LEGACIES OF LYNCHING
The Odyssey of Oscar Mack

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MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

FROM SEGREGATION TO BLACK LIVES MATTER: AN AFRICAN AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY SYMPOSIUM
SPONSORED BY THE SAMUEL PROCTOR ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
MARCH 23, 2019
A CLASSROOM STORY
An Engaged Campus

“An engaged campus is one that is consciously committed to reinvigorating the democratic spirit and community engagement in all aspects of its campus life: students, faculty, staff and the institution itself. The engaged campus recognizes that knowledge cannot be separated from the purposes to which it is directed. The engaged campus is not just located within a community, it is intimately connected to the public purposes and aspirations of community life itself. The engaged campus is unable to separate its unique responsibility for the development of knowledge, from the role of knowledge in a democratic society to form the basis for social progress and human equality.”
— Campus Compact
A PUBLIC HUMANITIES PROCESS

Curtis Michelson
(Democracy Forum)
CLASSROOM AS PLATFORM

RESEARCHING THE INCIDENT
Florida Negro Lynched.
New York Times (1857-1922); Jul 19, 1922;
ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2009)
pg. 30

Florida Negro Lynched.
ORLANDO, Fla., July 18.—Persons coming into Orlando tonight from the Kissimmee Road reported that a negro, believed to be Oscar Mack, charged with killing two white men at Kissimmee last Sunday evening, had been lynched by a mob at Lake Jennie Jewel, in Orange.
HIS 241: African-American History, 1877 to Present

Spring 2013 CSS 135 / W / 4:00-6:30
Instructor: Dr. Julian C. Chambliss
Office Hours: Wednesday and Thursday 2:00pm to 3:30pm and by appointment.
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Course Description
This course examines the experience and transformative contribution of African Americans to the United States from Reconstruction to the contemporary period. Students will consider the African-American experience since the end of slavery, the political economy of race, segregation, the civil rights struggle, and the social stresses associated with creation of a modern nation state in the context of the African-American experience.
Research Paper / Wiki Project (20%)

Each student will work on a team based research wiki assignment this semester. The research wiki, entitled Kaleidoscopic History, is a forum to explore multiple modes of inquiry related to historical subjects and their link to contemporary society. While many students are familiar with Wikipedia as an open source information site, our wiki project is different. Our goal is to bridge the gap between secondary source interpretation and primary source driven inquiry into local history. The goal is to highlight stories and events that define the local experience, but contextualize those events within the broader historical frameworks used to describe the national experience. This process will highlight broad political, social, and economic trends in the nation, but will clarify the impact of regional factors.
Sites

1) Jernigan Homestead
2) Powell Cemetery
3) Fort Gatlin
4) Lynching Site (Jennie"
5) Gotha
6) Florida Terror
DEVELOPING A FULLER NARRATIVE

What cause the lynching Oscar Mack?
### Mack Family Census 1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maria Mack</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Mack</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Moore</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Mack</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oscar Mack</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MACK FAMILY CENSUS 1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maria Mack</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Mack</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oscar Mack</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Oscar Mack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Date</td>
<td>19 Sep 1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Place</td>
<td>Florida, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence Place</td>
<td>Osceola, Florida, USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Build</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair Description</td>
<td>Not Bald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair Color</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Color</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Members:</td>
<td>Name Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oscar Mack</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source Citation:** Registration State: Florida; Registration County: Osceola; Roll: 1556934

**Source Information:**

**Description:**
This database contains an index and images of World War I draft registration cards completed by approximately 24 million men living in the U.S. in 1917 and 1918. Information that may be found for an individual includes: name, place of residence, date and place of birth, race, country of citizenship, occupation, and employer. More...
Five shots rang out on the air in the colored section of North Kissimmee at a few minutes after ten o'clock Sunday evening. Ten minutes later a call was sent to two physicians by Albert Sutton. At 10:20 the whistle blew the alarm for the sheriff. At 10:40 Undertaker J. W. Thompson drove to the garage to equip his hearse for ambulance use. At 10:50 R. M. Thomas, his chauffeur, was on hand to assist, and promptly at eleven a wounded man was being taken to an Orlando hospital—while another victim of bullets was lying dead in his car beside the negro Methodist church.
NEGO SHOOTER Sought.

Kissimmee, Fla., July 18.—A state wide search is being conducted today for Oscar Mack, negro mail carrier suspected of shooting and killing Gene Rhinehart and seriously wounding Stewart Ivey, near the negro's residence last night.

The men attacked were old residents of this community. Mack was recently appointed to his position after he had under bid an old white man of Kissimmee whom he succeeded.
A deeper understanding of the economic motivation behind the lynching
OSCAR MACK

When Florida is brought up in conversations in the 21st century, people immediately think of Walt Disney World, Sea World, or the 2012 National Basketball Association World Champion basketball team the Miami Heat. There are many other famous names of places or people that come up in conversations, but lynching is definitely not a topic that is ever associated with Florida's reputation. After the Civil War, America was in a reconstruction stage. The war left America in shambles; the "Union," had defeated the "Confederates." The 13th Amendment had abolished slavery, and the 14th Amendment had given African Americans the right to vote. However, the South rejected these ideas. In the South, blacks were treated like second-class citizens and faced blatant acts of racism all throughout their lives. In the book The Beast of Florida, the author Marvin Dunn writes that racist whites oppressed blacks politically, exploited them economically, and dehumanized them morally. Lynching was a major part of this racism in the South, especially in Florida. Reacting to the new amendments that granted rights to blacks, whites in Florida lynched blacks to send a message that they were not equal in their eyes. Dunn writes that the State of Florida carried out more lynchings than any other state in America in the early 1900s.[1]

In 1922, a man named Oscar Mack was lynched in central Florida. This case represents an injustice that was deliberately hidden by Floridians, and as a result it remains forgotten by its residents today. With the help of an organization named Democracy Forum, students at Rollins College investigated this particular lynching that happened in our very own community. Although the story ultimately ends in Mack being lynched, to understand why this tragedy occurred in the first place, it is important to know who Oscar was.

According to the 1900 United States Federal Census records which were reported in Kissimmee, Osceola County, Florida, Oscar Mack's family consisted of his father William Mack, Maria Mack, William Jr., and Charles Moore. Oscar's father was William Mack. He was born in Georgia in 1864 and worked as a laborer. Oscar's mother was Maria Mack. She was born in North Carolina in 1864 and worked as a laundress. They married in 1884 (it was their second marriage for both of them). Oscar Mack's brother was also named William Mack and was born in 1881 in Florida. Finally, he had a stepbrother (Maria's son) whose name was Charles Moore and was also born December 1880 in North Carolina. Most importantly, in this census Oscar Mack was born on September 1882. He was six when the 1900's census records were recorded.

(Obove: 1900's Census Records)

On the other hand, according to the World War I Draft Registration Cards for the years 1917-1919 Oscar Mack was born on September 20, 1882. He registered to be a part of the army at the age of 25. Prior to joining the army Mack had a variety of occupations. In the 1910 United States Federal Census it is reported that he is living only

with his mother Maria and his father William. Also, that he is 17 and working as a well driver.

After his job as a well driver, Mack worked as a butcher for Nell Buss in Kissimmee.[2] Buss not only was a woman who raised cattle and but was a part of a prominent family that still lives in the Kissimmee area to this day. According to Mack's World War I Service Card, Mack joined the army on April 20th, 1918. His rank was being a Private and was honorably discharged on July 17, 1919.

(Above: Mack's Registration Card)

In 1922, Mack indirectly became a federal employee after receiving a government contract. His job was to deliver mail from a railroad station to the post office. This angered his white competitors and prompted them to pursue him in order to lynch him. [3] He was told to start working on Sunday morning but on his first day on the job he was confronted by three white men who told him he was not to handle mail because it was a white men's job and that he had to leave town by 12 o'clock. The men were Eugene Rinehard, Stewart Ivey, and another A.C. Alderman until H. McClelland [4]

After Mack's threat, a white assistant postmaster that worked with him named C.C. Collins gave Mack a revolver to protect himself because the postmaster knew that those men were going to try to hurt Mack. On July 16th, the men went to Mack's house in North Kissimmee and shot at it. [5] In self-defense, Mack fired five shots. At 10:28 p.m. the sheriff was called because Mack had shot both Rinehard and Ivey. Rinehard was found in a car that was next to the Nagas Methodist Church in that part of town. Ivey, on the other hand, managed to walk three blocks to the home of a woman named Elizabeth Waring. At 11:00 p.m. while both men were on their way to an Orlando hospital Dr. Haynes Brinson asked Ivey who had shot him. Ivey accused Mack of the shooting but never answered to Haynes the reasoning behind it. Ivey died the following afternoon.

McClelland apparently was not shot but nonetheless left the crime scene injured. The following Monday he denied any knowledge of the shooting and later on explained that his reasoning behind lying was that he was told by an
TELLING THE STORY

COMMUNITY WEBSITE
Who We Are
Local citizens who care about the rich history of our community and want to see ALL stories told, even the the most painful ones of our past, so that haunted voices long silenced can be lifted up, and real healing can occur.

Race dynamics of today have a direct correlation to dynamics of yesterday. We believe by revisiting these events, people of diverse backgrounds can come together in common ground.

Our Mission
To work collaboratively with local scholars, students, neighbors in the South Orlando community, in documenting the events surrounding the lynching of Oscar Mack on July 18th, 1922, offering a fuller picture of the complex dynamics in Orlando at that time, and finding ways to appropriately mark and memorialize this tragedy.

Get Involved
If you would like to help in this effort, contact us through this site, and let us know how you’d like to contribute. Abilities of many kinds are required: researchers, transcriptionists, oral history takers, street walkers, photographers, cartographers, anthropologists, historians, filmmakers, artists.
THE MACK FAMILY REACHES OUT

THEY TELL THE OTHER HALF OF THE STORY
Oscar Mack escaped, despite reports

The family used our research to answer their question

In 2017, they gave their great-grandfather his name back
Dr. Julian Chambliss

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