

Julie Zwibelman: The second interview with Amelia Thorpe in her home at 608 Dunbar Street in Durham, North Carolina. You were talking last interview a lot about your political things that you did in Durham and in California. Were your parents active politically?

Amelia Thorpe: No. They voted. They were responsible citizens. But no, they were not active. They belonged to the NAACP, but they just—and obviously, they were really active in the community.

Julie Zwibelman: How did they respond when you were active?

Amelia Thorpe: Oh, they thought it was our responsibility during the Civil Rights Movement. Yes, they did. They supported our activities. Yeah.

Julie Zwibelman: And did they always vote? Do you always remember them voting?

Amelia Thorpe: Oh, yes. Always remember them voting. Yes. Because my mother could [indistinct 00:01:02]. A part of the first teachers who got equity in D.C. because when she started teaching in North Carolina, all the White teachers were paid more, regardless of their degree. She was well-aware of inequalities that just personally affected her profession. And of course as always, those Jim Crow laws.

Julie Zwibelman: Did she always teach, even after the schools were integrated? Did she continue to teach?

Amelia Thorpe: She had because, about the time the students were fully integrated, she did teach one summer at Hillside and that was being integrated, I think that was the summer before she retired. For kids in school, it was much later that, before they became integrated. And it still to this day, there's just a token number of White children who go to Hillside school. There may be a few more Hispanics.

Julie Zwibelman: And growing up, you said that your mom was real strict, and we talked a little bit about your dad. Were you closer with one of your parents than the other, or?

Amelia Thorpe: Well, being the oldest daughter, I was close to my mother. And yet I realized I was my Daddy's oldest daughter, too. And it wasn't, unfortunately, it wasn't until after he died that I realized how close I was with him. But my mother lived so much longer, and I stayed with her during those declining years. And that was because I had grown up to be her help by her, and oldest daughter. This happens a lot, especially in Southern families.

Amelia Thorpe: And exactly since I was. And now, in my old age, I realize why women are so anxious to get married. Traditional women, you know, traditionally. They were so anxious to get married, to get out of the family home. That was the only way they knew to get out of their family home. And of course, I was brave

enough, and thinking enough of myself to go to California and live for a while on my own. Which was pretty brave.

Julie Zwibelman: And what did your father do for a living?

Amelia Thorpe: He worked for the Golden Belt Manufacturing Company, he worked there nail cleaning.

Julie Zwibelman: And you said you weren't, he was in—

Amelia Thorpe: And earlier he had worked in hotels.

Julie Zwibelman: Oh, okay.

Amelia Thorpe: In Raleigh.

Julie Zwibelman: Okay, and then for a while he was also up north?

Amelia Thorpe: Yes, at a very young age he lived up in New York. But that was in the depth of the Depression, and it was very difficult to find work, to live up there, so that was when he went to clean hotel rooms at the Sir Walter Raleigh in Raleigh. And then he came to Durham, he worked as a Washington Duke bellhop.

Julie Zwibelman: Did he describe what it was like here during the Depression?

Amelia Thorpe: In New York?

Julie Zwibelman: Yeah, or in Durham, after he came back.

Amelia Thorpe: He didn't talk about it very much. I think it was a very, very difficult time for them. He shared with me a lot about his early childhood, how he had been fortunate enough to have an aunt to go to when things got kind of difficult with his own home, and Henderson Institute. But he never talked very much about his early days in his twenties. He was about twenty-seven when he married my mom, and he never talked very much. I think those days were very stressful and unhappy. And so he didn't talk very much about it.

Julie Zwibelman: Did your mother talk about the time when she was—

Amelia Thorpe: Yes, my mom talked more about the times when she worked in the summer for well-to-do White people on the shore of New Jersey. She talked about it because although she was working that way, she said she had pleasant situations, and what she was working for, it must have been a place where nuns lived. You know. Not a sanctuary. It's a—

Julie Zwibelman: Like a convent?

Amelia Thorpe: A convent, but yeah, a convent, thank you—kind of place. And she said how kind they were. They took her to the sea. So, although she was working as a domestic while she went to school, it was uncommon. She never described it as something, you know. Because she was working, and she was working for people who treated her kindly. And there was a way that she could continue going to school.

Julie Zwibelman: And then you talked about your grandmother, Amelia. Do you know much about the lives of those women?

Amelia Thorpe: I'm sorry, something dropped on my head. What was that? (laughs) It was something. See, Amelia my grandmother died when she was around thirty, thirty-five. So I didn't know, I was told that she was a very genteel lady. Very kindhearted, and loved her husband very much. Her mother had lived a rather isolated life on a small plantation, and didn't know too much about them except that she had three daughters, and the middle daughter, I think —

Julie Zwibelman: Was that a slave plantation?

Amelia Thorpe: No, no, no. My great-grandfather was born what was called issue-free. He was never a slave. But he never owned anything, either. But he had his own little plantation in North Carolina, and unfortunately he did not have any sons. That's why people were so anxious to have sons, because sons generally would carry on the farm. He didn't. However, he did have one daughter who had about six or eight children. So my mother had many more first cousins than I did. My sister and I only have two, and my mom must have had about six or eight.

Julie Zwibelman: Your great grandfather was born here?

Amelia Thorpe: In Granville, North Carolina. All the people that I know, all of my ancestors that I know of are from North Carolina. Between Person and Granville. I used to envy some of my friends on this thing, who had grandparents in Kentucky. I would always be like, "If I had grandparents in another state, I could go to visit." As far as I know, all of my family are from North Carolina.

Julie Zwibelman: And Pearl Page, I've got her, she's your—

Amelia Thorpe: Yeah, my great aunt. She's my grandfather's, my mama's dad. She was the one that told me about my grandmother, because she came here to take care of my mom and her sister and brother, when their mother was sickly. So she got to know them pretty well.

Julie Zwibelman: And how did she come to own the grocery store?

Amelia Thorpe: When she came to Durham, there was J.L. Page, was running the grocery store. And she was a very—she was a pretty lady. And she took a shine to him, and they got married, so that's how. She married the grocery store.

Julie Zwibelman: And then she—

Amelia Thorpe: And then he died in 1942, and after that she was in charge of the front. And then as long as she could, she worked in the store. And she cooked on the other side of the store, that's where the kitchen was. And then in later years they built her a kitchen in the house, but she still kept up with her customers in the store, and people were so very fond of her, they expected her. She was never lonesome. People always come there, and she liked to cook, too. As long as she could cook.

Julie Zwibelman: Yeah, you talked about the kind of group of women—

Amelia Thorpe: Yeah, her friends. She had very good friends. Very supportive. They had a women's lib going, you know, that many years ago. They were very strong, very supportive friends. And Pearl Page was strong.

Julie Zwibelman: Do you remember any stories they tell you, or advice?

Amelia Thorpe: The biggest story that Pearl Page told me were about her growing up, out in the deep woods, and how she always knew she wasn't going to marry a farmer because she didn't want to live in the deep woods all her life. And how she, forever, loved her brother and respected him so much for bringing her to the store, and treating her very nicely, and introducing her to nice people. And that's how she gained the store, and she worked very hard with her husband, in his stead.

Julie Zwibelman: We were talking about kind of deep woods, versus the city. Do you remember, actually this doesn't connect that well, but when you started watching TV, and when you came down—

Amelia Thorpe: Oh, yeah. My mom was not a fan of TV. So we didn't get a TV when I was in [indistinct 00:12:12]. We were later getting a TV, and my younger sister, she just wanted to see something. She was like, "Pearl Page had a TV," because her son had brought it. He wrote an essay and won a television, so she had a television. And on Sunday evenings, we would be there. We had to go home, my sister Fern was in choir. So my mom, we didn't have a television, until I was in high school. And she was pretty strict about it even then.

Amelia Thorpe: And I know I really liked, always have liked, UNC channels. Chapel Hill. And one night I was watching, it got pretty late, and she came in there, she didn't care what it was. Just, the television needs to be off. And that's why you don't see a television in this living room now. It was all right for the den, but in the living room, it's about conversation and music, and you just don't sit up in the middle of the room and talk, and watch television. Not her rules, anyway. So, yeah. She was pretty strict about that.

Julie Zwibelman: Do you play the piano?

Amelia Thorpe: I played a little bit. Yeah.

Julie Zwibelman: Did you learn when you—

Amelia Thorpe: Yeah, I took lessons by the time I was about eight until I finished high school. But it takes constant practice. Do you play?

Julie Zwibelman: No, I gave up when I was real young.

Amelia Thorpe: Ah, you got off the hook.

Julie Zwibelman: Yeah. I don't think I had very much talent. They said, "Okay, you can quit."

Amelia Thorpe: Oh, parents back then, they said, "Oh no, you're going to go through every year, work at it." Basically, but I'm a person, I had to practice. I didn't get any of it. And I didn't like to practice. So I've practically forgotten. I think I know the scales, but yeah. I'd have to do a lot of practice to be able to play. But the piano belongs in the living room. Oh dear.

Julie Zwibelman: You also talked about how poetry was such a big part of like, in elementary school, they really—

Amelia Thorpe: Oh yeah, that you asked me once, I didn't have that history. It was like an integrated part of our learning. We learned James Weldon Johnson and Paul Laurence Dunbar. We had the history of the Black man who was the first public school was named, Pearson School, who was an early educator in Durham. We had pictures of George Washington Carver and Fredrick Douglass in the auditorium. So every time we went in there, it was a constant part of our schooling. And that's different anymore. Yeah, yeah, sometimes, unfortunately, some very positive things are lost these days, behaving now, and they have to go back and try to catch up the part we missed in society.

Amelia Thorpe: And I think now, in the still—schools that are predominantly Black, there's still a sense that there is an emphasis on African American contributions. I understand there's schools that are predominantly White, it is not. So, that part of our heritage and of our culture, still remains our responsibility. It's the most we can do.

Julie Zwibelman: Do you remember particular poems, or favorite poems?

Amelia Thorpe: Oh, I like Paul Laurence Dunbar. "October Morning." I like Paul Laurence. I like—life is like—"My life has been no crystal stair"—that's by—do you know? Yeah, you know what I'm talking about.

Julie Zwibelman: I know about who you're talking about, but—

Amelia Thorpe: Yeah. I like most of his. In fact, I read a fascinating piece, a biography of, I'm trying to think of—

Julie Zwibelman: Langston Hughes.

Amelia Thorpe: Langston Hughes. Thank you, thank you, sweetie. Yeah. So those are some of the things. And of course I liked [indistinct 00:17:26].

Julie Zwibelman: And then in college, you'd mentioned before that you were a member of AKA sorority. What was that like?

Amelia Thorpe: Oh, for then, it was fun. I probably put too much energy in it, and I overdid things. I wanted to belong, I wanted to participate. But as I matured, I realized that that wasn't quite the form of participation I wanted. In undergrad, it was a lot of fun, but I put too much work into it. I busted head, I did. And then I joined a graduate pathway, and then I went to California, and I did my graduate stuff down there. And after a while, I had just had enough of that. I still admire the work that they do, and the women in my sorority are well prepared, well accomplished women. I just, for a while, had worked enough.

Julie Zwibelman: What kind of work did you do?

Amelia Thorpe: At the graduate level, we did community work, and we did dances and luncheons and public awareness meetings. We sponsored [indistinct 00:18:50].

Julie Zwibelman: And at the undergraduate level?

Amelia Thorpe: Mostly community service, but it was a lot of fun, going to dances with fraternities. But I never had [indistinct 00:19:05] personality [indistinct 00:19:08] now. (laughs). I guess my disappointment was, I never had a date. I was a president of the sorority, but I was kind of isolated. And part of that was my own presentation, I suppose. I'm very sure of it, you have to take responsibility for all of your actions, and all of your history. So, I didn't really, as a very young woman, I didn't present myself as being available, I guess. So, I realize now, I was sad a lot in college. I did my work to the best of my ability, most of the time. But I was very sad. Because I wasn't, there wasn't—part of my balance was not there. Yeah, yeah. But thank goodness I did make it through. It was fun.

Julie Zwibelman: Were there ever conflicts within the sorority?

Amelia Thorpe: Oh, of course. Women? (laughs) How could you not, you know? (laughs)

Julie Zwibelman: How were those resolved?

Amelia Thorpe: Discussions. Yeah. Or somebody going off to [indistinct 00:20:31]. Then you were elected to a position, but didn't get picked. You'd get picked. There's a part of accepting that responsibility. I guess it's why I need support in that area, I wasn't accepting my responsibility. Yeah.

Julie Zwibelman: Oh, was there a difference, as far as people who are from Durham in the sorority? Or other—

Amelia Thorpe: Oh, yeah, that was another thing. In college, anyone could go away to school and stay on campus, because I stayed here. The school was a few blocks away, but it made me an outsider. No matter how much I participated, I was not a dormitory paid-in. And that was a big difference.

Julie Zwibelman: Were there a lot of students who did come from—

Amelia Thorpe: The city?

Julie Zwibelman: Any, outside. From out of town.

Amelia Thorpe: Oh, it was remarkably diverse. My best friend was from Pennsylvania, and Virginia, and Washington. Yeah, we had quite a few. And I looked through the roster, and one day I saw someone who had come here from Seattle, Washington. I didn't even remember who they were, yeah.

Julie Zwibelman: So were most of those women in the sorority, was it all diverse as far as where they were from?

Amelia Thorpe: Yes, yes, because the one I mentioned from Pennsylvania was pretty far. But most of us, of course, most of the students were from North Carolina.

Julie Zwibelman: Were there big class differences that were clear?

Amelia Thorpe: You know, I as a person and family, we never emphasized the class difference stuff. I realize now, I was being naïve. Because they were perceiving me in a certain class, and I was told later, many years later. I think it was our twentieth reunion. And the same friend who was from Pennsylvania said, "Did you know, you were always styling." And I was dumbfounded. You know, I live right here, and I walked to school, I didn't have a car, I didn't wear fancy clothes. But I did have a party here at my house once, and maybe that's just how they perceived it. But then I realized why I was never really accepted. Because that's how I was perceived.

Amelia Thorpe: But now of course, this class thing is all—that's the whole society now. And even I just told a friend, we were having a problem in her neighborhood, and it's about a business that is disreputable. And although our neighborhood is older now, and it's mostly older people and it's an inner-city neighborhood, it's still going through a disreputable place, it's just a nuisance. And I called her to ask her, you know, get her thoughts about it. And she went off, because she lived in New York for so many years, and she's come back here, and she's not very happy. And I could understand it's difficult. But I said to her, "You know," she said, "I don't even drive my car down several streets." And I said, "I know, you upper-middle class people moved out and say, 'don't come through here.'" And I heard myself, and I thought, "Oh Amelia, this is ugly as other people." That was the only thing I could come back with.

Amelia Thorpe: Anyway, yeah. This whole class issue is—often in most people's minds. I think that that's

really the dividing fault, now. Yeah. What class people could be, you could be, really. And what I realized is always been, and I was just naïve. But now, there has been such a large group of people who truly are uneducated, and unemployed, un-cared for. There is lack of real compassion, I think, and it's more political talk. But less real compassion.

Julie Zwibelman: During the Civil Rights Movement, during the marches and things on campus, was your sorority involved?

Amelia Thorpe: Yeah, we'd do that—

Julie Zwibelman: Or what type of students were usually involved?

Amelia Thorpe: Yeah, the sorority, that's how I came to join the sorority. We would organize, we would go to that. Yeah. Yeah, that was a very use for it. A way that the sorority participated in these things.

Julie Zwibelman: Was there any dissension among the sorority about how you should respond to the event, or what event you should—

Amelia Thorpe: Well, we went to these meetings where we were trained as to how to do it. So, there wasn't much dissension, more a matter of, "I've got a test I've got to study for. I believe in this, but I've really got to study, because I want to get out of this school." That was the biggest thing, how much time you could devote to it. There were some who devoted twenty percent of their time. They were willing to miss, not finishing school. I mean, they were really, really that caught up. And somehow that kind of person was needed, but I knew deep inside I was not that kind of person. Yeah.

Julie Zwibelman: And who did the training?

Amelia Thorpe: Floyd McKissick. He was—he did a lot of the trainings. Yeah. And some of them.

Julie Zwibelman: What was he like?

Amelia Thorpe: Very determined, very angry, but a focused anger. The only thing he ever said that I did not tolerate—at the time I was still very much a big church member, and he said, in the pulpit—because most of our meetings were in the church, because it was the largest place we did to meet. And he said inappropriate things in this setting. "God wasn't going to do anything, God doesn't stop it," he couldn't accept that. And I knew that even speaking from the perspective of God, that if you believe in God, that the God is us. It's what acts. And so, it just sounded like he was shoving the higher power aside, and saying that we had to do all this, and we had to. I just didn't agree with that. But of course I agreed with the rhetoric, to really bring out, to make the calls for the laws.

Julie Zwibelman: How do you feel about what he was saying now?

Amelia Thorpe: I still would disagree, even though I'm Buddhist, if I was in church and someone stood behind a pulpit, starting talking about what God couldn't do, what God could—you know, I would not agree with that.

Julie Zwibelman: Is there a perspective, but your experience with Buddhism, and your perspective on that?

Amelia Thorpe: Yeah, yeah, there is a new perspective on it. And yet I respect all religions, valid religions, and I respect presenting not to—feel comfortable with all of them, denying or belittling of God, if that's how you call your higher power. And that is, within a Christian framework, what he's referred to. So for them, and I just still have too much respect for the religion to feel comfortable, in some way, [indistinct 00:30:01], it's all, there's just us, it's all there is.

Julie Zwibelman: What is the Buddhist way to look at—

Amelia Thorpe: The Buddhist way, for me is, not from a higher power outside, but that Buddha nature within. And so you tap into that Buddha nature, the best part of you comes out. You can change your whole destiny, you can change the law. That it can make you feel it, this form of Buddha in you, the Buddha in you. The older forms of Buddhists, they too have that thinking—Buddhism is not a deism kind of religion. Thinking, the Buddha is you, that's what you can tap into when you change. [Indistinct 00:31:11] anything will change. It's a mystic law, and it's very powerful.

Julie Zwibelman: Do you think your experiences with the Civil Rights Movement, or other experiences kind of led you to this religion?

Amelia Thorpe: No, I think my own—there's nothing in my—it's not by happenstance that you come into know about this religion. You've made some calls early that you do believe in a future life, you have made a call. You feel about it, and you're called to practice it. And so I knew, although I had worked very hard in the church, and I had learned a lot, and experienced a lot. I still have good friends. But me personally, I was moving away from it. I didn't know what I was moving to, but I knew I was moving away from it. And it was [indistinct 00:32:45].

Julie Zwibelman: Did you experience other religions before you found this one?

Amelia Thorpe: No. I went to different churches, in fact I played the piano for a while in the Catholic church. But I knew when I went there, wasn't very long, and the priest announced for three occasions, they needed someone to play the piano. Well, the church is right over on the hill, and I know a lot of the people that go there. And I kind of looked around, everybody was looking there looking straight out the window. And I said, "Oh shucks, this is the third time this man has asked this." I said, and that time though, the Catholic Church had made some revelation that their hymns, were the hymns I had learned in the Baptist Church. I said, "Oh, gee, this is not Latin or anything strange, I'm going to play the same hymn that I played in the Baptist Church."

Amelia Thorpe: So I did. I played, I knew that I was not in that, with the idea that I was going to join. And that's another thing. That I realized, what I did realize back then, they're too nice, but they don't ask anybody to join their church. I guess the family? I'm not sure. But they never, in fact, they wondered exactly what was I doing, what was my mother and daddy doing? I'm a full grown woman, [laughs] and I answered him, I said, "My daddy is rested in peace, and my mom is an old lady." It just happens that I'm home with her. [laughs] You know. But I guess what I'm saying looking back is, how important it is, too. I think I realized, to leave home early, so that you don't have people don't perceive you as being just so settled in stuff, that if you do anything different from what they perceive you to do, then they feel free to question whatever you do. So that's one of the things I had to deal with, being a single person in my traditional neighborhood.

Julie Zwibelman: Do you still get things like that? Do you still live in a traditional neighborhood?

Amelia Thorpe: Oh very much. Like I say, most of the people in this neighborhood all do that. Yeah.

Julie Zwibelman: Did you grow up with a lot of traditional?

Amelia Thorpe: Yes.

Julie Zwibelman: This goes back to what we were talking about, when you took the training. Do you remember specific things? Parts of the training?

Amelia Thorpe: Oh, I'm sure it was like army training to get you not to be afraid. But he would come up against brutality, and he would talk certain techniques. And to expect the brutality, [indistinct 00:36:03]. And just the whole thing.

Julie Zwibelman: Were there equal number of women and men being trained?

Amelia Thorpe: Yeah, as I recall there was maybe always a few more women. But there were a lot of men. There were a lot of them.

Julie Zwibelman: Was the environment at all sexist or discriminatory against the women?

Amelia Thorpe: I didn't think so. Yeah. What I recall, I can remember still having grown up with sisters, we weren't quite on that cutting edge of the men being treated differently from the women. Because we all thought that if we had ability, then we had ability. Now, I realize, that many of, most all of them had gotten married, they were smart enough that in the same way they treated fellows. And I somehow never did, so you know, I never got a date. I was always seen as more of a kind of person that you choose to be president, to do the work, you know. But not one to have fun with. And I guess I'm still perceived that way.

Julie Zwibelman: And was there any specific work through CORE, or NAACP?

Amelia Thorpe: We worked through CORE, and some NAACP, but mostly just CORE.

Julie Zwibelman: Was it younger people?

Amelia Thorpe: Yes, there was some.

Julie Zwibelman: Were there any other civil rights organizations?

Amelia Thorpe: Oh yes. SNCC got started right over at St. Augs. And they had treated—I always knew not to [indistinct 00:38:05] or what our community means here. And I never felt comfortable really with either of the racist talk, whether it was from White people or some Black people, I don't—I didn't agree with that, I never agreed with anything too radical. For example, I thought it was good when the Black Panthers started to give food for the young children. Yet I knew what was behind it. And unfortunately, that overpowered the good they were doing, and some of their leaders never could get out of the mold of being [indistinct 00:38:59]. And it's really sad. But I was never attracted to that level of intensity, violence.

Amelia Thorpe: And yet, some very brilliant people too, Angela Davis, is a brilliant person, and Kathleen Cleaver, made very well from the Civil Rights, very well. Now, Angela Cleaver was married to a Panther. And Angela Davis is not very old. She's only—and she's still an avant garde, very brilliant woman. But I knew I was never at that level of—I would march, I would go to things, I would support all of the leaders who were doing things that I agreed with, that I felt were effective. And yet not that real radical terror technique.

Julie Zwibelman: And the SNCC that was in this area, what radical things—

Amelia Thorpe: You know, it was formed over there, but they never did the radical thing. They took their more radical things I think further South, to Mississippi and Alabama. It was interesting that they actually got formed over here.

Julie Zwibelman: Do you remember specific leaders of that meeting?

Amelia Thorpe: I can't recall [indistinct 00:41:11]. But some of them too, just never got out of being heard. Rap Brown, who continued to get in jail for four more—

Julie Zwibelman: So he remained here?

Amelia Thorpe: Well, the last time he was in the Las Vegas area I think. But still, it's a [indistinct 00:41:40]. Yeah. And in the whole scheme of things, they certainly had heart. Some of that, I think all of that was necessary, except wasn't the—part that I think was [indistinct 00:42:00].

Julie Zwibelman: Do you remember specific places that you marched at?

Amelia Thorpe: Downtown on Main Street, about Walgreens. Any place that had counters that we couldn't

eat. Woolworth's, Kress.

Julie Zwibelman: Was there a certain, any specific incident?

Amelia Thorpe: The ugliest incident was out on highway—which is called Chapel Hill Boulevard now. I don't think that place is still there. But, one of the waitresses, the waitresses at the restaurant [Indistinct 00:42:30].

Julie Zwibelman: The waitress?

Amelia Thorpe: Mm-hmm.

Julie Zwibelman: And what was the response? Were you there?

Amelia Thorpe: I was there. It was always to remain in the nonviolent position, to never retaliate anybody. Yeah. Just last summer though, these baseball players, you know, baseball players, an American sport, spit in the face of their own. And, yeah. Yeah, yeah, the people just get out of control.

Julie Zwibelman: You also traveled to the deeper South, you had already graduated when you went to Mexico.

Amelia Thorpe: Yes.

Julie Zwibelman: What big differences did you see there?

Amelia Thorpe: As to whether it happened here? The intensity of the hatred and [indistinct 00:43:53] that the majority of people had on the other people, is so much more intense than in North Carolina. Especially in this pocket of North Carolina. Durham County, Orange County. It's all around this area where you had the schools, you had the industry, you had the businesses, the economics definitely makes a difference. The ceiling may be some of the same, but when African Americans have a reasonable economic status, there is a definite difference in how the relationship has been predicted.

Amelia Thorpe: See, traditionally Durham has North Carolina Mutual, downtown, viable downtown business operations, and Mechanics and Farmers Bank, a viable downtown business. And there was many viable upper Black businesses, there was North Carolina College, there was—and all of that formed a community of Black people that lived in very nice communities.

Amelia Thorpe: It just made a difference. The feeling were definitely low, but the status is a capitalistic society, and your economic position is a powerful position. So, Durham had that as an advantage as opposed to some other cities. It's just like in [indistinct 00:45:59], the maxes in society, you know, the structure. But in Durham, actually some of the first hardcore demonstrations were formed at an ice parlor called the Royal Ice Cream Parlor over in North Durham, it was just a free-form act of [indistinct 00:46:11]—