

## **Interview with Tema Jon Okun by Bridgette Burge**

*Preface and Index*

### **Interviewee**

Tema Jon Okun

### **Interviewer**

Bridgette Burge

### **Interview Dates**

May 16, 2007; June 22, 2007; September 14, 2007; March 7, 2008

Four interviews total in the series

### **Transcription**

Denise Kelly (first and second interviews), Emily Baran (third and fourth interviews)

### **Place**

All interviews were conducted in Durham, North Carolina at Tema Okun's home

### **Collection**

Heirs to a Fighting Tradition: Oral Histories of North Carolina Social Justice Activists

### **Heirs to a Fighting Tradition**

Heirs to a Fighting Tradition: Oral Histories of North Carolina Social Justice Activists is a multi-phased oral history project which explores the stories and traditions of social justice activism in North Carolina through in-depth interviews with highly respected activists and organizers. Selected for the integrity and high level of skill in their work dedicated to social justice, the interviewees represent a diversity of age, gender, and ethnicity. These narratives capture the richness of a set of activists with powerful perspectives on social justice and similar visions of the common good. These are tales of transition and transformation, sea change and burnout, organizing successes and heart wrenching defeats. These are the stories of the Movement. This collection will be a valuable addition to the modest amount of literature about contemporary social justice activism in the South.

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## Description of the Interviewee

Tema Okun is a white, Jewish woman who was born in New York City, NY on March 15, 1952. Okun has been active in Middle East peace efforts as a member of Jews for a Just Peace and as a volunteer with the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions-USA. Okun has worked with social justice organizations for over 30 years. She has worked as a development director, production coordinator, training director, interim director, trainer and facilitator. Much of her work has focused on anti-racism training. She has been an adjunct professor at Duke University, Guilford College, UNC-Chapel Hill's School of Social Work and at UNC-Greensboro. Okun is working toward a Ph.D. in the Department of Education Curriculum and Cultural Foundations at the University of North Carolina—Greensboro. As of 2007, Okun lives with her partner, Tom Stern, in Durham, North Carolina.

## Index

<i>Last Name</i>	<i>First Name</i>	<i>Page</i>
Abdul Jabar,	Kareem	28
Alexander,	Stephanie	30
Alinsky,	Saul	57
Bailey,	Betty	32
Barfield,	Velma	56
Belafonte,	Harry	21
Bell,	Bill	110
Berman,	Phyllis	11
Bisharat,	George	92
Brown,	Cynthia	110
Burge,	Robyn	124
Burns,	Robert	5
Bush,	President George W.	97
Callair,	Pat	36
Carlson,	Bree	44
Carter,	Mandy	77
Chad Mitchell Trio		21
Cheney,	Vice President Richard (Dick) Cheney	97
Cosell,	Howard	28
Craig,	Senator Larry	123
Dodson,	David	109
Dubois,	W.E.B.	10
Easley,	Govenor Michael Easley	75
Edwards,	Harry	28
Ellis,	Marc	98
Fanon,	Franz	50
Feinberg,	Leslie	146

Gantt,	Harvey	36
Gauna,	Jeanne	42
Gilbert,	Ronnie	18
Giroux,	Henry	64
Gulati-Partee,	Gita	3
Gupta,	Pronita	78
Hall,	Bob	48
Hall,	Donald	123
Halper,	Jeff	95
Handler,	Michelle	34
Hawken,	Paul	90
Hearst,	Patty	27
Helms,	Senator Jesse	75
Herman,	Russell	129
Horwitz,	Claudia	89
Howell,	Cathy	32
Hughes,	Langston	17
Jackson,	Rev. Mary	154
Jeffries-Logan,	Vivette	154
Johnson Reagon,	Bernice	84
Johnson,	Michelle	36
Jones,	Charlie	10
Jones,	Kenneth	40
Kahn,	Si	18
Kennedy,	President John F.	88
Kimsey,	Robert	25
King,	Dr. Martin Luther King	146
Klein,	Kim	33
Lerner,	Michael	11
Marcharia,	Kamau	36
Masri,	Rania	85
Meggyesy,	Dave	28
Millman,	Dan	28
Mooney,	Julie	109
Nonyameko,	Karimah	41
O'Grady,	Ellen	2
O'Koren,	Mike	30
Okun,	Tema	4
Okun,	Will	4
Okun,	Daniel	4
Okun,	Elizabeth (Beth)	5
Okun,	Michael (Mike)	5

Okun,	Milton (Milt)	5
Okun,	Joedan	144
Overton,	Jim	79
Peter, Paul and Mary		21
Pharr,	Suzanne	71
Plihcik,	Suzanne	44
Plummer,	Lou	149
Pollitt,	Dan	10
Rasheed,	Abdul	36
Scott,	Jack	27
Seeger,	Pete	10
Seligman,	Leah	4
Smith,	Tommy	28
Stern,	Tom	1
Stern,	Cassie	13
Stout,	Linda	33
Townsend,	Ella	36
Walton,	Bill	28
Wancheck,	John	36
Waskow,	Arthur	11
Watson,	Lila	58
Wheeler,	Jewel	69
Whitley,	Melvin	36
Williams,	James	38
Wilson-Allen,	Tawana	36
Seligman,	Rose	5
Dueker	Eli	49
Reis,	Erika	112

	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Page</i>
Fund for Southern Communities,		2
UNC-Chapel Hill,		3
Carol Woods,		3
Community Church of Chapel Hill,		9
Fellow Travelers,		10
Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions,		12
West Bank,		12
Chapel Hill High,		15
Lincoln High,		15
House of Un-American Activities (HUAC),		18
Grassroots Leadership,		18

Lake Forest College,	24
Oberlin College,	24
The Independent School,	25
The Women's Center,	26
Students for a Democratic Society (SDS),	27
Weather Underground,	27
Athletic Revolution,	28
Antioch,	29
Rising Up Angry,	29
Institute for Southern Studies,	31
Rural Advancement Fund,	31
YMCA,	31
Duwamps Cloggers,	31
Carolina Community Project,	31
Southern Tenant Farmers Union,	31
Piedmont Peace Project,	33
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation,	35
National Organizers Alliance,	36
Leadership and Empowerment Institute,	36
Kellogg Foundation,	37
The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond,	37
Equity, Inc.,	37
Crossroads Ministry,	37
Lillie Allen Institute,	37
Barriers and Bridges,	35
Dismantling Racism Works,	40
Peace Development Fund,	40
Exchange Project,	40
Penn Center,	40
ChangeWork	42
Southwest Organizing Project,	43
Boggs Center,	45
SANE/Freeze,	47
Peace Action,	47
Ford Foundation,	51
Freedom Road Socialist Organization (FRSO),	59
"White Supremacy Culture" article,	62
NARAL (National Abortion Rights Action League),	69
Duke University,	72
UBUNTU,	72
J.P. Stevens,	79
Tough Love Consulting,	81

The Western States Center,	82
Chatham County Health Department,	83
UNC-Greensboro,	88
National Lawyers Guild,	92
Parent Circle,	95
Duke University's Heart Leadership Program at the Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy,	110
MDC,	110
Southpoint fight,	110
Guilford College,	113
My Lai,	115
OpenSource Leadership Strategies Inc.,	122
North Carolina Outreach,	124
North Carolina State University,	128
Leadership Council of the Saponi Tribe of the Occaneechi Nation,	155