

LISA MAGARRELL AND JOYA WESLEY. FOREWORD BY BONGANI FINCA
Learning from Greensboro

Truth and Reconciliation in the United States

"A mid-sized town in America decides to confront its painful past, which harkens back two decades and stretches beyond the zone of comfort for many. This book, both unerringly honest and wonderfully accessible, opens us to a fascinating process which brought South Africa, Peru, and Northern Ireland to North Carolina. Do we have something to learn from our past? We certainly do. Is confronting the truth easy? Absolutely not. This terrific book shows us just how, and why."--Priscilla Hayner, author of *Unspeakable Truths: Facing the Challenge of Truth Commissions*

On November 3, 1979, in the Morningside neighborhood of Greensboro, North Carolina, a caravan of Ku Klux Klan and Nazi Party members arrived on the scene of an anti-Klan protest. After a scuffle, some of the Klan and Nazis opened fire on the mostly unarmed, racially mixed gathering of political activists, labor organizers, and children. While news cameras filmed, five protesters were killed and ten were wounded. Police officers were notably absent at the time of the attack. State and federal criminal trials resulted in acquittals of the shooters by all-white juries.

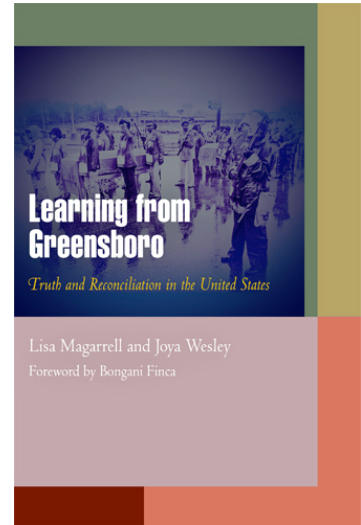
The City of Greensboro consistently denied any responsibility for the events. In 2001, Greensboro took its first groundbreaking steps toward confronting the past through an independent Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Inspired by South Africa's efforts to tackle injustice and seek reconciliation on a larger scale, Greensboro explicitly and controversially connected its experience to other contexts of injustice and launched a novel undertaking for a U.S. community.

Learning from Greensboro provides an insider's look at the truth and reconciliation process, including how it worked, the challenges it faced, and the local context in which it existed. The book offers valuable practical insights into the process of truth-telling and gives testimony to the possibility that denial, indifference, and hidden histories can be made to yield to a deeper and lasting justice.

Lisa Magarrell, a human rights lawyer and Senior Associate at the International Center for Transitional Justice, was an advisor to the Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation process.

Joya Wesley, a Greensboro-based writer, editor, and public relations consultant, was Communications Director for the Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Bongani Finca is a former member of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission.



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