortunate that I didn't, but it still was affected in terms of, like, quality of education, whatever. I lucked out with that. Um, I moved to Charlotte. Initially, I was- I worked part time, and it was a struggle to kind of make ends meet, you know what I mean? And the difference is --and this is something that they're talking about in the Opportunity Task Force-- is that I had what's called social capital. I know people who can connect me to the right person, who may be able to offer me a job, maybe able to mentor me, maybe--. You know, all of these different things, but even in

an area that I live in --I live on the east side of Charlotte-- that's not the case for everyone, you know what I mean? So, it's like how because of social capital, my son--. I can homeschool, for one. And two, my son can go to D.C., and it's- you know, and experience something, but not everyone gets that.

BK: Well, did you make the decision that your son would not [Clears throat] get a good education in the public schools in Charlotte?

MG: Oh, absolutely. Um, so initially, he- in kindergarten, he went to a public school literally right around the corner from me. His teacher was great; she's- she taught at, um, on whatever level the kids were on, but I would volunteer, and I would see how the other teachers were. And I just was like, 'I don't want my kid [Laughs], you know, to experience that,' you know? And I got him into a charter school. And the charter school, it's a really, like, good charter school, I would definitely recommend it, but I wanted him to have more self-directed learning. So, not so solely focused on testing and what that looks like, but mainly, like, if he's interested in science, then we build on that and we can add those components. And initially, that's what the plan was, but it changed, and so I decided that--.

BK: Well, how-how integrated are the Charlotte s-schools?

MG: Oh, no. Segregated.

JS: All my kids went to integrated schools in Charlotte, and my kids graduated from West Charlotte High School, but--.

BK: Oh, okay. And, how many years ago?

JS: Then they resegregated.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

MELODY GROSS: Right. So when they resegregated--. Oh, Melody Gross. It's very resegregated, um, and so, it's funny, because his kindergarten class was multiracial. It was everything there, I was like, it's like the United Nations; it was amazing. But the teachers were all predominantly white women, young white women. There was like one Black woman there, who taught, and she looked stressed out. Like, you know. So, it's definitely resegregated. Um, his-his charter school was very, um, proactive in that approach, they wanted a balance of--.

AH: Which charter schools can do. You know, they have the flexibility to do that.

MG: Yeah, yeah. So they had a weighted lottery. Um, and I was on the diversity and inclusion committee in order to get that input. And so, it was, you know, they made it- they still make a really big effort on how to--.

JS: Say your name before you finish.

MG: Oh, I did. Melody Gross, yeah.

AH: Tell me more about that Opportunity Task Force. Is that something the city government put together, or...?

MG: Yeah, it was a group of people. Um, and just, like, in different areas in which they can kind of pull social mobility, outward mobility--.

JS: They actually invited Desmond to talk, he talk (inaudible - 00:07:46)

BK: Oh.

AH: In- where was he going to be?

JS: In Charlotte.

AH: Oh, in Charlotte.

PV: The *Evicted* author?

JS: Yeah.

AH: She was the--. Yeah.

JS: And, um, some of the churches (inaudible - 00:07:56) some of the big white churches that are-are involved in this initiative, and Tom (inaudible - 00:08:06) who used to be where Melody works now, uh, who told me that Westminster Presbyterian is actually a- gonna start developing (inaudible - 00:08:14)

AH: Hm.

JS: So (inaudible - 00:08:17) it's a- it's a drop in the bucket, but it's some-something. And it's some of the power structure to indicate this problem seriously. They could, you know, they could do something.

ASHER HILDEBRAND: Th-the eye opening thing to me about *Evicted* because --uh, this is Asher Hildebrand from Durham-- uh, was, you know, a lot of the work we do in the congressional office focuses on federal affordable housing programs, which most people agree --most people care about and agree-- are underfunded, and in some cases in need of reform, but they provide a-a certain, uh, uh, concrete framework, uh, for-for addressing the problem. The eye opening thing to me about *Evicted* was learning about how- about the-the market for, uh, affordable housing, uh, private lan- and private landowners that exists kind of, I don't want to say above or below, but in a way, below the federal programs. People, who for whatever reason can't qualify for federal programs, can't get off the waitlist or something, and are totally at the whim of these landlords who, uh, are making business decisions. And I thought the book did a pretty good job of humanizing the landlords, they're people too, but on the other hand, it's very clear, like, they see this as-as a real, uh, uh, cat- you know, sort of a-a source of

revenue and source of profit. It's a fairly profitable place to invest and they don't want to be under the- in the federal programs because then they have to comply with the building codes, and they have to have inspections, and they have to, you know, go through all of this bureaucracy. And that was eye opening to me because I've spent so much time focusing on how do we improve our federal programs? But that's a whole population of people that's not even being reached, though.

BK: That's a quarter of the actual affordable and available decent housing. Is that--.

AH: That's right.

BK: And it's been that way for years.

AH: That's right.

BK: And that's- it hasn't changed.

AH: That's right.

PETER VARELA: Peter Varela from New Jersey. I'm new to the area. I'm curious, Charlotte or the Triangle, which areas are more segregated just by-by capital?

JC: Charlotte.

MG: You think so?

AH: Yeah.

PV: Yeah.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

JC: I mean, Charlotte is--. I mean, if you add it all up, I mean, Chapel Hill's different. I mean, the Triangle was big and vast. Uh, and I think part of that boils down to--. If you want to add in school segregation, uh, Raleigh's is a Wake County system,

and they basically have been practicing desegregation based on economics, which has worked fairly well, utilizing the magnet school system. Even though a few years ago, it was tried to- they tried- they tried to reverse it, but what people didn't realize is the four of the five school board members were from up north. Because in the north, the most segregated school systems in the country are like New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Michigan, um, because--. And everyone I--. I was born in, uh, Wake County, and everyone I knew was like, ‘Don't go back to that, don't break apart this system,’ which is what they wanted to do. But I-I think--.

PV: So they kept--?

JC: Yeah, they voted out all the conservative members and voted in, uh, liberal pe- uh, board members. Yep.

AH: One-one part-partial answer --and this is only a partial answer-- is that I-I think it's changing a lot in that in cities like Durham, where I live, uh, and in Raleigh, too, I think, you know, his-historically there's been pretty bright lines, uh, and in some cases, you know, actually bright lines, whe- in public policy between neighborhoods, um, like a lot of midsize cities around the country, that's changed through economic development forces through gen-gentrification. And so now you're seeing, uh, a little more racial diversity, but less e-economic diversity, because people are being displaced from these neighborhoods. And I live- I live on, uh, on the very edge of a historically affluent and white neighborhood, that’s literally across what used to be a railroad track, which is now the American Tobacco Trail, from a historically poor and Black neighborhood. And it's interesting because I'm physically closer to that neighborhood and to a lot of my neighbors there, and we try our hardest to, you know, to-to-to be integrated in our day to

day existence, but the difference between the two is very- is very stark. And it's-it's only- it- the only difference is, uh, is this one, what used to be a railroad line that ran-ran straight from down from the tobacco factory, is-is now a greenway. And- but now what's happening is in that nei- a-adjacent neighborhood, which is called South Side, it's been the focus of the city-city led redevelopment effort, uh, to create affordable housing and replace a lot of substandard housing with affordable, uh, owner occupied housing, single family housing. And it's been an effort made not to displace all of the residents--.

JC: In Durham? It's not working.

AH: Well, that's the thing. Like, inevitably, what's happened--.

JC: It's lightning fast.

AH: Well, that--.

JC: Houses going for, like $50,000 five years ago, are 300 now.

AH: Well, no, and you should see it. I mean, it's-it's--.

JC: I have seen it.

AH: So much of this is in this-this South Side neighborhood--.

JC: Sad.

AH: Entire blocks are being redeveloped, and the houses might come on the market at a slightly lower price point than elsewhere, but nobody who was living there before is able to afford it. And so now, whereas now, you know, the ou-outsider might come in and see a, you know, a-a mixed race, mixed income neighborhood, that-that's only a point in time, and what's really happening is, as you say, this rapid process of-of people being displaced, um, through redevelopment and-and gentrification, and it's created a lot of tension in the neighborhood, uh, as you can imagine--.

PV: So you live in downtown?

AH: I live very clo- I live very close to downtown, but my neighborhood, I'm on the edge of it, but it's-it's a--.

PV: What's the na- what's the name of the neighborhood?

AH: The neighbor- my neighborhood, it's called Forest Hills. It's a- and it's a- it-it was in the 20s, developed as a-a largely white suburb of Durham, and it's a little more mixed now but still has retained that-that identity a little bit and so--. Um, but again, geographically, I'm a quarter of a mile from--. You know, so it is- the legacy is there but the changes are there too.

PV: Yeah. Thanks for sharing.

AH: Yeah.

[Pause]

BK: Well, maybe we should try another question?

PV: Yes.

BK: Does anybody have a particular--? I-I-I like--.

MG: Say your name.

BK: Mine is: *Discuss the varied responses of local administrators and legislators to civic calls for the dismantling of Confederate monuments.*

AH: What's this from? What? Say your name? Sorry.

BEVERLY KAWALEC: I'm Beverly Kawalec. *The response of the administrators and the leaders in our communities to dismantling Confederate monuments*. Uh, this is a- this is a big issue in Chapel Hill. Maybe you all have- have been reading about it, except that it hasn't made it all- its way all the way to Charlotte.

MG: Oh, absolutely. We have our own ones, yeah. [Laughs]

AH: Well, Silent--. Yeah. Silent Sam stuff.

BK: Silent Sam.

AH: Well, and the school system and, uh--.

JC: Maybe the Durham, too?

AH: Oh, yeah, Durham may take matters into their own hands--.

JC: Gone. [Laughs]

AH: Which is interesting, and I'll-I'll just say--.

[Laughter]

AH: I-I'm very interested in what others have to say on this. But--.

PV: I did catch that one [Laughs]

AH: You know, from our perspective, from the perspective of a public official, um, you know, who has been very out on-on the records supporting tearing down monuments, uh, opposing the law the General Assembly put in place, uh, uh, to-to prevent local communities from-from making their own decisions on this, uh, so there's no question where he stands. On the other hand, when, you know, when a group of citizens takes matters into their own hands and sort of outside of the framework that's been created, it does crea- how to respond to that is-is a dilemma for-for a public official. And so- and, you know, in our case, he expressed a good bit of sympathy, but it's-it's a tough one, what do you do when the law doesn't prevent you from taking a-a peaceful- from resolving an issue, uh, through peaceful public local input, uh, it-it's--.

BK: And it's definitely been a problem for Carol Holt, the, um--.

AH: Folt, yeah.

BK: Pres-President of the univer- --I'm sorry-- of the University, because she feels caught in between the-the, uh, University population, the students and the faculty, would like to have this Confederate monument that's on campus, gone, or moved to at least to a more pro-appropriate place, like maybe a cemetery or a museum. But, uh, the president of the University is feels bound to obey the law, uh, of the state and the legislative--.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

MG: So here's the issue with obeying the law, [Laughs] because the law, there was a time when there were laws on the books that just, like, were not good at all, you know what I mean? So we-we walk that fine line when we say "Obey the law," because those laws can be very detrimental to a group of people. We see that absolutely now.

BK: And-and this law was def-definitely a racist law.

MG: Yeah.

BK: They've passed it only to make a point--.

MG: Yeah.

BK: And not because they really--.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

MG: Well, yeah. And that's the thing, most of these- majority of these monuments were not, like, directly after the Civil War. You know, they were, you know what, in response to the Civil Rights Movement, they were a response to, you know, all of these different, you know, civil rights issues, that now they're like, you know, they're just there. So it- so it's like, we s- we-we have the Super Bowl, we have N.B.A. finals, and we're like, 'Yay, we go for the winner.' Literally, the South was like, literally, the South lost, and

yet they want to still be seen as winners. That is the issue. That is the other issue is like, you lost. You lost, you don't get to get a trophy ‘cause you lost. That's weird, you know what I mean? And so--.

BK: Get used to it.

MG: The other issue is, they say, ‘Well put it in a museum.’ And we actually wrote a piece about that; it was like, ‘Just because you put it in a museum, that doesn't mean, like, it just goes away, anything like that.’ Like, a quality museum is going to put context.

JC: Yeah, you have to interpret.

MG: The story. Interpret that. And you know, so we can't just--. The answer’s not, ‘just go put it in a museum.’ That's not--.

[MG intermittently agrees]

JC: And I've worked in museums, and likely, it's gonna sit in storage for a long time. And then when it comes back out, there might be good context, or th- it might have been politically changed to be context that's not as good as it sh- could be or should be. Yeah.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

AH: I think your point’s a very important one that, you know, that we can't look at these in the absence of their historical context and the context in which they were erected, in addition to these huge spikes. And if you haven't read it, the Southern Poverty Law Center did this great analysis nationwide where there are, and you see these huge spikes at- in-in the 1910s, uh, when white supremacist movements were on the rise in this- including very much in this state, uh, and then in the 1960s in reaction to the Civil Rights Movement. Interestingly, there's a handful of these monuments in North

Carolina that have been erected since the year 2000. If you just think about that, it really blows your mind. Uh, and-and so, um--. So yeah, the historical context is critical. M-What my bosses said that I think it's a pretty good line, is that: 'We can't choose our history, but we can absolutely choose which history we choose to exalt and which history we choose to condemn.' And so this is an opportunity to-to do that. Um, um… you know.

BK: Well, what a--. Y-y-you haven't read yours.

JC: I-I have another one: *What should be done with monuments and place names commemorating white supremacists?* Um--.

AH: Well, what should be done with them is--. Yeah, it's a different question than the local reaction no less--.

JC: I mean, I'm not against putting them into museums or in Confederate burial grounds or whatever, because I think that the context for whatever is that- that we don't need to forget what happened in the teens. We don't need to forget, uh--.

MG: Well, that's what books are for. [Laughs]

JC: What happened in the 50s and 60s and 70s. Yeah, I-I agree, but people don't read.

MG: Yeah, I agree, I agree.

JC: People don't read--.

MG: But here's the thing--.

[MG intermittently agrees]

JC: People don't know. And kids that come to a museum, if they are with a good educational program are shown and explained, um, with camps and things like that, too.

I mean, I used to run a summer camp and it does help. I think place names, especially in certain areas, venues are a lot tougher and harder. I mean, every single--. I mean, there was a- the movement a few years ago, or a couple years ago, at UNC to change the place name of the one buil--.

AH: (inaudible - 00:21:25)

JC: Yeah. Every single one of the early founders, all of the buildings at UNC Chapel Hill--.

MG: I mean, the entire country--.

JC: They were all racist. Okay? So, why are we picking on one name when they're all the same? I mean, really, this guy had a track record, but they all have a track record. And--.

MG: I don't really have an issue with place names. I-I- (inaudible - 00:21:45)

JC: I think there needs to be context of the buil--.

MG: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

JC: At the building and to interpret and who this person was, what they did good and what they didn't do good. Um, but…

AH: But statues in public places, that does seem different, yeah.

MG: That's-that's different. Yeah, statues in public places.

JC: Yeah, they need to come down.

AH: Would you, uh--. Not-not to make light of the situation because, uh, just add a little levity to it, there's a petition going around now, nationally, to rename Carrboro, um, Unicornboro. I don't know if you've seen this.

BK: [Laughs]

[Crosstalk]

MG: Unicornboro? [Laughs] Okay. (inaudible - 00:22:20) was cute.

AH: Uh, because--.

JC: (inaudible - 00:22:22)

AH: Julian Carr was, of course, a-a devout racist.

MG: That's cute.

AH: Uh, and so--.

PV: What was the name?

[Crosstalk ends]

AH: Uh, Julian Carr, who --uh, she mentioned Silent Sam-- he spoke, uh, at the dedication of the statue at UNC's campus and it is one of the most vitriolic and racist speeches you'll read, and so if you have any doubt about the context, uh, in which these things were arrested, read that speech.

JC: There's a lot of different meanings for unicorns.

AH: Well, and of course--. Oh, the [Laughs] the irony, of course now is that Carrboro's one of the most--.

JC: Why not just call it Millboro?

AH: That-that would be good.

JC: It used to be a milltown.

AH: Milltown. That would be good.

JC: You know, I mean, it was a mill town that brought a lot of people together.

AH: Well, you know, the Unicornboro, I think- I think, is a joke. But, you know--.

JC: Yeah.

BK: Another point of leva-levity on the, uh, Silent Sam statue is that most of the people who walk by it and look at it don't know that the statue is dressed in a Boston policeman's uniform.

MG: Oh wow.

AH: I didn’t know that.

BK: They had- they had the- the ha- the sculpture was- sculpturer was from Boston and he had no idea in the world of what a confederate uniform looked like. All he knew to look at was the people in the policemen in Boston, and so it's hardly a Confederate soldier.

[Laughter]

JC: Well the one at--.

JS: Yesterday- yesterday said all the statues were made in Cincinnati. And there- you know--.

JC: A lot were made in Georgia.

JS: And the Union and the Confederacy and then-then, you know, some difference, I forget. I think it was a belt buckle or something small.

MG: They didn't get that right, oh my God.

JC: The-the guy who founded the North Carolina Museum of History at that time was called the Hall of History of Fred Olds. He actually posed in some of the period Civil War uniforms in the collection, and one or two of the-the main obelisk statues at the state capitol, one or both of the side soldiers are actually him.

BK: Oh really?

JC: Um, he took all these photos like in all the various poses, um, in the early 1900s before the statues were mostly put up--.

BK: Well, Duke University definitely did the right thing. They took the statue of Robert E. Lee off of the chapel.

AH: Off of the chapel, yeah.

JC: Yeah.

BK: Which is--.

AH: Now that they've got a brand new president who did that and he took some heat from his trustees, but, uh, you know, the benefit, I guess, of being a private institution and not a public one--.

BK: Yeah, yeah.

AH: Answer only to your trustees and not to the state legislature.

JEFFERSON CURRIE II: So, a question based on this, um--. My name is Jefferson Currie, by the way. Um, so I'm Lumbee. Uh, my dad's white, my mom's Lumbee. I--.

MG: I don’t know what that is.

JC: It’s an Indian tribe.

MG: Oh, okay.

[MG intermittently agrees]

JC: In southeastern part of the state, Robertson County. Um, my grandparents on both sides moved to Raleigh for work. I was born in Raleigh, but I grew up in the country. Um, and I still live in the country ‘cause in Nash County, I'm more comfortable. I

don't like--. I've lived in Durham. I've lived in, uh, Raleigh and few other urban areas, but I like the country better. Um, which I find is more diverse. Honestly, um--.

PV: Which city?

JC: Uh, I don't live in the city.

PV: It’s called Ashe county?

JC: I live in Nash county.

PV: Ashe?

JC: Nash.

PV: Nash county.

AH: I live in Ashe county.

JC: I live between, uh, Semeria, Murray Town, Daddy's Ville, and-and, uh, Goldberry.

[Laughter]

MG: This is awesome.

JC: Found that.

PV: I’m still learning my geography.

JC: Yeah, no one's ever heard of that. But-but another question based on this.

PV: I'm looking, I’m looking.

JC: Um, I grew up- I grew up poor. We didn't have anything. Um, I am the kid who--. We were evicted from places and lived in substandard housing, and I have most of my life. But what about Andrew Jackson? Nobody's calling to take Andrew Jackson down, and Andrew Jackson killed thousands upon thousands of Indian people.

AH: That’s absolutely right.

JC: And, uh, this year, there were four statues taken down in New Orleans. No one ever pushed to take Jackson down. There's a Jackson statue on the state capitol; nobody's talking about Jackson.

AH: It is a really hard question of where to draw the line. ‘Cause you're right, you know--.

JC: You know? Yeah, it is.

AH: If we're trying to expunge all evil in history from our public monuments, we're gonna have a long task on our hands.

MULTIPLE PEOPLE: Right.

JS: But--.

MG: The entire country was built off--.

AH: Yeah.

MG: Evil.

JS: The Indians need a writer like Ta-Nehisi Coates- Ta-Nehisi Coates (inaudible - 00:26:48).

JC: Uh, we did. We had one. His name was Vine Deloria.

MG: Here we go.

PV: [Laughs]

JC: Yeah. And he wrote for about forty years. But no one much listened?

AH: I'm interested.

[Laughter]

JC: Yeah.

PV: What’d he do?

JC: But he was a writer of, uh, political scientist--.

MG: *Custer Died for Your Sins*.

JC: Uh, law, um, he had a theology degree. He wrote about Indian issues. He wrote, uh, this, uh, *God is Red*--.

PV: Hm, *God is Red*.

JC: Um, uh, *Custer Died for Your Sins*, um, *Red Earth, White Lies*.

MG: Oh, I'm totally here for that one. [Laughs]

JC: Yeah.

AH: That's cool.

JS: Talk about reparations. [Laughs]

PV: Oh, she's got her own book.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

JC: Yeah. So, I mean, yeah, I-I-I think there is an issue with, uh--. There has been recent notoriety because of Standing Rock and because of the fight for water, but in general, Indians are the bottom of the bottom of the bottom of the bottom when it comes to — and as he has a chapter title, 'Others,' you know, we're just 'the others,' you know? And honestly, I feel that part of the problems with the discussions in general in America on race are because that race is white, Black, period. And in order to get to something, we've got to talk about it in all of the nuance, as well as with poverty. And then, you come to a difference- more difference of opinion, and the problem is, we don't really want to have it complicated even more, we want to have it fairly simple.

MG: So, two things I'm thinking about: one, why don't you take that up?

AH: Yeah.

MG: Like, it really does start with--.

JC: Yes.

MG: That one person that says, ‘You know what, F this--.’

JC: Yes. Well, there’s people already taking it up.

MG: You know what I mean?

JC: Yes.

[JC intermittently agrees]

MG: And two, it's interesting because it is- it definitely becomes a white, Black thing. And I remember a-also (inaudible - 00:28:48) blogger of mine said that people living in Oshkosh, Nebraska had never seen a Black person before until he went to college. He had a friend who lived on the reservation, and so they went back home to the reservation, and the family was saying, like, the heat is constantly always cold, or whatever, in the house, so he would kind of take something off the side to make it warm, but they didn't realize they were taking the installation off — because they never told them, they just put them in the house and said, ‘This is your home. There you are.’ You know what I mean? But no one ever said, ‘This is what's wrong.’ And-and I do feel like we-we --and I've been guilty of it as well-- forget about the Natives and forget about the impact of this entire country on them. Yes, we were enslaved. My people were enslaved--.

JC: Oh, Indians were too.

MG: Right. No, no, no--.

JC: I descend from enslaved Africans and Indian people.

MG: Absolutely, absolutely.

[MG intermittently agrees]

JC: Yeah. And-and I think the problem is we don't read, we don't know history. And that's the educational school system, but also--.

MG: But that's also because--.

JC: On all of us.

[JC intermittently agrees]

MG: You-you-you want--. The victor tells the story. You know, the--. I- luckily we are at a place now where that's not happening as much. There are--. I- and I honestly, I think it's because of social media and because of the internet, you get to hear those different perspectives, you know, and people are sharing it, but--. Yes--.

[MG intermittently agree]

JC: Although, I will say, every week I get [Laughs] pissed over something else because there still is this tendency to not tell the whole story, to leave things out. And I think it's as much out of intent, uh, as it is out of ignorance. I mean, I think both of them go hand in hand, whenever there's a story in the newspaper on cornbread and Indians aren't mentioned at all. That's--. I don't know whether that's intent or ignorance, but that's pretty rough.

AH: Well, and you're right. And if anything, the, you know, the-the stories are becoming shorter, and yes, there is a space now where we could talk about these things that maybe didn't exist in the past. And we can, maybe, begin to understand the nuances a little more, but for the vast majority of people out there, they're consuming this information in these tiny little bits.

MG: 140 characters.

AH: That's right. Or 280 now, I think..

MG: 280 now. Yes. [Laughs]

AH: And it's like, you know--. Or-or the cable news or whatever. And so even though the space is there in a broad sense, like the-the channels through which we access it, are so constrained and so, uh, you know, uh, uh, instant gratification, short story, you know, short, uh, soundbite, rapid turnaround, and not long form. And you need long form to-to understand something so, you know. I mean, and--. Right, and I think the other important point that I really agree with is just how elusive the concept of-of race can be. And-and, you know, the-the Trail of Tears was one of the great tragedies in our nation's history, but a lot of folks stayed behind, and a lot of folks stayed behind, you know, intermarried, and, you know, they're-they're-the-the--. I've got a lot of my family like, the-the--. Those today who trace their ancestry back to the Cherokee, or other tribes that were forcibly displaced, like, you know, every single shade of the- of the rainbow in terms of what-what-what they look like. Yet, because we think about it in these binary terms, it's, like, hard- it's hard for us to get our mind around it sometimes as a survivor.

JC: I mean, I grew up with the privilege of looking like a white boy, which my mom at one point was like, 'Well, I thought y'all'd be darker.'

AH: [Laughs]

JC: Like-like it was a fault of ours in our birth.

BK: Oh, dear.

JC: And but at the same time, I always had this thing inside of me where when people would not acknowledge that I was Indian, I would like, 'I'm an Indian, dammit.' I

mean, it's like you're caught in identity issues and the diversity of what we are is a lot more than what we--. Yeah, as you're saying, what we want to really get into.

[JC intermittently agrees]

MG: I think this is, right here what you're doing is coming to things like this and sharing that and now, I'm like, 'Oh, let me go ahead and--. I gotta study the next six, seven weeks learning,' you know what I'm saying? Researching and trying to find a book on it. You know what I mean?

JC: Oh, I'll send you some books if you want. [Laughs]

MG: Yeah, yeah. For sure. So, you know what I mean? So I do think--. And definitely the reason why I do stuff like this like too, is because even though, you know, it is black and white, but this- there's still this- this Blackness that is only looked at, you know what I mean? Like, people love to quote MLK and I'm like, 'Uh, there was so much more than that.' And I'm like, there's so much more than that, you know what I mean? So…

JC: A-amen.

PV: I learned about the Lumbees today.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Yeah.

JC: And we're still fighting for it.

AH: Still fighting for recognition.

PV: [Laughs]

JC: It was in Congress this week, or--. Yeah, earlier this week.

BK: (inaudible - 00:33:44)

AH: We're cosponsors.

BK: About the story being asked, ‘What are you?’

JC: We need it.

BK: You know? ‘What are you?’ Somebody walked up to her grocery store and said, ‘What are you?’ Because she-she looks (inaudible - 00:33:57)

AH: So do you think that's a good thing or bad thing? That we're like- feel like we can be open about it?

BK: It was a- it was a, sort of a--.

PV: (inaudible - 00:34:04)

BK: (inaudible - 00:34:05)

JC: Yeah, it's new where I live. Yup, right down the road.

PV: It’s diverse?

JC: Um, the area? Yeah, I mean, within five miles of my house, Hispanic, white, Black, Indian. Um, and I think that growing up, going to the high school I went to in Franklin County, which was--. I mean, there weren't a lot of Indians around because Indians live in different areas in the state. But, uh, my high school mostly was half and half, uh, African American, white, some Hispanic, some Asian, a few Indians. Um, and l-living next door at different times in my life, you know, you grow up with everyone, and in the country, especially in cert--. Now, I'm not talking about the mountains. The mountains is a white place in North Carolina, but in eastern North Carolina, white, Black, now Hispanic, are side by side, especially in-in rural areas. And it's-it's always kind of been that way. There was a saying --I worked on the civil rights exhibit a few years ago-- and there was a saying in back in the day, uh, in the African American community. I had a few people recount it to me that, in the north, you can go to school

together and you can't live next to each other. In the south, you can live next to each other, you just couldn't go to school together.

[Laughter]

JC: And that was kind of what rural South was. Because a lot of people live side by side in the same community.

JS: Right. Did your kids play together?

JC: My dad did, my mom did. I mean, as- when my dad was growing up, I mean, I actually played with kids that were, uh, the sons of, um, African American family that my dad lived next to, and my daddy was like- asked his father, 'Why don't we go to school together? We eat, you know, we associate all the time.' Um, but there were barriers. And I-I think--. There's a lot of stories that are untold about what was going on, um--.

PV: Ze-Zebulon or in Nashville? Which was more diverse?

[Pause]

JC: Zebulon. Yup

AH: So, uh, you showed him, but so is ra--? This is Nash County. Here's Rocky Mountain. Here's Nashville, where-where are you?

JC: I'm kind of on Southern Nash. Yeah, on the corner, like, near where the Mudcat Stadium is.

AH: Okay. Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

JC: Not far from that.

AH: Towards, uh, so- part that's getting some growth now from (inaudible - 00:36:38).

JC: Yeah, we don't want it, but yeah, it’s comin’.

Unknown: [Laughs]

BK: (inaudible - 00:36:42)

JC: I was glad when the economy went down in some ways, ‘cause the growth stopped. Wendell’s getting grown up.

AH: (inaudible - 00:36:46) Wendell Falls or whatever going (inaudible - 00:36:48).

JC: I hate Wendell Falls.

AH: I’m sure you do.

JS: I have a question for you.

PV: What is that?

[Crosstalk]

JC: It’s a--.

AH: (inaudible - 00:36:53)

PV: [Laughs]

JS: Is there a Lumbee church? I mean, the white church played such a major role--.

[Crosstalk ends]

JC: There is- Lumbees are Baptists and Methodists most likely, uh, normally, my family was Baptist. But, um, up until recent years, I don't think, uh, there wasn't a lot of politicking in the church. It wasn't a place for politicking. Uh, Indians were not as willing to utilize the church as a place of organizing. Um, so it is different. We did that with the schools more, but once se-desegregation happened, that changed as well. But--.

JS: Thank you.

MG: What's your question, Peter?

JC: Yeah.

PV: Says: *Imagine racial equity*.

MG: [Laughs] Oh.

PV: So how do you interpret that?

AH: Oh, wow.

MG: Well, I'm glad it didn't say ‘equality.’

PV: Yeah, that's why--.

MG: Um, ‘cause there's a big difference between equality and equity.

PV: Equity is more interesting.

MG: Um, yeah, I mean--.

PV: Is that something you can build over time?

MG: Oh, in this country? Oh, no.

AH: [Laughs] That’s a- that's pessimistic, probably true, but pessimistic.

MG: You’re right. Yeah, yeah--. I mean, I don't know if it’s pessimistic or it’s like, realistic, right? We see it. We see it now. We have someone in administration who has wholeheartedly opened the floodgates for hatred, you know what I mean? So--. And the thing is, it's funny, because I'm like, these people are --no offense-- in our Congress, they're in our, you know?

AH: None taken.

[Laughter]

MG: They’re- they’re our--.

AH: I see ‘em everyday.

MG: They’re making the decisions for our lives, you know, and so I don't see it as — un-unless they're held accountable. Here’s my thing, prime example. You know, I post stuff on Facebook, if you say something ridiculous--.

PV: [Laughs]

MG: What I'm doing: I'm screenshotting it, I'm sending it to your boss, because I have to make it- where it hurts.

JC: Right.

MG: Money will hurt you.

JC: Right.

[Crosstalk]

MG: If you lose (inaudible - 00:38:53)

JC: It’s the only thing that hurts in America, yeah.

MG: It’s the only thing that hurts in America.

[Crosstalk ends]

JC: It's all about the money.

MG: It’s- and-and-and--. I haven't even had to do it, like I've had white friends and white allies who say, ‘Oh my goodness, did you just call her a ‘Black bitch’?’ And they'll screenshot it, and they'll call their job and they'll send an email and everything. And then you know, it goes from there. But you have to hit ‘em where it hurts. And that's money and that’s (inaudible - 00:39:14). So I think until we make racists uncomfortable, till we make it so that they lose their job and their livelihood, we will not have racial equity.

JC: I don't think we ever will.

AH: So I'm not--.

JC: I'm not- I'm not co- I'm not really hopeful for equity.

MG: Definitely not in my lifetime or my son's. [Laughs]

AH: I got a related question, which I think about a lot 'cause of where I work, but I'm interested in y'all's thoughts, 'cause you mentioned the current political environment and the phenomenon of this current president and there's some debate going on about is this- is this the last gasp of, you know, essentially white male dominance of this country, uh, uh, given that white-white men, uh, are going, you know, are-are rapidly becoming the minority and will-will-will--. In a Democracy, they- be unable to sustain, uh, you know, their-their decision making power indefinitely. I guess the basic question is-is, in the long, uh, sweep of history, are demographics on the side of racial equity, uh, and this is just like a bad period we're going through right now, or is it something deeper than that? Something about human nature, something that's more fixed and enduring and-and unchanging--?

JS: This idea of tribalism? Maybe, that idea? I mean, it has- it seems to reinforce the idea that-that this is deep human nature. I mean, humans made the arrangements that will keep people down. Those arrangements can be changed. But, you know, apparently the folks up top don't want nor like it, [Laughs] so.

MG: The other thing is--.

JS: I don't like the idea that it's human nature.

BK: Yeah.

MG: I think the other thing is, you mentioned that, you know, white males are the minority, but in all actuality--.

AH: (inaudible - 00:41:07)

MG: You guys are the minority, because if you- if you're doing it- because it's white and then there's people of color. So, technically, if you're saying we're-we're--. Because- white people were already the minority.

AH: Sure.

MG: If you add all the people of color, that-that (inaudible - 00:41:21) right? So we have white, and we have Black, and we have Latino, and we have all of these break ups, but in all actuality, white supremacy has continually put white above anything else. So, until, I think, people of color realize that they can dismantle white supremacy. Until white people are saying, 'We can no longer subscribe to this idea of white supremacy,' then, yeah, we will not- it will not come down, you know?

PV: But wasn't that the whole novelty of Obama? As the first Black President to, kind of, subside--.

MG: Oh.

PV: White supremacy? Now--.

MG: Yeah, it was supposed to be.

PV: We got hit harder with Trump.

MG: Oh, we got hit--. They wanted someone total opposite.

PV: Exactly. So--.

MG: Total opposite.

PV: It was supposed to--.

MG: But here's the thing- that liberals that voted for Trump.

AH: And- well--. And like it was conservative--.

MG: [Laughs] (inaudible - 00:42:11)

JC: There's also a-a higher percentage of African American, and Latino and the Indian, and a bunch of other people of color voted for Trump than voted for Obama.

BK: Women voted for Trump.

JC: Like a massive amount more.

MG: Well, ‘cause there’s the thing, the idea is that [Pause] they- and they- it made it seem as though like--. I-I don’t even think they've made it into a race thing, it did. But it's also a have and have-nots, you know, poverty versus rich.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Yeah.

MG: You know what I mean? So, if I can support this person who is big business — mind you, I am from New York, and his businesses is really…

JC: [Laughs]

MG: No.

AH: Built on frauds and bankruptcies his whole career.

MG: Right, exactly. It’s also- you know, that part, but it’s- it’s built off of ‘You’re poor, you-you’re gonna hate me because I’m middle class,’ you know what I mean? Not saying literally, I say it ‘cause I’m poor.

JC: I’m (inaudible - 00:43:05)

[Laughter]

[Speakers intermittently agree]

MG: But, um, you know what I mean? So it’s like ‘I'm going to hate you because you’re middle class or you’re- look like you’re middle class.’ You know what I mean? What is that? Like, so I think it was more so [Pause] it was more so of a power struggle in terms of like (inaudible - 00:43:26) You know what I mean?

[MG intermittently agrees]

JC: I-I think that that, rich and poor--. And I- I mean, to be honest, living in eastern North Carolina? Recession ain't over.

MG: Oh, no.

JC: There's still no jobs. And I-I would say, whatever race a person is in eastern North Carolina, they're still pissed.

AH: Nash county--.

JC: And they're, like, freaking, and I have to go and deal with my mama, who every day is on the verge of tears, because she has no money, her body's breaking down because she cleaned houses and worked in plants her whole life when she couldn't do it. And now, she's stuck and has nothing. No matter--. My stepfather got laid off a few years ago, and even though he got re-educated, he's making $5-6 less. This has happened everywhere, no matter white, Black, Hispanic, Indian. And I think--.

MG: And that was the (inaudible - 00:44:25)

JC: He seized on it. And the problem, though, I will say, eh, I-I think the Democratic Party didn’t. I think the Democratic Party is as much to blame because--.

AH: Oh, that. Well, that--.

JC: Because honestly, Democrats, economically, are Republicans.

AH: We made it all about Trump. That's part of the problem. Instead of--.

JC: Yeah, look at every Cli- every Clinton ad was about how bad Trump was. It wasn't about what she was doing.

AH: Nash county is one of the counties that voted for Obama and then Trump, I believe.

JC: Yup.

MG: Oh, wow.

JS: You still have got to have a good message, the Democrats. They--. You know, there have been periods and- when there was really active community organizing, like it was (inaudible - 00:45:07) and way before that. The Indians and-and slaves worked together at one time. Um, and I don't know what we can do to bring that back. And my question, eh, to me personally, is how can I be an ally to a cause like, uh, Black Lives Matter? You know, I can't- I don't- I don't qualify. I want to- I wanna support--.

BK: You can s--.

JS: Fifteen, you know, $15 minimum wage and stuff like that.

BK: You can speak out against injustice and unkindness, whenever or wherever you hear it or see it.

MG: Right, I definitely think, um--.

BK: As an individual.

MG: Calling it out your people [Laughs] when they- when they do something stupid and say something stupid is a- is a big step. Like, again, I have, um, you know, white allies. I like to call them accomplices because there's a difference between an ally and an accomplice.

[Laughter]

[Crosstalk]

MG: And, you know, an ally (inaudible - 00:46:11)

JC: An accomplice goes to jail with you, a ally (inaudible - 00:46:16) you out. [Laughs]

[Crosstalk ends]

[JC intermittently agrees]

MG: (inaudible - 00:46:16) Um, you know --rest in peace-- accomplice was the one who was killed in (inaudible - 00:46:21). That's an accomplice, that's the one who's out in the streets and, you know, and you guys are older so I do not expect that from you guys [Laughs]. But you know, if you're in church or whatever, get your people together who have some views that are really tainted, you know what I mean? That are really detrimental to that, you know?

JS: You really shrunk when I said that. What is- what was your input?

JC: I thought about an-an old school anarchist that --actually feminist and anarchist-- back in the day, Lucy Parsons, when she said, uh, what she would like is for, uh, the poor to station themselves at the doorways of the rich and shoot and stab them as they come out.

[Laughter]

JC: And that's kind of where my mind goes. It's like--. 'Cause I do- grew up down here. And I'm kind of like, I don't dislike the middle class, I dislike the upper middle class a lot of times, 'cause I've got to talk down to, um--.

AH: Well, this'll make it just like , so my-my--.

JC: So, yeah.

AH: My neighborhood is squarely upper middle class. We're you know--.

JC: Oh, I know. [Laughs]

AH: But we've got the smallest house in it and- but, you know, that's neither here nor there. We're- we're upper middle class as well. We're fortunate to be. The, uh, I-I already said I live next- in a predominantly white ne-neighborhood, geographically closer to a predominantly Black neighborhood and most of that--. You walk through my neighborhood, you see a lot of Black Lives Matter yard signs, you walk through the neighborhood next to me, you don't. And I-I think, and-and yet, you read my neighborhood listserv, when people start firing off, you know, the very lively debate, for example, last year about the suspicious activity who ended up being a can--.

JS: Tell me about it.

AH: A canvasser for the Hillary Clinton campaign, who happened to be Black was knocking on doors and that freaked people out.

JS: (inaudible - 00:48:04)

MG: We can't do that, that will literally get us killed.

AH: A-and so--.

JC: In other words, talk to your people. [Laughs]

MG: (inaudible - 00:48:12) people.

JC: Talk to your people and say, 'Black does not mean suspicious.'

AH: Well, and that's the thing. And-and I- people did. People rose up thing, but like, I guess my point is, like, I'm not trying to be too cynical about someone putting a yard sign in their yard. I think that's an important shar- sign of solidarity. But there is this kind of phenomenon of like, you know--.

MG: Yeah, like the safety pin thing. Don't do the safety pin thing. When they did the whole safety pin and the pink pussy hats — don't do that.

[Laughter]

MG: That's not supportive, that is very hands off, just wanna do enough to make someone--.

JC: I'm gonna run looking for safety pins (inaudible - 00:48:44)

AH: Oh yeah. You don't want empty symbolism. So like, what it- what is it? Well, it's- it's like--. You know, I don't know, I-I don't know. I don't- I don't have an answer. But like, one thing we've been trying to do is like, you know, start at the neighborhood level. We-we- in my neighborhood, again, we've got two neighbors, right on top of each other, there's been some bad blood in the history, but we both have these neighborhood associations begin to get the neighborhoods together and talk about, you know, issues like that, i-incidents like that. But like, as a good example of, like, misunderstanding that can lead to, uh, to prejudice or prejudices that could lead to misunderstanding--.

MG: I think the other thing is, a lot of times well intentioned white folks, they come and they at the table and they're with a person of color, and, you know, someone asks a question and --this-this hasn't happened here-- but someone asks a question and--.

AH: It's okay if it has.

MG: Someone else who is not a person of color, answers for that person of color. Like, don't do that. Like, do not do that. Let that person of color--. Unless they say, 'I'll let you take that.' You know what I mean?

[Laughter]

MG: But you can- you cannot speak for us. No- you know, let us talk, let us--. And it's- it's gon- it may get ugly, and may involve curse words and may involve yelling

but it's because we are angry. You- just how you're angry with the situation with Natives, I am angry with the situation when it comes to Black or Latinos, and so that can be expressed in so many different ways. But the important thing is to just listen and take ego out of it and take, you know, pride out of it and all of that and say, ‘Okay, this isn't really about me,’ you know what I mean? This is about what this person has gone through, what their lived experience is, you know what I mean?

JC: Mm-hmm.

MG: So--. But, ye-yeah--.

Unknown: Well, I mean--.

MG: Get your people together, that's all. [Laughs] That’s what you can do at your age.

JC: (inaudible - 00:50:29) your people.

MG: Yeah. Just talk to them, you know. That’s all. I try- I mean, my family- I talk--. They’re sick of it, so I--. [Laughs] They’re just like, ‘Well, no.’ Because my family is not (inaudible - 00:50:41) they’re not, like, outspoken.

JS: Oh, I think--.

JC: Yeah.

JS: You know, I- a person like you is really important in your job and to relate to the public, and--.

MG: I'm lucky to have that job, I probably would have been fired at any other place. [Laughs]

AH: What’s your job?

JS: (inaudible - 00:50:56)

MG: I work at Levine Museum of the New South.

AH: Oh, yeah. That's a great museum.

MG: Yeah. What's your question?

AH: Oh, my question: *How is North Carolina characterized in national media? How does this relate to our vision for the state's future?*

Unknown: Oh, wow.

AH: Not a loaded question at all.

MG: [Laughs] Right, right. You picked that one.

BK: I think it's Jesse Helms and basketball.

Unknown: Hm.

MG: Yeah. I don't even know who--. Who's Jesse Helms?

JC: Exactly.

BK: Oh.

JC: That's age dependent. [Laughs]

BK: Yeah.

MG: Oh?

BK: Yeah, he was the most racist--.

[Crosstalk]

JC: Not saying anything about your age, but I figured--.

MG: Oh no, it's fine.

BK: One of the--.

MG: I'm probably older than--.

BK: He was one of the--.

MG: But I'm a Northerner too, so.

JC: Right.

[Crosstalk ends]

BK: One of the most racist senators in Washington, um, for twenty years.

MG: Okay.

BK: Uh, ending in the mid 80s.

[MG intermittently agrees]

AH: He was the original right wing radio host or TV host before there was a cable news. It's how he got to start in the 50s and 60s really, uh, Dixiecrat and then ran for Senate. And, uh--.

MG: Okay, I think (inaudible - 00:51:57)

AH: Yeah, famou- you know, pioneered ads such as--. Uh, what were some of the famous ads he ran?

JC: Uh, the--.

AH: The white hands ad that was- it was (inaudible - 00:52:05)

[Crosstalk]

JC: Yeah, the--. Yeah, of- basically--.

AH: H-E-L-M-S.

JC: Black hands taking--.

AH: Taking money from a white hand--.

JC: White jobs.

AH: White jobs.

[Crosstalk ends]

JC: Oh-oh-oh, yeah. Um, African American woman dancing with Jim Hunt. Remember that? When that hit the news? Yeah.

AH: Governor Hunt will tell the story, uh, he's told it to me, where- when he ran, uh, against Helms in 1984 for Senate. You know, this is, you know, uh, from down your way, you know, grew up in eastern North Carolina on a farm, you know, always considered himself deeply religious man of the people. He would go around to the grocery store and see someone he knew. And they would say, uh, 'Oh, hey-hey, James. How are you doing?

BK: Jim Hunt or Jim--?

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Jim Hunt.

BK: Uh-huh.

AH: Governor Hunt. They'd say- he'd say- 'Well,' you know, 'Can I count on your-your support?' Uh, 'Well, I like you, but I'm gonna to vote for the religious man.'

JC: [Laughs]

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Oh.

AH: Or you know, whatever it is, uh.

JC: Yeah.

AH: Yeah.

JC: I- I'm like worn out that the power of the Democratic Party has been in east North Carolina traditionally, and Jesse Helms was not from eastern North Carolina.

AH: True.

JC: He was from Monroe.

AH: From Monroe.

JC: Right outside of Charlotte.

BK: Yeah.

AH: And then got his career in Raleigh.

JC: Uh, his father was the town police chief.

AH: I love that you don’t- that you don't know who Jesse Helms, by the way. So I want you to answer the question of how you--.

JC: Although--.

AH: Feel the state is portrayed in the national media.

BK: Yeah. Yes, yes.

JS: Somebody else tell it.

MG: *How is North Carolina characterized in the national media?* Whew. Um, see, coming from New York they-they just swear--. Like, because I live in Charlotte, they just swear I'm still in the country, like--.

BK: Yeah.

JC: [Laughs]

MG: I’m like, I am not in the country.

JC: No.

MG: Like I have public transportation.

AH: It’s in the top twenty biggest cities in the country.

MG: Right.

AH: Fastest growing in the last decade.

MG: I’m like, ‘What?’ They’re like, ‘Oh, what is there to do tonight? Nothing ar--?’ No, there's literally something to do every day.

JC: ‘You got a tin roof?’

MG: Right, right.

AH: [Laughs]

MG: Like, it’s so weird.

AH: ‘How’s that- how’s that outhouse been treating you?’

MG: Right, it’s weird. So, it's still this. You know, North Carolina is still looked at as the ‘Deep South’ and I'm like, ‘Eh, no. No, it’s not.’ Um--.

JC: No. Not Alabama.

[MG intermittently agrees]

BK: My nephew lives in New York City, a-and he has your same attitude of--. He would never want to live in North Carolina. He just thinks it's nothing. But that's New Yorkers’ problem. That's not our problem. That’s-that--.

JC: I find that the more New Yorkers who move here, the more that every- just about everyone I talked to is like, ‘Oh God, now that I'm here, I never want to leave.’

BK: Yeah.

MG: Oh yeah, I’m never going back.

BK: Yeah.

MG: No, absolutely never going back.

JC: I just- I would ask one thing: Don't tell anybody else.

AH: [Laughs] That’s right.

BK: Right.

MG: But literally--.

JC: Because honestly, the growth is about to strangle us. [Laughs] Like--. Yeah.

MG: My family--. I came down in 2011, my sister came down two months later. Two years later, my other sister came down. Three years after that, my older sister and my s- mom came down.

JC: Yup.

PV: We're coming, we're coming.

MG: (inaudible - 00:55:09)

JC: It's what hap--. Oh, been coming for 40 years.

AH: Well, and that's now filtering its way up into our political leadership. Uh, crazy (inaudible - 00:55:14), you know, we've got a crazy General Assembly, some of them are from--. That's a technical and political science term.

[Laughter]

AH: Some of them are from- are native North Carolinians, from rural areas, but a whole lot of them aren't though, they're-they're from out of state and, uh, have come for various reasons. But I, you know, it is cha--. I-I see it as a healthy thing. I think it's changing a lot, um--.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

MG: I have mixed views, even from like a New Yorker. Like, I have mixed views because I came in not in some 'Oh, I'm here to take over.' And a lot of New Yorkers come and do that, they move to the South and make it like so they can do all this New York stuff. And I get it. I-I-I don't like that. I like the culture, of certain aspects of it, you know what I mean? I do think that there's issues, there's issues everywhere. There was no — I couldn't afford to live in New York, so I moved here, right? But, um, I think that you still have to respect some of the culture, you know what I mean? And what's

happening is that there are people who are coming, moving from the North or the West Coast, or whatever, and they're not respecting the culture, you know? Um, where- there was an article in *Charlotte*, and this woman was, like, tired of hearing that she's not a native Charlottian. And like, she was, you know, she was like, 'You don't have to remind me.' Like, well, no, there's pride in the fact that there's people that still are from Charlo-Charlotte, born and raised. And there's nothing wrong with that. Look, I say all the time, 'I'm from Harlem, I love Harlem.' You know, I love--. I'm never moving back.

[Laughter]

MG: But I love Harlem. I love it, you know, because there's a culture there that you will not find anywhere else. And you have to respect that, you know? Um, I do- like, I think North Carolina as a whole is still looked at as country, um, where you think they're going to go to see, like, cows grazing in every--. You know, (inaudible - 00:57:02). And there's a mix of that, there's city life, there's urban life, there's all of this, and so, um--. But, I also feel like, on the flip side, businesses see North Carolina as a good market to be in, and businesses are moving here --big business, mainly-- if they put another damn brewery up in Charlotte, I'm gonna lose my mind.

BK: [Laughs]

JC: Oh God, Yeah. I don't even drink beer. I hate (inaudible - 00:57:25) [Laughs]

AH: Well, (inaudible - 00:57:28) Rocky Mountain, too.

JC: I'm sick of 'em. I mean, they can do some cider, I like that, but beer? Ugh.

AH: [Laughs] I'm from Asheville, you gotta drink beer in Asheville.

JC: I--. You know--.

MG: And politics a lot of times, I think it's-it's-it's not as- it's-it's regressing from what I can see- what I've learned--.

AH: That's certainly the national image. I mean--.

MG: And the national image is that North Carolina is re-regressing.

BK: H.B.2 has really messed with our image really badly.

MG: Oh, yeah.

AH: The number one question I get now when I'm, like, back in D.C. and talking to the political circles, or if I'm in, you know, New York (inaudible - 00:57:57) and wherever, normally the big league coastal cities, but they all say, 'What in the world is happening in North Carolina?'

BK: Wow.

AH: 'Cause I- I do think- and I do think that speaks to the fact that, at least among some, there has been a perception that North Carolina is exceptional within the South.

JC: I--.

MG: Yeah.

AH: And-and (inaudible - 00:58:14)

JC: I will say I agree, but I think we're in an enigma.

MG: Oh.

AH: Yeah.

JC: And I- the-the reason I say that is because whereas we had Jesse Helms at the same time as we had Terry Sanford--.

AH: Terry Sanford and Jim Hunt.

[AH intermittently agrees]

JC: And Terry Sanford was the reason why we didn't have anybody at the door house of a school with the National Guard banning s-desegregation, a-or-or fighting it as heavily and--. But we're- we go back and forth, and we always have now we've just gone--. I mean, even when we had Republican governors in the 70s and 80s, Jim Hunt was not what republicans are--. I mean, uh--.

AH: Jim Martin.

JC: Jim Martin or Holshouser was not what, you know, Republicans are now, though--.

MG: As a woman, though, I have serious issues with North Carolina, like--. [Laughs]

AH: Tell me about them.

MG: I have serious issues because, um, yeah, the government is definitely trying to- well has taken some of the rights from women, you know, um, abortion rights, even childbirth. Like, you can't- you can't have a home birth if you don't, you know, if you're not a midwife that's underneath some doctor, and--. You know, all these different things that are, like, taking away the power of women. Like, I want to have children, you know, more children, and I want to give birth at home. And I'm going to have to do it in a way that I'm gonna have to do it, you know what I mean? Because the law is against me doing it the way I naturally my body wants to do it. It's really--. You know, so. For women, especially in my age group, I am not a millennial, even though you guys may think I am. I am not, I'm old. I'm a Generation X, thank you very much.

AH: I say that all the time. Thank you.

JC: I'm sorry, my bad.

MG: Yeah, I am not a millennial. Um, but yes--.

JC: The Helms thing threw me off.

MG: Yeah, well--.

JC: I didn't realize people just don't know Jesse who weren't here.

AH: Well she's from New York, yeah.

JC: Although Susan Sarandon, I remember at one time on *Donahue*, back in the day said we were all, like, all North Carolinians were shit because of Jesse Helms and I got--.

MG: [Laughs]

AH: Was like that like--.

JC: And I got so--. I was like--.

AH: Was that like she came here to film-film *Bull Durham* or something?

MG: Right, right--.

JC: Yeah, after *Bull Durham*. Yeah, and I was like--.

MG: (inaudible - 01:00:16)

JC: 'Eh,' you know, don't be- don't be putting us all in the same boat just because of Jesse, you know.

MG: So that's-that-that is a big issue that I have with, um--.

JS: Conservative religion was a problem in North Carolina, I think. . I mean, at Hill (inaudible - 01:00:32) denomination which-which is that fundamentalist, you know, vision of-of imposing that on everybody.

AH: And I think that's part of the enigma that Jefferson's talking about. I mean, because that's been- that's deep rooted, that's been-been here a long time and-and you know what--.

JS: You know I--. They--.

AH: So I think--.

JS: We can get drinks now at 10 o'clock on Sunday--.

MG: Right? [Laughs]

JS: Morning. I mean, that- the only progress in terms of progressive legislation that-that--.

JC: I brown bagged it in college. I know, yeah. Yeah, dry. [Laughs]

AH: S-so I the- there are two- every state, there is two statues to the United States Capitol. And North Carolina's two statues currently are William V. Aycock.

JC: Charles V. Aycock.

AH: Charles V. Aycock, thank you. Uh, who is--.

JC: Education and racism.

[Speakers intermittently agree]

AH: Education and racism, white supremacist, was the governor elected, uh, arguably by fraud to bust the fusion ticket in North Carolina, which was a interracial coalition to get only one in the South at the time in the early 20th century. And-and Umstead was brought--. I- sorry. Umstead's, uh, th-th--. Other--. The William B--. Charles V. Aycock, was brought to power by this white supremacist movement. And so he's now got a statue in the Capitol. The other one's Zebulon Vance, who was the governor during the Civil War. You know, some folks will say, 'Well, he didn't really want

to be in the Civil War.' True, but at the end of the day, he was. And so, uh, uh, not exactly a strong showing from the state of North Carolina. The General Assembly has now voted to take down the Aycock statue. Uh, you know who they're replacing it with? Billy Graham of course.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Oh.

[Laughter]

JC: Really?

BK: Oh.

JC: Really?

AH: Yes, but-but the funny thing is, is they passed this law --it's Raleigh, not Washington-- it's the General Assembly that decides--. They passed this law like four or five years ago, that- but, they cannot actually replace the statue until someone's passed away.

[Pause]

JC: But C.B. Aycock's long been dead. [Laughs]

AH: Well, no.

JC: I know.

AH: But Graham, eh, keeps hanging on.

JC: Yeah, he keeps hanging on.

MG: He's still alive?

JC: Well, at least he's not Franklin.

AH: Yeah, that--.

JC: I-I will say that.

AH: Most people say that.

JC: That's-that's the enigma that; Billy Graham was more liberal than his son in many ways, which is scary.

JS: You know, it just blew my mind when the North Carolina Museum of History took an exhibit from Billy Graham's Foundation, or whatever he's got, you know, to put up in--

JC: Samaritan's Purse?

JS: (inaudible - 01:02:58) did an exhibit without Billy Graham.

AH: I saw that. Yeah--.

JS: And the--.

AH: It was some controversy over that, I think. Yeah.

BK: Oral.

AH: Yeah.

MG: Yeah, we have a small section of (inaudible - 01:03:09).

JC: Not on this, but I can tell you some more.

AH: (inaudible - 01:03:11) strong presence in Charlotte.

[Laughter]

PV: Off the record.

JC: Way off the record, yeah.

MG: You ready for the last one?

AH: Oh, yeah.

JC: I'm always ready. [Laughs]

MG: *How might changes to--.*

AH: I’m gonna- I'll be right back. I’m just gonna--.

MG: *How might changes to the ACA affect you, your family or your community?* That’s Affordable Care Act, right?

PV: A.C.A.

JC: Hold on, I gotta sit on the floor.

MG: [Laughs]

JC: This one's hurting me. [Laughs] That one's--.

MG: So, um, prior to me working, I worked --I’m full time now-- but prior to that I was part time, and, um, it definitely affected me because I had to get insurance. You know, I wasn't eligible for Medicaid. Luckily, my son was. And I say luckily because I, um, I'm super granola. Like, I'm from the city, but I'm really granola in terms of like, I don't do vaccinations, I do homeschool my kid. You know, I’m really, like, not the norm, I guess, right? And so, you know, finding a doctor who is not trying to push vaccinations and all these tests and everything. Like, I had a doctor tell me, um, um, ‘He just has allergies.’ Like he had a mu-muscus buildup, and so, she's like, ‘Oh, he has allergies. Give him his medicine.’ I said, ‘I’m not giving him this adult medicine without you doing some kind of test.’ ‘Well, they’re not going to do the test unless you give medicine.’ I said, ‘Well, I'm not--.’ Well, here we are to sell me, right? So then I said, ‘Well, let me just go home and do some research, talk to some people about it.’ And basically, it was just like I had to cut back on da-dairy, you know what I mean? And that was that. But, like, when you have certain insurance, they pressure you to do certain things, you know what I mean? So they were- they constantly would try to question me and get him vaccinated. They were constantly tryna, you know, pressure me to give him medicine or

you know, things like that. And I had to fight back and say, ‘I'm not going to do this.’ Um, I'm also not necessarily a ‘go to the doctor for every little thing’ person. And so I was paying for insurance that, technically, I wasn't really using, um, because I didn't go to the doctor. However, I sprained my ankle and I was happy I had insurance because, if not, who knows what’ll- you know, would’ve happened? And- and I still don't necessarily feel I got the quality of care that I wa- you know, wanted. Um, but I still got some kind of care. So it can be detrimental- it could be dedi- you know, life or death.

JS: North Carolina has, per capita, more people on subsidy than any other state? So imagine what's going to happen when they shortcut the subsidies or-or just totally change the insurance where--. I mean, I can't- I don’t know the number, but the ce- percentage wise it’s-it’s very high because we had so many desperately poor people who didn’t have any kind of insurance.

MG: And definitely certainly circles right back to the initial conversation of social mobility, outward mobility, you know. You-you--. If there’s no social mobility, there’s no upward mobility, how are you getting quality--? You can’t afford quality or, you know, quality (inaudible - 01:06:25). So it just circles- it just constantly circles back.

JS: And actually, I think their plan is dead (inaudible - 01:06:35). If you take it away, somebody’s (inaudible - 01:06:37)

BK: Yeah.

JC: I-I would say… Why, I would just go ahead and come clean, I hate A.C.A., and I'll tell you why [Pause] it-it was a compromise that was not--. I-I want health care, I want you to take money out of my taxes, and give me dadgum health care, or give me

the option of doing that. I don't like it, I think it's a compromise. I don't like the Republican plans even more--.

AH: So you want a single payer, or-or--?

[Speakers intermittently agree]

JC: I think that, uh--. I think that was a huge compromise that was not good. I've never been able to afford it. I'm a contract worker with college loans and everything else, I can't afford it. I have to pay the penalty, because I still don't have health care. Because I don't--. North Carolina didn't take the money. I don't make enough to afford health care, and I'm caught in the middle and a lot of people are. And why can't I just have money come out of my taxes in a collective pool of Americans? Just like- because that socialized medicine, well, I don't really care. And-and I--.

BK: Did you vote for Trump?

JC: No. God, no.

BK: Okay. [Laughs]

JC: How--. No. Because I'm- because I'm criticizing a Democrat?

BK: No.

JC: I criticize people based on their policies, and Democrats to me, nowadays, are Republicans when it comes to economics. There's no difference. Bill Clinton, to m- I mean, he eroded the welfare system in the cou- in this country, he took it away.

JS: (inaudible - 01:08:14) Bill Clinton.

JC: And Hillary wasn't any better for economics. And I don't think Obama was that great economically, for anybody--. I mean, business--. I mean, you can look around at North Carolina, RTP's [Research Triangle Park] great, but they didn't educate the rest

of the state to actually get jobs there, you know? And-and I feel like, I'm liberal — I'm more liberal than the Democrats when it comes to economics, I want a social network that's real.

BK: So what would your--.

JC: [Laughs]

BK: Ideal health, uh--. What-what could the candidates say that you would vote for a candidate about health insurance?

JC: That they're gonna take more ta- that they're gonna raise taxes to pay for it, and everybody's gonna pay in the system, and they're gonna take Social Security, and if you make above that threshold, you're still gonna have to pay Social Security tax too.

BK: And if realistically, that simply is not going to happen…?

JC: I just--.

AH: I-I was in- working in Congress--.

JC: I'd just be continually on the outside of wishin' America would be what it could be, and wishin' Democrats would understand that these policies economically in the Democratic Party are not helping.

AH: So it's interesting because --I-I totally agree with you as a Democrat as someone who works for a Democrat-- interesting, and just in the last couple of weeks, you know, Bernie Sanders introduced his Medicare for our bill- All bill, and whereas even a year ago, two years ago, five years ago, uh, there were a lot of Democrat--. And that's, it's not quite full socialized medicine, but it basically- uh, it's basically saying, as the name implies, we all pay into Medicare, we all get out of it some variation based on income, and all of that. But it's using the framework of that program to expand with

everybody. Even a couple of years ago, there were a lot of Democrats who did not sign their names on to it. What you saw this time around, floodgates open, leadership sign on Congressman Price is co-sponsor--.

JC: It's too late now, though.

AH: Well, is it? I mean, yes, but--.

JC: I mean, based on where Congress is at, more America seems to be?

AH: Well--.

JC: We had an opportunity. And I think- I think the party line was that we're trying to get bipartisan support when there was none. [Laughs] So I'm wondering, I-I-I'm glad that people are starting to come around--.

AH: But, you're right. Politically, that doesn't mean that--.Yeah, and I--. Look, I was there when they passed the A.C.A., it was one of the, like, triumphant moments of my career as a staffer; on the other hand, the fact that they couldn't even include a public o-option.

JC: That's all I want.

AH: It's a very watered down version of that was totally depressing to me because it seemed like that's how far we've come away from-from the concept of universal health care, that we couldn't even get that.

JC: That's right. That's what I'm saying. That's why--.

MG: I get it. I definitely get it.

JC: I'm more left. [Laughs]

BK: And I basically agree with everything you're saying.

JC: Yeah. Yeah, I- no, [Laughs] I wouldn't vote for Trump.

BK: Yeah.

AH: [Laughs]

JC: That dude is horrible. He's a dismal human being.

AH: [Laughs]

BK: Oh, he is. He is. Well, this has been a great discussion.

[Laughter]

PV: Very nice to meet you all.

JC: Now, I'm like- I just want to cry now.

MULTIPLE SPEAKERS: Aw.

[PV and AH's separate conversation from 01:11:25 - 01:13:11]

PV: What part of Asheville?

AH: What part of Asheville? I grew up, uh, uh, (inaudible - 01:11:31) went to Asheville High. (inaudible - 01:11:35) Have you been to Asheville?

PV: Yeah, but I want to go to the (inaudible - 01:11:39)

AH: Yeah, do you want to drive around this road out here though Leicester?

[Rest of the conversation inaudible]

[JC, BK, MG's separate conversation from 01:11:30 - 01:13:11]

JC: I want more Terry Sanfords, I'll put it that way.

BK: Mm-hmm.

JC: Terry Sanford is my political hero. If you wanna know who I voted for, Terry Sanford.

BK: [Laughs] Did you write him in?

JC: I wrote Terry Sanford in and I'm gonna keep writing Terry Sanford in until it changes.

BK: But he's dead.

JC: I know. I don't really care. I voted for Nader, too.

BK: [Laughs]

JS: (inaudible - 01:11:51)

JC: It's dated in the sense of it was bor- bil- uh, written in like '70, but it is fascinating because he's talking about some of the same issues with dealing with--.

MG: Are you on Facebook?

JC: I am.

MG: (inaudible - 01:12:05)

JC: Okay. Follow me: Jefferson Currie II. I'm named after my father, and my great grandfather was Jefferson Lafayette Phillip, 'cause he's from Fayetteville area. Everyone was named Lafayette back then. I don't know where that Jefferson comes from.

MG: Jefferson what?

JC: Currie: C-U-R-R-I-E. I don't post a lot but I--.

MG: The second?

JC: Do follow--. Yes, ma'am.

MG: UNC?

JC: Yep, that's me.

JS: (inaudible - 01:12:38) UNC?

JC: I went to grad to school at UNC. I went to (inaudible - 01:12:41)

BK: What was your graduate degree?

JC: Uh, Folklore. Undergrad: Indian Studies.

BK: Oh, wonderful.

MG: So you made chicken bog and collards one time?

JC: (inaudible - 01:12:52)

MG: Yeah.

JC: Yeah, I made chicken bog last night.

Unknown: [Laughs]

MG: Oh, Facebook. Tells you everything.

JC: I like fried cornbread. None of that cake cornbread.

MG: Fried cornbread.

JC: Fried cornbread.

MG: I don't think I've ever had (inaudible - 01:13:06) I don't think I've ever had that.

[JC, BK, MG's separate conversation ends]

AH: I heard- I-I saw you were cooking last night.

JC: Yeah.

AH: How was it?

JC: It was fun.

AH: Yeah.

JC: I-I think it was pretty good, yeah.

AH: What was on the menu?

JC: Uh, chicken bog, fried collards, and fried cornbread. See, we cook collards and I ch- we chop ‘em, and then we, like, put ‘em in the pan and fry ‘em down with a little bit of grease. But I use vegetable- canola. I put some hot pepper in it and, uh, they were a little hot.

AH: That's awesome.

JC: Yeah.

AH: You dust ‘em or anything or just put ‘em straight in once you chop them up?

JC: What? Like the collards?

AH: Yeah.

JC: Um, well, we boil them and then put ‘em in.

AH: Boil them.

JC: Yeah. Drain the water out. But it just kinda- it j- it caramelizes and, uh, makes it a little less bitter.

AH: I like it.

JC: Plus we don’t eat cake cornbread.

PV: You a cook?

JC: Yeah, uh, well, I do cook on the side for fun. Um, I’m not really official.

PV: So you (inaudible - 01:14:01)

END OF RECORDING

TRANSCRIBER: Miwa Lee 6/18/21

To be copyedited.