

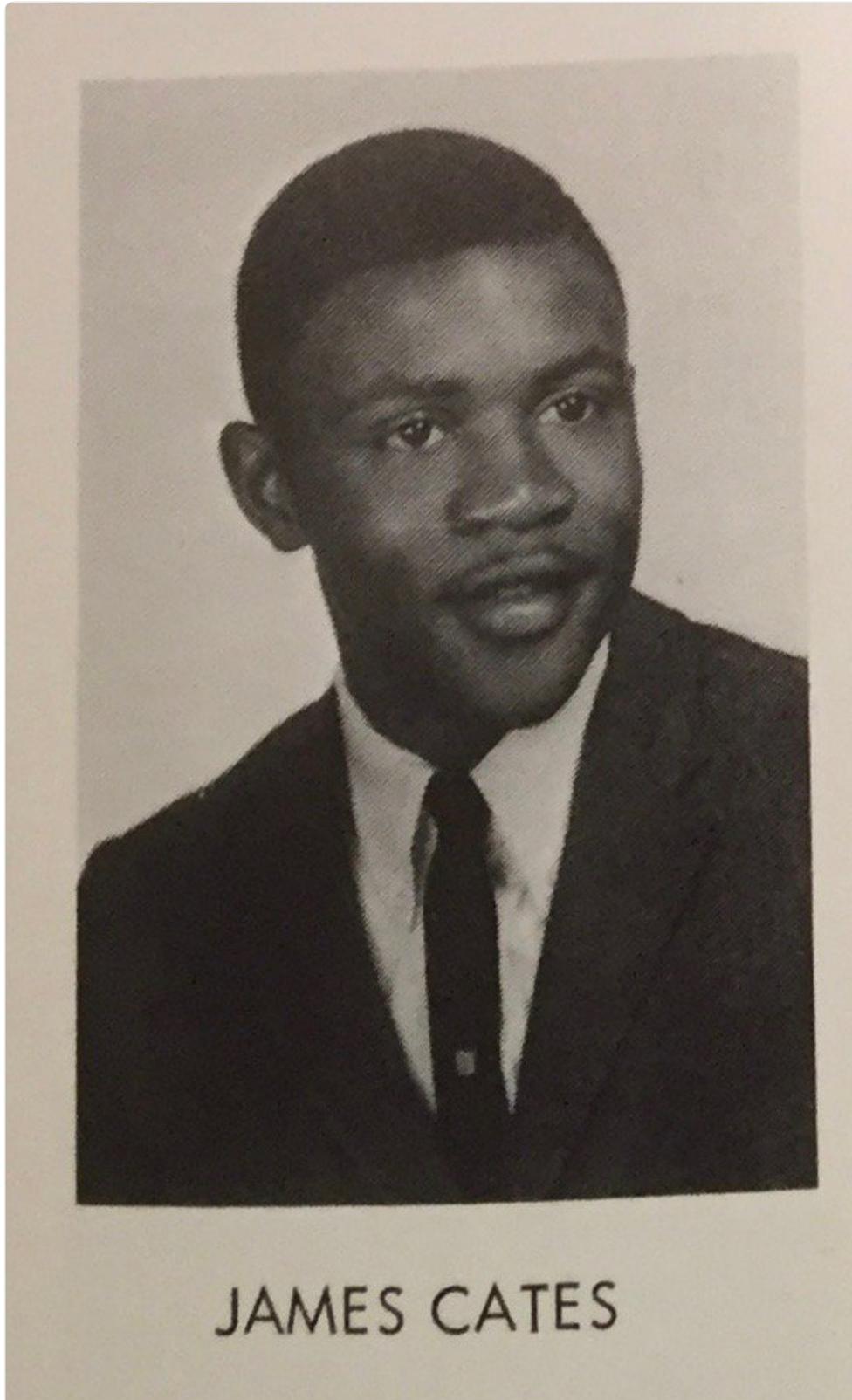


**Mike Ogle**  
@mikeogling

Thread Reader App  
117 tweets - 26 Oct 2018  
[mikeogling/status/1055833113455144962](https://twitter.com/mikeogling/status/1055833113455144962)

THREAD

James L. Cates Jr., a lifelong resident of Chapel Hill's historically black Northside neighborhood, would've turned 70 this weekend. But at 22, he was stabbed and left to die at the heart of @UNC's campus in 1970.



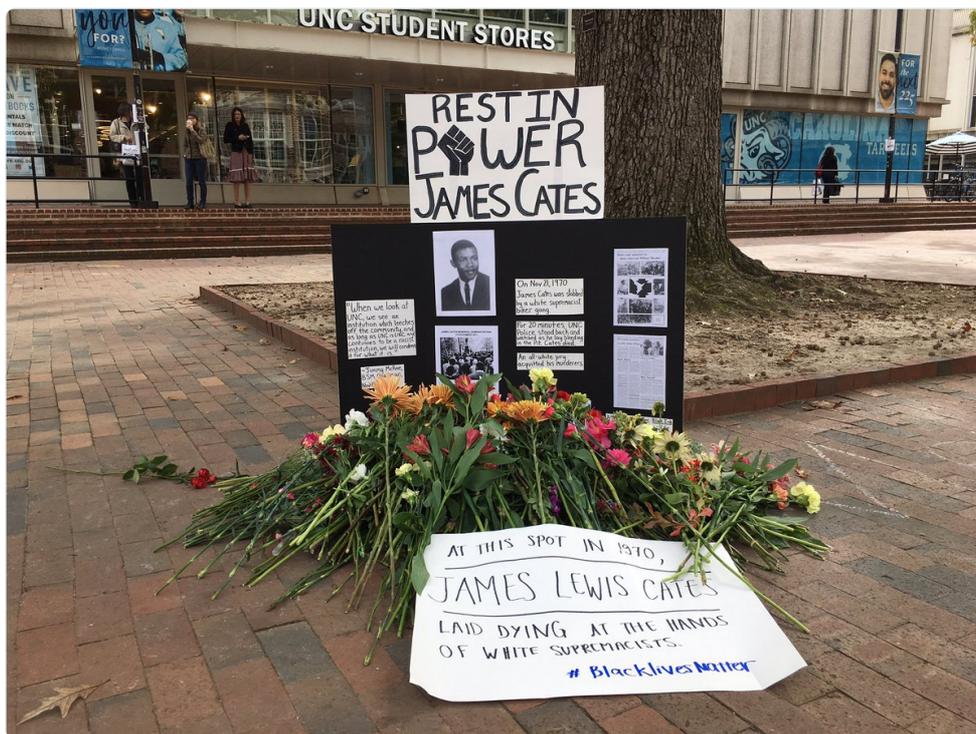
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This will be a (long) thread about the circumstances surrounding James Cates's death, and the role of UNC and police.

The full story of James's murder has never been told. That it happened at all had largely been forgotten,

whitewashed from Chapel Hill memory and history.

The recent night that UNC's Confederate monument Silent Sam fell, demonstrator Maya Little evoked James's murder in a speech. Little again mentioned James in court last week, and a memorial was held on campus yesterday.



<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcTOWJWsAAtpix.jpg>

This thread's timing is coincidental to that. I've been researching this case and the surrounding history for 2+ years. I'm unsure where that work is going, but now, on James's 70th, is the right time to put out some findings.

James's death was a Black Lives Matter event 40 years before that movement had a name. And as this 1971 photo from its first anniversary shows, Silent Sam was the obvious symbol at which to direct grief and anger.

<https://exhibits.lib.unc.edu/exhibits/show/silent-sam/item/5523>



<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcUJFUXgAAxqNv.jpg>

As the deadline looms for a proposal on what to do with Silent Sam, I hope @UNC @ChancellorFolt @UNC\_System will consider the following. This thread will also conclude with an important, non-Silent Sam proposal.

The following information is drawn from extensive research of many contemporary newspapers; archival, court, land, probate, and vital records; readings of scholarly research and books; my own interviews and conversations; and oral histories...

The weekend before Thanksgiving 1970, James Cates Jr. was killed during a large fight outside a dance at the Student Union. It was an all-night dance marathon meant to foster improved race relations.

# *All Night Dance Set Tomorrow*

by Anne Lafferty  
*Staff Writer*

The Committee for Afro-American Studies and the Carolina Union will co-sponsor an all-night dance marathon tonight in the Union Snack Bar after the John Sebastian concert.

The dance will run from midnight **FRIDAY UNTIL & A'M' Saturday.**

The pre-dawn dance was the idea of sophomore Eli Brown, chairman of the Afro-American Affairs Committee.

"The Road Band," a local rock group formerly billed as the G.B. Beckington Speed Band will perform from midnight until 3 a.m.

After an hour's intermission, the Dorvels, a soul band from Durham, will play from 4 until 7 a.m.

The feature attraction of the evening the Dorvells have returned from a Southern tour.

"If there is a band to keep people dancing between 4 and 7 a.m., Lord knows it's the Dorvells," commented Rick Gary, chairman of the Carolina Union Recreation Committee.

"We hope lots of people come around. It certainly was good of Servomation-Mathias to allow us to use the Snack Bar," he added. "They will even be serving food."

All the tables in the Snack Bar will be moved out to accommodate the dance.

Admission is free with a student I.D. and the SNACK Bar will remain open night.

"This is the first time we've ever tried a program of this sort," said Union President Richie Leonard.

"A lot of campuses have had a lot of success with pre-dawn dances," he added.

"This is an experimental program to see if it's really true that college students don't go to bed," Leonard quipped.

[https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcVJc\\_WoAEEeFN.jpg](https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcVJc_WoAEEeFN.jpg)

The fight was between members of a Nazi-themed motorcycle gang called the Storm Troopers, well known in the area, and black dance attendees, many from Northside. Several of James's friends and relatives are still around.

# Black Killed In Brawl



Chapel Hill Union Director Howard Henry sweeps the ground with the fatal stabbing of a black Chapel Hill student outside a dance at the Student Union early Saturday morning. The killing took place just outside the door of the snack bar at the Union during a brawl involving around 50 blacks and seven to 10 members of a Durham

motorcycle gang known as the "Storm Troopers." One man has been charged by Chapel Hill police with murder and another warrant is expected to be served soon. Looking on at right is Campus Security Chief Arthur J. Beaumont. (Staff photo by John Gellman)

by Rick Gray  
Associate Editor

A Durham man has been charged with the murder of a Chapel Hill black in connection with a brawl between blacks and a Durham motorcycle gang outside the Student Union early Saturday morning.

Ronnie Broadwell, 28, a member of Durham's "Storm Trooper" motorcycle gang, was arrested by Durham police early Saturday and charged with the murder of James Lewis Cates, 22, of Chapel Hill.

Cates died of severe knife wounds in the abdomen shortly before 3 a.m. Saturday in North Carolina Memorial Hospital after he and several other blacks were involved in a brief "clash" with "Storm Troopers" outside an all-night dance in the Union Snack Bar sponsored by the Union and the Afro-American Unity Committee.

Chapel Hill police said Broadwell is being held without bond in Orange County Jail in Hillsborough. Police Chief William Blake said a second warrant charging an unidentified suspect with murder was expected to be filed late Saturday night.

A heated verbal exchange between a "Storm Trooper" and a black apparently sparked the fight. The two went outside the Union, according to witnesses, where

a group of blacks gathered around the "Storm Trooper." Cates was stabbed in the evening fight.

Several more "Storm Troopers" rushed outside the Union and a motorcade followed in which two "Storm Troopers" were chased around the pit and beaten by blacks in front of the Student Stores.

When that fight broke up the "Storm Troopers" ran to their motorcycles and left the scene.

The entire incident, which began shortly before 2 a.m., lasted only five minutes.

Chapel Hill police said no students were directly involved in the brawl as far as they could determine.

Broadwell was arrested by Durham County officers at Wata Hospital in Durham where he had gone for treatment of severe facial lacerations shortly before dawn.

The murder was the third in Chapel Hill since 1965, and the second on the UNC campus in that same period. A UNC coed was stabbed to death in the Coker Auditorium in July of 1965. That case is still unsolved.

Reports on the number of people involved in the fight vary with estimates ranging from seven to ten Storm Troopers and as many as 50 blacks.

There were approximately 500 people at the dance.

One witness, who declined to identify himself except to say he was a UNC student, said Cates lay on the ground bleeding for about 20 minutes before he was carried to the hospital in a patrol car.

Witnesses said a student who identified himself as a former army medic tried to give Cates first aid while awaiting the ambulance.

Chapel Hill Police Chief W.D. Blake said his force was first notified of the disturbance shortly after 2 a.m. when they were asked to call the ambulance for Cates.

"The first call was for an ambulance," Blake said. "A patrol car transported the one that died (Cates) to the hospital because of the slowness of the ambulance."

Blake said he thought the incident might have been connected with a complaint his department received earlier Saturday night of a disturbance involving blacks and whites on downtown Herdemon Street. Blake said that disturbance broke up when a patrol car arrived on the scene.

Shortly after 1 a.m. there was another disturbance at the dance, apparently involving two blacks.

No charges grew out of either earlier disturbance, however.

## The Daily Tar Heel

78 Years Of Editorial Freedom

Founded February 23, 1893

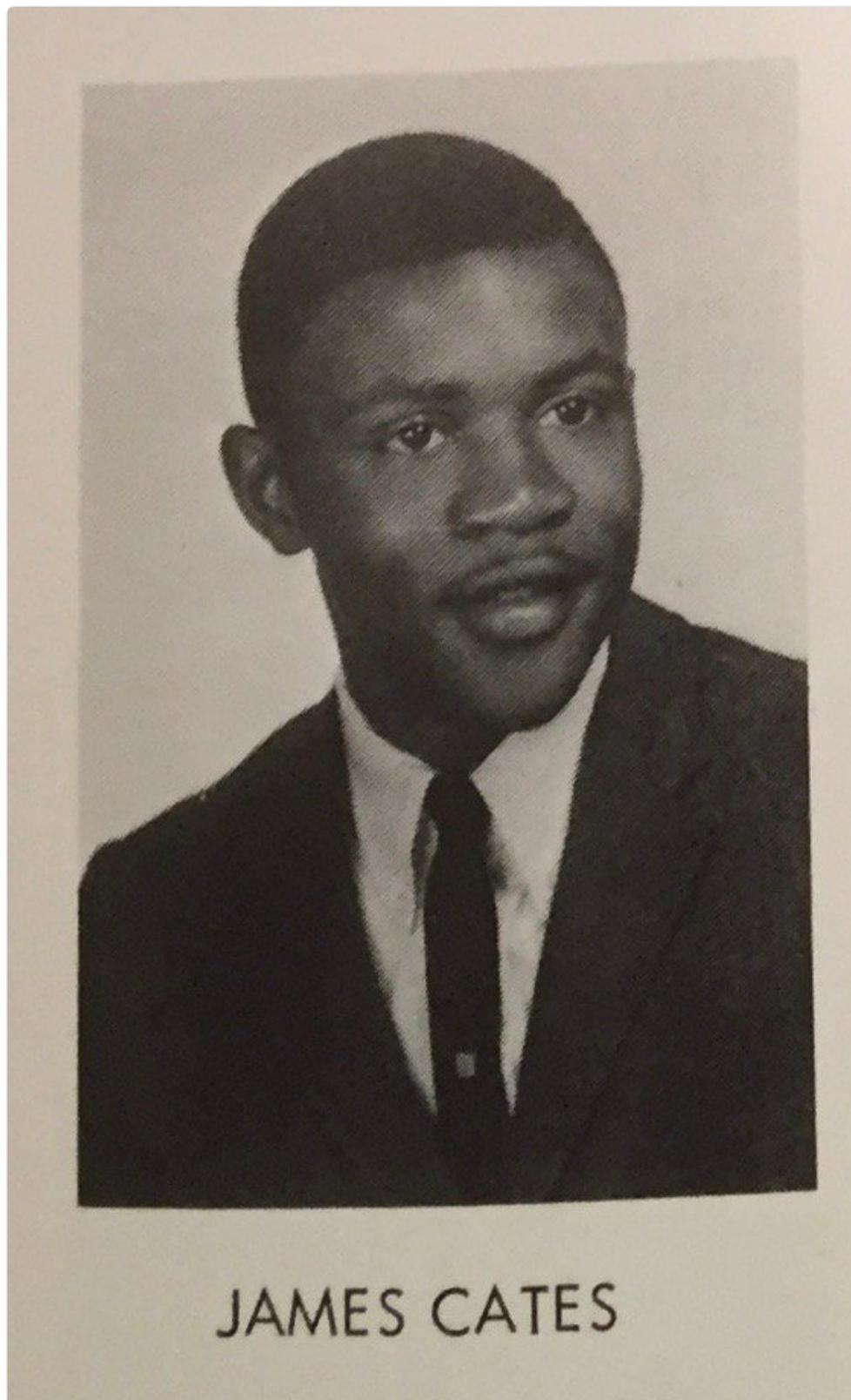
Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Sunday, November 22, 1970

Volume 76, Number 59

<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcVX-8W4AUjA0M.jpg>

(I apologize for the graphic photo but it is important to the story. And will come up again later.)

First, a little background on James, since nothing about his life was ever printed in the news coverage, not even a photo. He was just a name, an age, and a race ... James Lewis Cates, 22 ... and his name might've been incorrect.



<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcV1UfXQAMXaet.jpg>

While his middle name was reported as Lewis -- as it was on his death and birth certificates -- it was spelled Louis on his grave. Inconsistencies on vital documents were long common for African Americans.



<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcWJ6RX0AAbt5L.jpg>

For that same reason, I said at the start that James would've turned 70 "this weekend." His death & birth certificates and grave disagree on his DOB: Oct. 26, 27, or 28. According to his grave, Sunday would be his birthday.

But contemporary reporters never wrote the first thing about who James was, even missing out on the important fact that his grandmother, whom he lived with at the time of his death, had worked for UNC while raising him.

James's father, James Sr., known in Northside as "Boot," served in the Air Force for 22 years before retiring. Stationed around the world, he reached the rank of sergeant. From his military records:

**DECORATIONS AND AWARDS:**

WORLD WAR II VICTORY MEDAL, GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL, SMALL ARMS EXPERT MARKSMAN RIBBON, AIR FORCE LONGEVITY SERVICE AWARD, NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL, AF GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL, KOREAN SERVICE MEDAL, UNITED NATIONS SERVICE MEDAL, AF OUTSTANDING UNIT AWARD

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James Jr.'s paternal grandmother, Annie Cates, raised him from a baby in her Graham Street house in neglected Northside. Chapel Hill's black neighborhoods were long lacking in basic services, from sewer to paved roads.



<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DgcXH9fXcAlywZLjgg>

Born as Annie Fearrington/Farrington in the early 1900s, James's grandmother grew up on a nearby tobacco farm with an abusive father who was likely born enslaved, 2 months before the Civil War began.

1900 United States Federal Census for Rod Fearrington  
 North Carolina > Chatham > Baldwin > District 0002

Name	Relation to Head	Race	Sex	Birth Month	Birth Year	Age	Marital St
Julia	Mother in Law	W	F	Jan	1839	61	Wid
Fearrington Rod	Head	W	M	Feb	1861	39	M

<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DgcXURLWkAAFEoy.jpg>

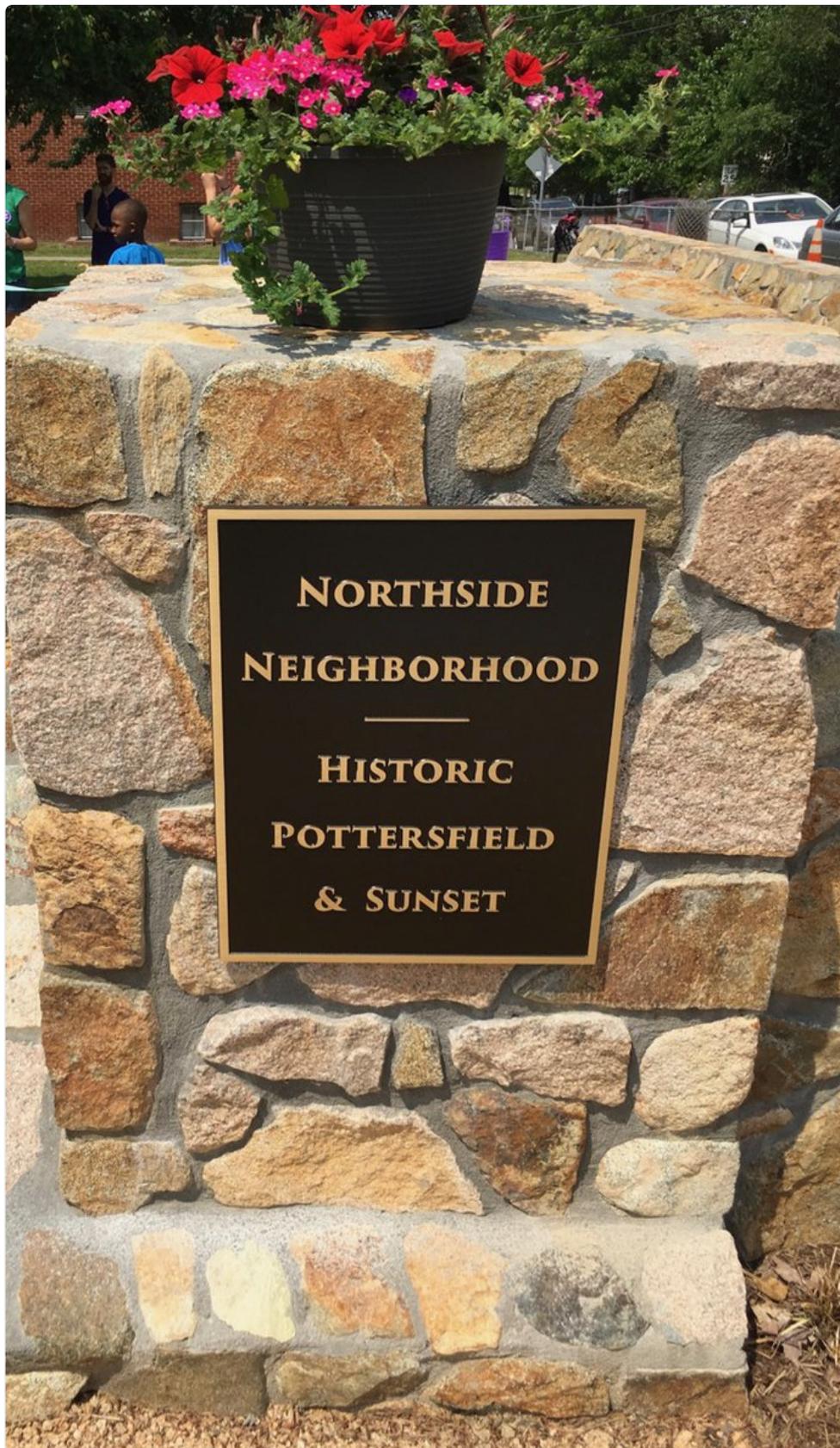
When she was old enough, Annie left the backbreaking work of the farm, where her brothers didn't treat her much better after their father's death, to make a life for herself a few miles north in Chapel Hill.

At the time of her grandson's murder, a perception existed that it was an event involving outsiders ... neither the Storm Troopers nor James were UNC students ... they weren't part of the UNC community.

But only 2% of UNC-Chapel Hill undergraduates then were black. Any campus event aiming for a diverse crowd would've had to rely on non-students.

Three years earlier when African-American enrollment was even lower, UNC's chancellor, Carlyle Sitterson, had said: "Any increase in the number of Negroes will have to come slowly."

Practically speaking, UNC's classroom doors were still closed to folks from Northside. But they and their ancestors had long performed the enslaved and then underpaid labor that fueled the campus.

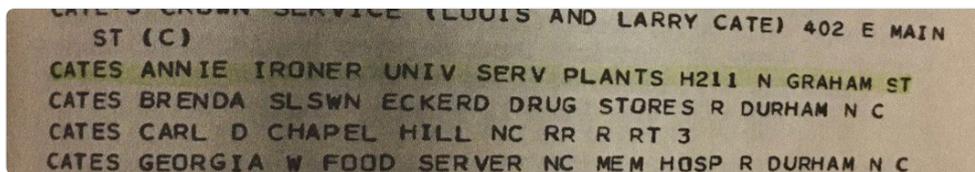


<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcYLoCXQAA0gss.jpg>

That included Annie Cates, who for many years worked at the University Laundry. Here she is in the 1967 town directory, listed as an ironer, a job she'd had for at least a decade by then, perhaps much longer.



<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcYke4WsAAeT9u.jpg>



<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcYoSSXgAAmSHG.jpg>

The Laundry was cleaning 2.5 million lbs of soiled linens per year. In 1970, when James died, nearly all women in similar jobs to Annie Cates made \$3,660-\$4,152 annually, not bumped above that despite years of service and the pay schedule often dictating they should've been.

Exhibit "B" - University Laundry

2

Position	Grade	Start	12 mo.	24 mo.	36 mo.	48 mo.	Max. 60 mo.
Laundry Worker	48	\$3660	\$3816	\$3984	\$4152	\$4332	\$4536
Maintenance Mechanic I	56	\$5184	\$5424	\$5676	\$5952	\$6228	\$6528
Maintenance Mechanic IV	64	\$7476	\$7824	\$8172	\$8568	\$8976	\$9384
Sales Clerk I	49	\$3816	\$3984	\$4152	\$4332	\$4536	\$4740
Sales Clerk II	52	\$4332	\$4536	\$4740	\$4956	\$5184	\$5424
Seamstress I	50	\$3984	\$4152	\$4332	\$4536	\$4740	\$4956
Seamstress II	52	\$4332	\$4536	\$4740	\$4956	\$5184	\$5424

<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcZKmyW0AAuqJ.jpg>

In 1967-68, the Laundry was still a Jim Crow workplace, from restrooms and break areas to segregation by job types. Laundry management installed new bathroom signs and posted notices, and made a token effort to integrate departments and widen opportunity for black workers.

4. Immediate steps should be taken to desegregate lunch rooms and toilets. The employees of the Laundry should be notified in writing that both lunch rooms and toilets are maintained for the use of all employees regardless of race, color or occupation. Mr. Hodgson observed that the toilets at the Laundry should be marked "Men" or "Women" because at the present time there is no sign on the doors to the toilets indicating use. Also he stated that all of the Negroes were eating their lunch and having their coffee breaks at one location and Caucasians at another.

<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcZgp6WwAYNabb.jpg>

  
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
CHAPEL HILL

Laundry Department

MEMO TO: ALL Laundry Employees  
FROM : Laundry Manager  
SUBJECT: Use of Rest Rooms  
DATE : April 24, 1968

It has been brought to my attention that someone has again complained to authorities that some of our Negro employees have been denied use of the upstairs rest rooms at the front of the building.

Each and every employee is reminded that at the meeting with all employees in November, 1967, I made it very clear that recreation rooms (2 at that time) and all rest rooms were to be open to all employees at all times and that no one would be denied their use.

In order that this may once again be made clear to all, I call your attention to the following:

1. ALL REST ROOMS ARE OPEN TO ALL EMPLOYEES AT ALL TIMES AND ANYONE MAY USE THE ONE OF HIS/HER CHOICE.
2. THE LARGE ROOM UPSTAIRS, FORMERLY USED AS A RECREATION ROOM, IS NOT TO BE USED AS A RECREATION ROOM OR LUNCH ROOM BY ANYONE AT ANYTIME.
3. ANY VIOLATION OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS SHOULD AND MUST BE REPORTED TO ME AT ONCE.

I solicit your cooperation.

J. B. Yelverton, Jr.  
Manager

<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcZj9zXgAleESv.jpg>

## NOTICE

The Large Room (Formerly Used As A Recreation Room) And The Rest Rooms On This Floor, Will Not Be Used By Anyone As A Lunch Room Or For Taking Break Periods.

The Rest Rooms Will Be Open At All Times

To All Employees That Wish To Use Them.

Your Cooperation Is Requested

<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcZv4yWwAAR6m1.jpg>

LAUNDRY DEPARTMENT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
CHAPEL HILL, N. C.

ENCLOSURE I

AN ANALYSIS OF JOB ASSIGNMENTS, BY SECTION, AS RELATES  
TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF NEGRO AND CAUCASIAN EMPLOYEES, ON DATES  
INDICATED BELOW.

SECTION	November, 1967		April 20, 1968		PLANNED
	Negro	Caucasian	Negro	Caucasian	
(3) Press	9	1*	7*	1*	
Receiving		8*	2	7*	Complete integration of this section through training and adjustment of plant work-flow will be accomplished with a target date of Sept. 1, 1968
(1) Wash-Dry-Fold	8	2*	5	1*	
(3) Silk	6*		5*		
Assorting		9*		8*	Complete integration of this section to be accomplished by September 1, 1968
(1) Flatwork & Tumble	9	7*	4	6*	
(3) Shirt Finishing	11	1*	7	1*	
Seamstresses		2		2	
(2) Utility	2		2		
(1) Bulk	15*	3*	15*	3*	
Totals	60	33	47	29	

<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcZzLFXQAneMl.jpg>

Annie's grandson, James Jr., was a Baby Boomer, born in 1948. He was a small boy and a small young man, roughly five-and-a-half feet tall, maybe 150 pounds. Friends and family called him "Baby Boy." Still do.







<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcaQoaWoAAJP2w.jpg>

James was popular among Northside youth. A lifelong friend described him to me as their Fonz. He was a “cool cat,” a smooth talker, well dressed, someone you’d consult for advice, and known as a ladies’ man.

As an adolescent in the early 1960s, James marched during Chapel Hill’s civil rights movement, which over four years couldn’t get the town to rid itself of Whites Only businesses. UNC took steps to discourage protestors. (James Cates not pictured)

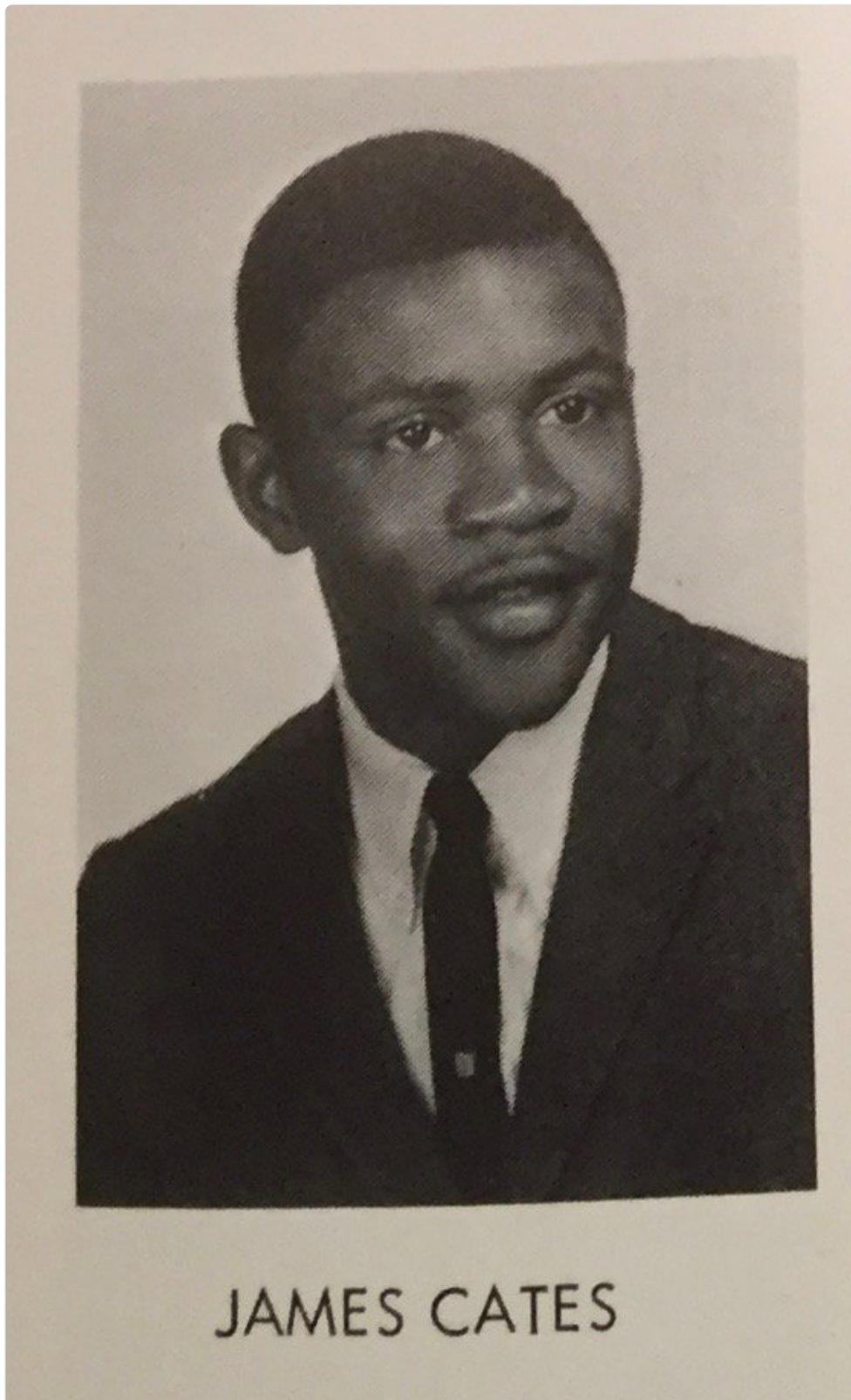


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<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/Dqca72gWoAAUym9.jpg>

James attended Lincoln High, Chapel Hill's black school, until his senior year, 1966-67, when he moved to Chapel Hill High. It was the first year Chapel Hill's public schools were fully integrated. At Lincoln, he'd participated in the school newspaper and student government.



JAMES CATES

<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcbLfgWsAAQwgQ.jpg>

When James was killed in 1970, there was no shortage of splashy media attention, including national coverage by the New York Times, AP, and UPI. Several newspapers closely covered developments through the trial.

**SLAYING AROUSES  
CHAPEL HILL, N.C.**

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## **Sleepy College Town Finds Itself Amid Conflict**

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**Special to The New York Times**

**CHAPEL HILL, N. C., Jan. 30—**

**This beautiful college town has seldom protested its national reputation as a charming island of liberalism amid a swamp of Southern backwardness.**

**In many ways, Chapel Hill, home of the University of North Carolina, is a remarkable place. Anti-Vietnam war pickets have held a silent vigil on the town's main streets every Wednesday for the last four years. In 1968, Chapel Hill and surrounding Orange County gave a majority to a black candidate for Governor. Local ecologists were recently successful in blocking a fiber plant offering many jobs.**

**But the violent death of James Lewis Cates has made it clear that the residents here must deal with the same tensions and conflicts that affect other towns.**

The details of the brawl will always be somewhat murky. But three things were clear about how James was injured: He was wounded in two places and bled to death; one or more of the Storm Troopers wounded him; self-defense was not argued.

It's also clear that the most historically significant (and overlooked) facts about James's murder actually occurred beginning the moment he fell to the bricks, including the ongoing cultural erasure of his murder.

The Union dance started at midnight on a Friday night. At some point, the Storm Troopers arrived. People were heated over an altercation the bikers had gotten into earlier with some black men at a downtown eatery.

In the neighborhood of 2:03/2:04 a.m., the big fight began outside the Union when four black men evidently assaulted one of the Storm Troopers. His face was cut and bleeding from the exchange. The four black men took off.

Incensed, the biker commenced yelling threats, saying he was going to "kill some n-----," including saying so to police officers asking the Storm Troopers to leave.

Amid the inflammatory threats, a scattered fight broke out between black dance goers and the bikers outside the Union and around the Pit -- a sunken, brick patio between the Union, bookstore, dining hall, and library.

Four or five Storm Troopers and anywhere from 10 to dozens of black youths were involved. Several people were injured, including students. The fight ended just after James fell to the ground bleeding. Police called for an ambulance at 2:11 a.m.

James had a long, deep gash across his belly. Less obvious in the dark was that he'd also been stabbed in the groin area. The puncture wound was 6 centimeters deep and his femoral artery was sliced open.

One UNC police officer was there from the start. Another arrived just after the initial scuffle; several more came during and immediately after the fight. Ten total officers, including Chapel Hill PD, were eventually on hand.

By policy then, once Chapel PD arrived, they were in charge. The police did not arrest anyone after James was stabbed. They let the Storm Troopers leave, even telling them to, which made securing convictions in court difficult. Their attorneys used an identity defense.

When James fell to the bricks between the Union and the Pit, he was unresponsive and bleeding profusely. An ex-Army medic then working as an orderly was attending the dance in work clothes and came to James's aid.

According to reports, the police officers at the scene did little to nothing to tend to James aside from calling for an ambulance.

Ambulance services were far from what they are today. The company that contracted with Chapel Hill out of Durham did not have a local ambulance available, so it tried to get a funeral home to go.

The ex-Army medic stuffed napkins from the Union snack bar into James's sliced gut. He told me it looked "like somebody had committed hara-kiri." With the excessive blood, chaos, and dark, he said he did not see the groin wound.

As blood pooled, officers reportedly seemed unconcerned, standing to the side as James's life was in obvious danger, which the ex-medic communicated. The hospital was 1/3 of a mile away as the crow flies, about a mile by car.

Black locals at the scene implored police to take James to the hospital, even trying to take him themselves, but officers stopped them. Police later explained that they were generally advised not to move injured persons.

A white undergraduate at the dance sent this letter to two local papers. Reports of how long James bled before police relented and took him to the hospital ranged from 14 to 45 minutes or more.

## Letters

# Murdered student died unnecessarily?

To the Editor:

I watched a man die early Saturday morning. At an all night dance, designed to promote Black-White relations, a black man was stabbed to death. I stood amazed with my date outside the Student Union watching a man die in his own blood on a cold brick walkway.

I do not know the particulars of about the knifing, nor of the total incident involved. The purpose of my letter is to convey to those who were not at the dance that a man died who might well have been saved.

A good friend of mine was dating a medic, who examined the victim and voiced the opinion that if the victim was not moved immediately, he would probably die of shock and excessive bleeding. It was obvious that the man was losing an incredible amount of blood very quickly.

I find it hard to believe that no ambulance was available for this dying man to be transported a full one-half mile to Memorial Hospital. I find it hard to believe that a flock of policemen stood by to let this victim lie bleeding as much as thirty or forty minutes before finally showing him into the back seat of a police car.

Had the police acted more efficiently, James Cates could very possibly have been saved.

I find it hard to believe that the police left the scene of the knifing to walk a good ways away from the crowd and to congregate, leaving the victim unguarded in the midst of tens of violent, hot-headed, and fired up youths, who stood shouting at one another around the stabbed man's pool of blood. I expect something more from my police.

I am no doctor, but I believe that the knifed Black man could have been saved. I find myself wondering that had the victim been a white college student, would he have waited so long to be medically treated?

I am thoroughly disgusted with the ambulance service and the police regarding this fatal stabbing.

Joseph K. Daley  
Pine Grove Mobile Homes

## Exchange student 'certainly truthful'

To the Editor:

Thank you both—author and publisher—for the story about my country, Colombia a “fantastic place.”

It certainly tells the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth—about the American shortmindedness.

Gustavo Restrepo  
152 Craige

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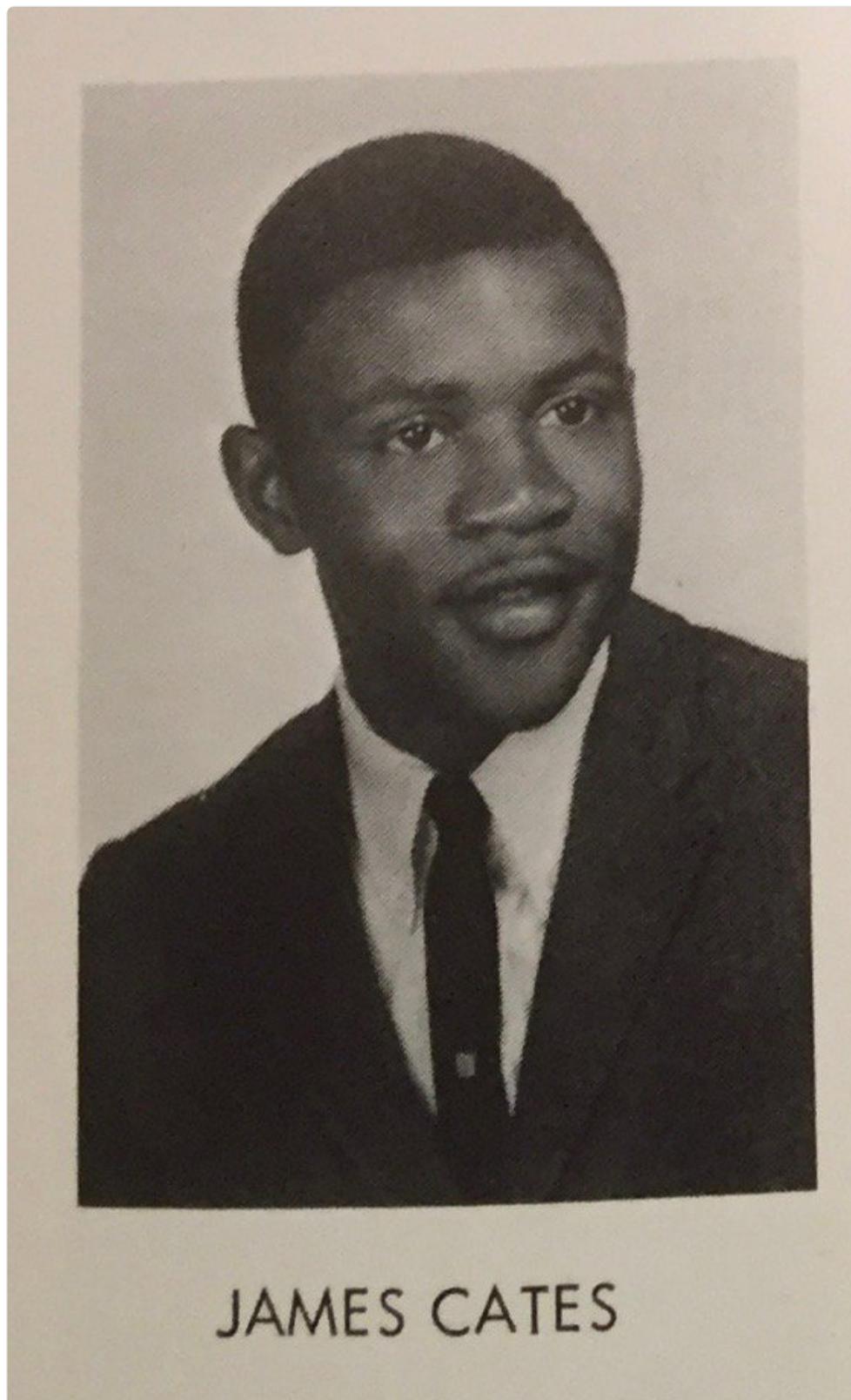
Another young black man stabbed during the fight ran to the hospital. He lived.

It is possible James was there for as long as 45 minutes, but it's hard to know. It would've been a supremely cruel length of time to wait. But it's unlikely police exited with James in a car at 2:25 a.m., 14 minutes after calling an ambulance, which became UNC's position.

Eventually a police car was driven up to James and he was loaded into the backseat and taken to the ER. James arrived at the hospital alive but died shortly thereafter due to excessive blood loss from the groin wound.

The ER doctor in charge told me that by the time James arrived, he had so little blood in him they could not get an IV into his veins. The medical examiner testified under oath “the body was almost devoid of blood.”

The ER doctor testified that James could've lived if he'd gotten to the hospital sooner. As it was, James flatlined. CPR failed. And according to his death certificate, James died at 3:30 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 21, 1970.



[https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqciWu9WkAATKn\\_.jpg](https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqciWu9WkAATKn_.jpg)

The ex-Army medic, who was white and whose name was never published, remains traumatized by that night to this day. For many years, he unfairly blamed himself for James's death for, he says, not spotting the groin wound in the dark, chaotic scene.

What also wasn't in the papers was that black witnesses, neighbors, and relatives were so upset about police disregard for James's life, they went to UNC system president Bill Friday's house Sunday evening.

The men asked for an investigation by UNC into the campus police's conduct. Friday called a meeting for 8:30 a.m. Monday with the chancellor, the vice chancellor over the police, and the assistant to the chancellor.

Chancellor Sitterson instructed his administrators to meet with the concerned black men and then work to reconstruct the events of the night James died.

The result was a memo/report of 5+ pages that for multiple reasons looked as much like a coverup as a good-faith effort to find the truth. A coverup at UNC's highest levels, of white violence against a black man, had precedents.

President Kemp Plummer Battle had worked diligently to coverup extreme abuse of convicts on a chain gang building UNC a railroad spur after one was whipped to death in 1880. Julian Carr aided Battle's effort.

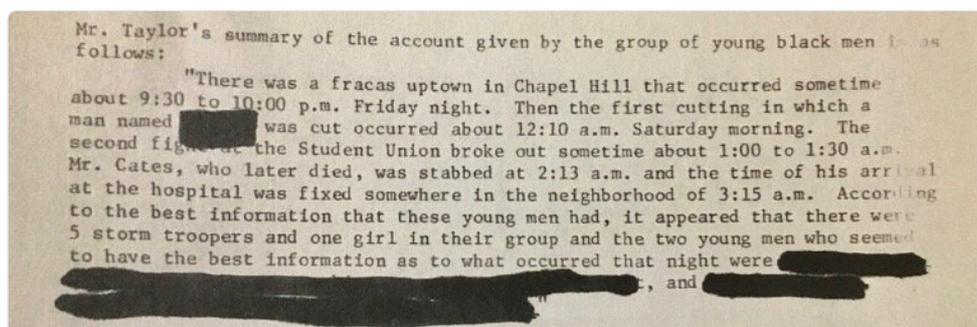
In 1886 a group of armed students marched into the black community following an argument after a whipping. A student was killed, UNC paid to prosecute the black men, and Battle advised a student to withdraw to avoid prosecution for the whipping.

With James Cates in 1970, UNC administrators immediately interviewed a group of 10 concerned black men after their visit to President Friday's house the previous evening.

The UNC-Chapel Hill brass were tasked with determining "insofar as possible the facts and the sequence of events." Their methods left much to be desired.

For starters, the 10 black men were interviewed as a group, their account summarized as a single version of events that amounted to 5 sentences in a report that relied almost entirely on verbal and written police accounts.

And only one sentence of those five came close to addressing the men's complaints about the police's conduct that night: They stated that James arrived to the hospital about 3:15 a.m., an hour after he was wounded. (Names redacted here for privacy.)



<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/Dgck51bWkAgZp23.jpg>

Supplemental documents contained more detail from interviews than did the final report. But the black men's account was exactly as brief, 148 words. Meanwhile summaries of individual officer accounts went as long as 5+ pages.

Those supplemental docs summarizing administrators' interviews of campus officers touched very little on the time of the ambulance's arrival. The administrators also first told the officers, who might've feared for their jobs, that their main concern was the time that elapsed.

UNC-Chapel Hill handled the interviews of police and others, as well as the creation of the report. However, the summation of the black group's account from their meeting was dictated by a UNC system vice president, Ferebee Taylor.

The month before, Taylor's archived papers show, he'd traveled to northern Virginia to honor the 100th anniversary of Robert E. Lee's death at Lee's birthplace. Taylor was so moved by the memorial address, "He Stands Alone," ...

He asked the speaker for a copy. The speaker, a UNC trustee, sent Taylor the 16-page speech he'd written. In 1972, Taylor became UNC-Chapel Hill's next chancellor.

UNC took as fact that James exited the Union in a car at 2:25 a.m., and arrived at the ER at 2:30, 45 minutes earlier than the group of black men had asserted.

The ambulance company's contract with Chapel Hill was up for renewal, an incentive to possibly lie. It soon lost the contract, and the South Orange (County) Rescue Squad was founded as a result of James's death.



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Further, a relative of James's who was present provided information in grand jury testimony and in a later interview that seemed to sink the 14-minute story adopted by UNC.

In court, he stated that he tried to pick up James to take him to the hospital himself twice but was stopped by police. Then in an interview years later, he recalled another damning detail.

He said he'd borrowed a car, drove to James's mother's home, told her that James had been stabbed, got back in the car, drove to Annie Cates's house, told her, and then drove back to campus to find James still on the ground.

I drove a 3.5-mile, slightly shorter version of the route five times with almost no traffic on the road. The average time it took was 12 minutes, 35 seconds (shortest 11:09, longest 14:08).

That was without getting in and out of the car twice to wake up two households with news their son/grandson was gravely injured. Factor in two thwarted attempts to collect James himself, getting to and from the car at the Union...

Plus, factor in time it took to get a police car through a crowd to outside the Union, carry an unconscious man into the backseat, and exit to the street, when the ambulance was supposedly arriving at 2:25 a.m. ...

The official line of 14 minutes doesn't add up. And according to the report, the police began loading James into the car at about 2:20, within 10 minutes, exiting after 14 total.

It also seems unlikely that if police had moved to get James into a car within 10 minutes, that witnesses would've confused that with as long as 45 minutes or even more...

Or that witnesses would've been so outraged as to go to Bill Friday's house. The U.S. Department of Justice was even asked to investigate, although I could find no record that its Civil Rights Division or FBI did so.

Further inconsistencies with the official story existed. James's death certificate said he died at 3:30 a.m., that doctors worked on him for an hour, and that the time between injury and death was also about an hour.

Also in supplemental documents, while some hospital staff said James arrived about 2:30, the hospital's assistant director said he got a call to go to the hospital at 2:30, yet he got there in time to see James arrive. That was not in the final report.

Other problems with the report included the fact that it completely omitted the racial slurs and threats by the Storm Troopers, portraying the bikers as cooperative bystanders in the events.

By contrast, the report described actions of black men in an almost animalistic manner. One claim was that the ex-medic, in a white orderly's uniform, was "jumped by a black" while helping James. The ex-medic does not recall that.

Despite the report portraying police conduct as proper, records reveal that as a result of that night, UNC officers were made to complete various forms of training: first aid, firearm, crowd/riot control, and more basic training.

Memos and correspondence spanning decades make clear that administrators had low opinions of UNC's police officers and bosses. Complaints of employee discrimination in the department later led to a lengthy lawsuit.

The mistakes that night did not stop there. Another egregious misstep occurred in the early hours of Nov. 21, 1970, that went unnoticed at the time but also spoke to how little James's life mattered on campus.

As James died at the hospital, university employees (the Union director and the head of security) were already cleaning the crime scene, a practice that even for the time was suspect.



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Arthur Beaumont, buildings security chief and part of the UNC police apparatus, had been police chief but was moved from that role due to erratic and unprofessional behavior. Howard Henry had been the Union director for 12 years.

That a home football game vs Duke was to be played on campus the next afternoon could've been a factor. The annual "Beat Dook" parade was the afternoon before the dance, and Don McCauley broke O.J. Simpson's single-season rushing record.

The photographer who arrived to take the photo of the crime scene being cleaned in the middle of the night told me he ran into Bill Friday and former governor/then-Duke president Terry Sanford on the way to the next day's game.

They walked to the stadium together asking the photographer what he knew. Friday and Sanford fixated on the idea of outsiders. "They were incredulous that somebody would throw an all-night party and let non-students come," the photographer remembered.

One campus police officer told administrators in his interview that "when you get a large group of blacks together you are likely to have a fight."

So as a result of police decisions that night: No arrests were made at the scene, no murder weapon or blood evidence from the Storm Troopers' clothes or bodies was obtained, and the crime scene wasn't investigated.

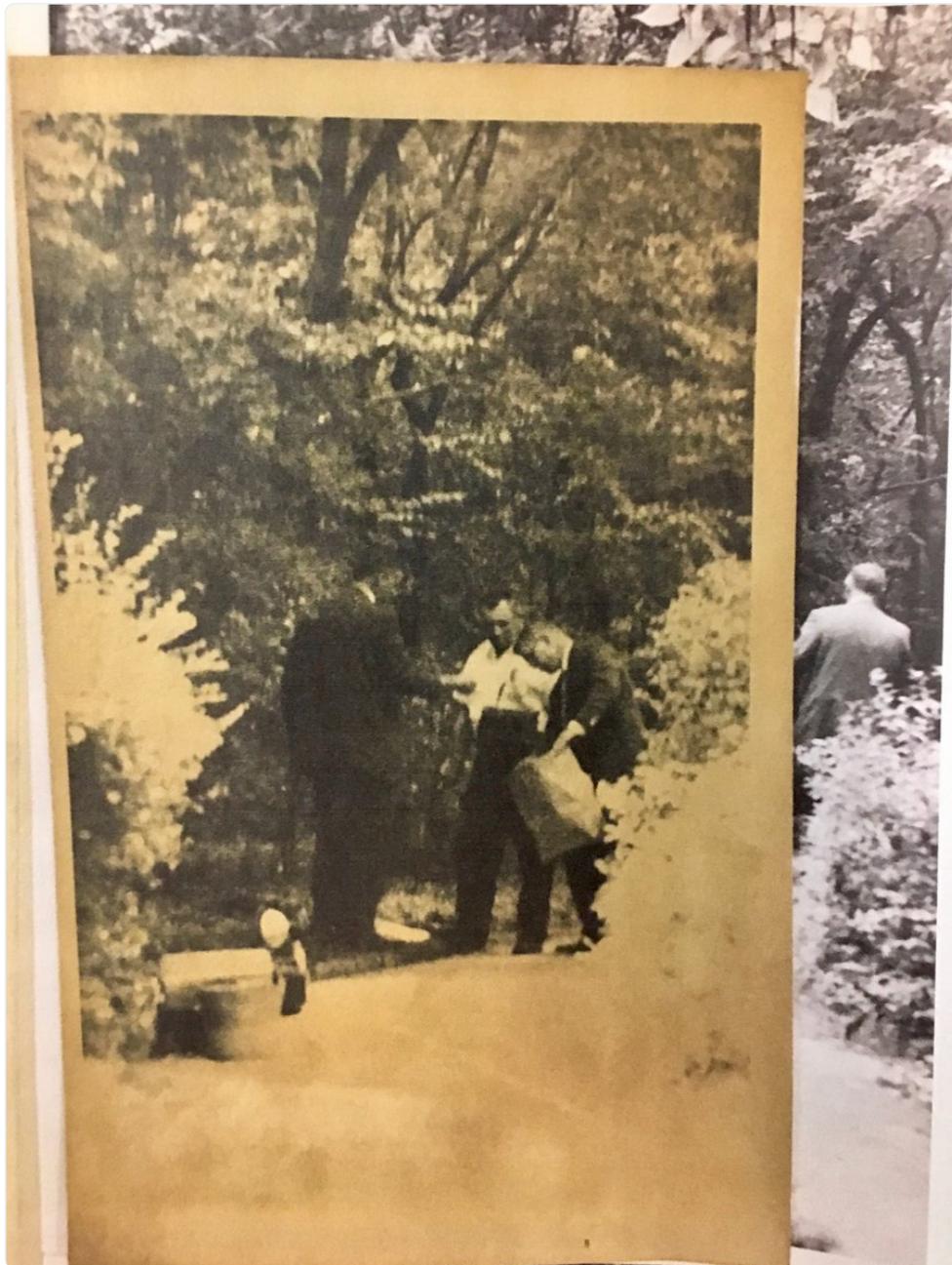
UNC police then quickly turned over the investigation to Chapel Hill PD.

By contrast, five years earlier, in 1965, there had been another murder on UNC's campus, in the Arboretum. This one was of a white female summer school student, and the assailant was thought to have been a black male.

A multi-state manhunt ensued. Dozens of black men were interrogated. The SBI was brought in. News coverage was breathless and years long, and the victim's life was written about in great detail.



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Raleigh, N. C., Saturday Morning, July 31, 1965 101st Year Daily 10c. Sunday 20c.

# UNC Coed Is Murdered

**SUELLEN EVANS**  
... victim

By FRED ROBSON  
CHAPEL HILL—A 21-year-old University of North Carolina coed was stabbed to death about 11:30 p.m. Friday as she walked through the University arboretum, a botanical garden about two blocks from downtown Chapel Hill.

Suellen Evans of Rt. 4, Greensboro, who had been killed once in the heart, was dead on arrival at N.C. Memorial Hospital.

Chapel Hill police said they were looking for "a slender young Negro of medium brown complexion, about 5 feet 6 inches tall."

"They had no suspects Friday night, but were conducting an intensive investigation and had picked up several persons for questioning."

Police said that no weapon had been found.

Miss Evans, described by police as "an attractive brunette," was walking from campus toward Cobb Dermatology where she roomed—and was within 100 feet of heavily-travelled Raleigh Street—when the assailant struck.

Chapel Hill Police Chief W. D. Blake said that two coeds and two men, who were walking on the sidewalk next to Raleigh Street heard screams and ran to Miss Evans.

"The women, whom police declined to identify, saw 'a dark man, either a foreigner or Negro,' struggling with Miss Evans in a clump of porrtulakum."

"She got up and ran toward them and fell," Chief Blake said. "She had reached the walk-

on Raleigh Street across from Melver Dermatology."

Dr. Leonard Patis, a Chapel Hill physician who was walking nearby, was called to the scene by the men and called an ambulance and gave artificial respiration.

But Miss Evans was dead by the time the ambulance arrived. She said nothing except "I feel faint" before she died.

Chief Blake said that some men working near the arboretum "saw a Negro boy with a blue shirt, with the shirttail out, running out of the arbore-

tum south toward Davie Hall."

"When he saw the workmen he turned and ran back toward the Finestarium."

The Finestarium is adjacent to the Morehead Finestarium. Bloodhounds from a nearby prison camp were rushed to the scene. They led police to the Episcopal Church at the northeast corner of the arboretum, but a search of the church yard disclosed nothing.

The crime occurred between

See COED, Page Two

The Raleigh News +  
Observer  
7/31/1965



<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcrapXcAEhdh0.jpg>

When a murder weapon couldn't be found, Chapel Hill police even invited hundreds of UNC students to comb the Arboretum. (Photos from UNC Archives. News clips from a book that was compiled for Wilson Library a few years ago.)



<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/DqcrqngX4AAR69C.jpg>

Often I've mentioned James's murder to white locals who knew nothing of it but who replied by asking me if I'd heard of the Arboretum murder. It is well remembered and documented.

I once surveyed 50 people at a public social event at the Carolina Inn, asking if they'd heard of James's murder: 4 said yes (3 of whom had because they'd been UNC students in 1970).

Three members of the Storm Troopers were arrested for James's murder later that weekend in November 1970. I won't go into the details of the legal proceedings here, because this is all way too long for Twitter as is.

Suffice it to say, the court case was a travesty too. The prosecution was perfunctory, the investigation lackluster and with costly missteps.

At the conclusion of the trial, the Chapel Hill Weekly called the solicitor (the term for district attorney then) "to put it charitably, ill-prepared," in regard to his performance at the trial.

The young solicitor would continue to have a checkered history, including suspect conduct when race was a factor in cases, and earned a reputation as an uninspired and ineffective prosecutor.

Including a 4-hour jury selection, closing arguments by 7 attorneys, and jury deliberation, the Cates murder trial lasted 3 and a half days. The prosecution called 5 of about 50 civilian eye witnesses sequestered at the courthouse.

The defense called no witnesses. An all-white Orange County jury deliberated for 85 minutes. When the jurors re-entered the courtroom, the judge instructed the gallery that no one was to enter or leave.

But a woman, likely Annie Cates, got up and tried to exit, apparently too upset to hear the verdict. Bailiffs stopped her, but the judge told the sheriff's deputies to let her go. The three Storm Troopers were found not guilty.



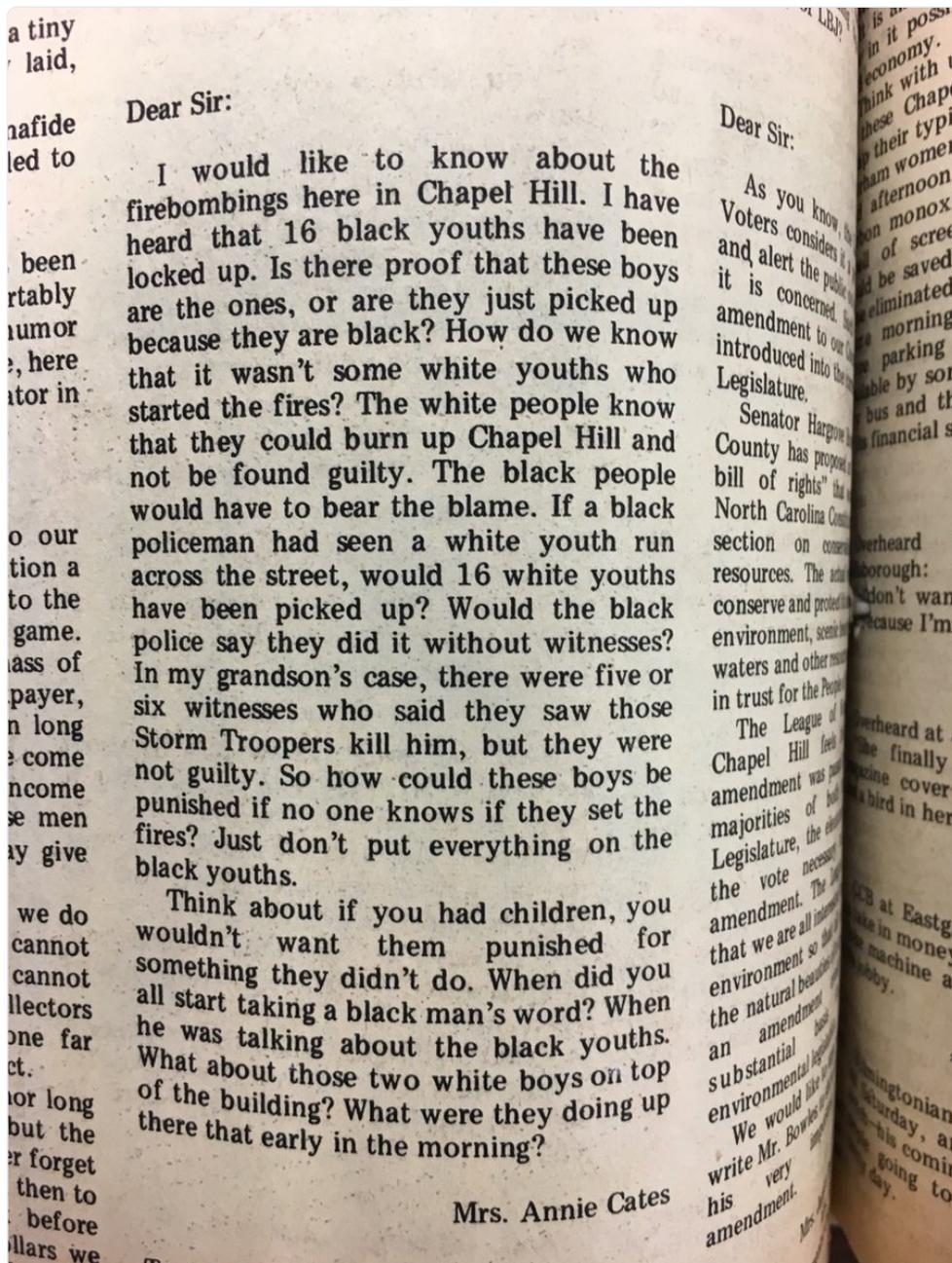
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The day of James's funeral, the day before Thanksgiving, mourners had marched from Northside through town. The night after the verdict, in late March of 1971, it snowed, and two Chapel Hill buildings were firebombed.

Hundreds marched again from Northside. A couple of weeks later, more firebombings occurred. The response by police and courts was much more vigorous than for James's murder. The same went for editorials and letters to the editor in the town newspaper.

Fifteen young black men, as young as 16, were arrested for the firebombings. Bonds were initially set for \$60,000 (15 years of pre-tax salary for a University Laundry worker). Bond for the Storm Troopers had been \$10,000.

Annie Cates wrote a letter to the Chapel Hill Weekly too.



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Of course, there's a lot more to the whole story, but this isn't the venue. I don't know where my research is going, but I feel that now is the time to put out some of it.

For one, I hope that [@UNC](#) [@ChancellorFolt](#) and [@UNC\\_System](#) take these facts into account as they decide what to do with the white supremacist monument called Silent Sam.

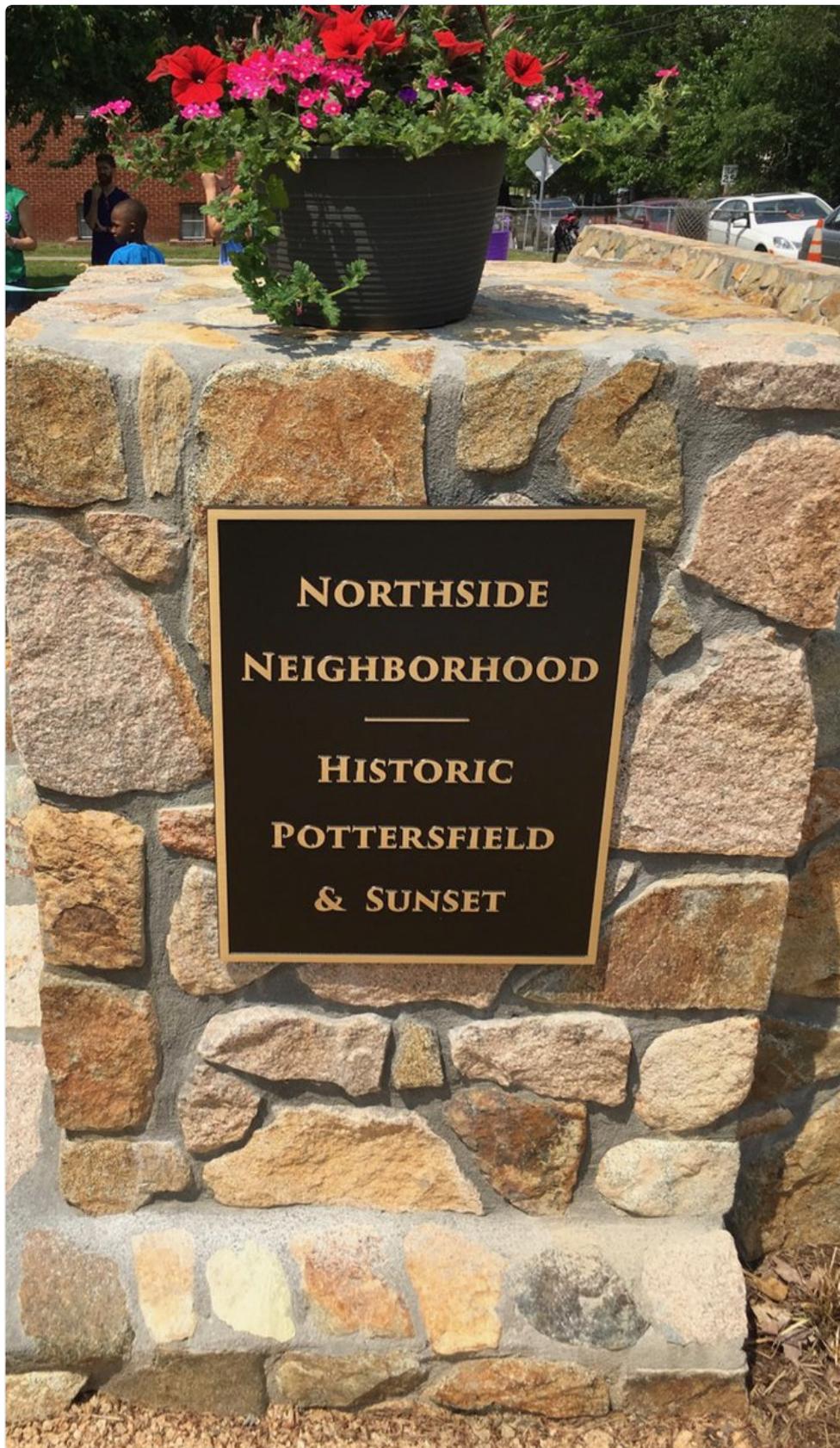


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Most crucially though, I hope that @UNC, in light of @ChancellorFolt apologizing for UNC's role in slavery and saying the apology must be followed by action, takes action. The value prescribed by UNC and Chapel Hill to James's life was not an anomaly.

I propose that @UNC create and finance a scholarship fund, perhaps in James's name, to cover tuition and fees for a dozen African-American students from Orange County's historically black neighborhoods, the residents of which UNC exploited as a resource for 200 years.

For too long, the iconic stone walls that enslaved people built at UNC signified where young black men and women could not go, except to labor. Descendants still living with that legacy reside in close proximity. A great debt is owed.



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The one thing UNC can offer is an open door to education. It can signal that the residents of Northside and other neighborhoods are outsiders no more. That the “University of the People” will stop defaulting on its promissory note. /END



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