

I'm not much for New Year's resolutions, but I have a lot on my mind as we close out 2019. Highest on the list is this question: How do we participate fully in Reparational Genealogy? I've had a lot of people ask me that question, but until this moment, I think that my answers have been inadequate. Today I'm making my appeal for a practical means of participating in getting your enslavers' names out there for all researchers to find: blogging.

I'm not new in this request, nor with this idea. Plenty of people do this all the time, and it really helps family members to Google a name, find commonalities, and connect. I've never really discussed this on the podcast because I've certainly never done it, and I don't want to be a COMPLETE hypocrite!

Until now, my primary means of working with reparational issues has been by researching other people's trees, and my blog has been a place to publish my podcast. But as of 2020, in addition to podcast posts, I will be publishing information about my individual enslaving ancestors from my own tree, one per post, with complete documentation, images with citations (don't break copyright laws, my pumpkins!), keywords, categories, tags, and so forth. This way, I can get all of the data from my own tree and my own enslaving ancestors out onto the internet for all to use. I invite you all to be a part of the solution, and to do the same, in 2020.



Hello there. Welcome to episode 216 of From Paper To People. My name's Carolynn ni Lochlainn, and I am your hostess with the mostest. This is one that's coming just off the top of my head. And if I had to give it a title, I guess I would be talking about Reparational Genealogy for the Individual in 2020.

One quick thing I want to thank Melissa McPherson for [joining the Patreon Army](#) and becoming a patron at the Branches level. Very cool of her. She said that among other things

she really likes the Family Cookbook recipes, which is good for me to hear, because I'm never sure if I'm the only one enjoying those or what! She has apparently made a cookbook of persimmon recipes with her grandmother. So let's all work together to try to get her to come onto the podcast. Maybe we can egg her on from the group, or on Twitter, or someplace else. But let's get her on, and maybe she will reveal some secrets to us, and tell some backstory, and give us a recipe.

There's a lot going through my head right now, because it's the end of the year and I feel like there are so many things that I haven't gotten done yet, so many things I haven't been able to get up into the podcast yet. And so I may be popping in more often than once a week with with the various kinds of episodes. I hope I'm not, because I don't want to overwhelm you. I would rather space it out and do better that way, but this is something that's been in my mind specifically this for, I don't know, a couple of months, and I haven't quite known how to incorporate it into other things I was thinking about or talking about. So we're just going to talk about it today. It's very simple.

People come to me via email, via message on Patreon, from wherever, fairly often, and they ask me "well, how is it that I can do reparations genealogy on my own, what would you consider reparation in my work?" They ask me all these related kinds of questions, and I feel like I never have a very good answer for them. I tell them things like "well, join me and the Reparational Genealogy Project, and you can work on trees for people who were lynched, or for people in the black community who were never known or acknowledged by the white community and who deserve to have their names lifted up, and to have their information available on FamilySearch for all to see and to know about." But you know, for a lot of people, that's not really a significant answer in terms of what they're already doing. I think what most people are doing right now who are white, who have ancestors who were enslavers, is working on their own trees, and they're coming across information that shows that their ancestors, either direct or ancillary, were enslavers, and they don't know what to do with that information.

Another one of the suggestions that I've made multiple times is "well, go on Facebook and join these groups like "I've Found My Ancestors' Enslavers" or "Lost Kin," or a lot of other organizations and groups that are represented on Facebook. These are groups that are primarily black in membership, and that do have some white members, or primarily people descended of enslaved people but that have some descendants of enslavers in them. That is a good place to put information. I'm not saying it isn't. But not everybody's on Facebook. So if you're not on Facebook, and you don't necessarily have the time to give to the tree that I'm working on as well as your own, and you want to make your own information available, how do you do that? Social media. That's one way. But the best way, I think, is blogging.

I've decided that, starting in 2020, this is what I'm going to do. I want to both invite and challenge you to do the same thing. I have a WordPress blog. You can get free WordPress blog. You can get a blog with a whole lot of other platforms. I don't even know what the platforms are anymore. I just ignore them because I use WordPress, and that's pretty much me. But there are so many ways that you can just create a family history blog. There are so many family history blogs out there to read that you can get ideas about format from what it is that you read.

This is what I'm going to do. I don't know how often per week or per month, but I'm going to be putting these posts out as regularly as I can. I'm going to start by catching up with all of the people in my tree whom I know and have proven to be enslavers. Then, I'm going to make a post about a person, like George Penn. George Penn enslaved as many people as he had family members - I think he had eleven people in the house, and he enslaved eleven people. Some of those enslaved persons came over with his wife when she married him. So that, to me, is very interesting, and it's indicative of how enslavement worked. It's indicative of the process of - it's so weird - I mean, dowry? Really? But yeah, how dowry worked in the 18th and 19th centuries. And these people were named out in wills, where he willed his children property, property including some of his enslaved persons.

So what I want to do for George is to make a blog post and give every bit of information -

“I’ve got about him in 1810 on the census living here; in 1820 on the census living here...” and provide the images (with credit to Ancestry, a full credit so that I don’t get dinged for copyright violation. I guess we’ll find out if this works). but certainly I’ll give the data and I’ll give the hot link to the information so that others can go and see it. I’ll provide everything I can in terms of names, and dates, and places, and hashtags, and keywords, and all that kind of stuff, so that when someone who is searching for an ancestor they know was enslaved by a Penn, or maybe even by George Penn specifically, or by someone who’s in the town or the county where George Penn lived at the time that he lived there, they can find this blog post with a simple Google search and it will provide everything that they need without them having to go digging around in my Ancestry tree. But I’ll also provide a hot link to my Ancestry tree itself, because my Ancestry tree is public (except for those those brief periods when I go in and try to clean up a lot of the messes that I made when I made the tree, back in the early days when I believed that everybody who was on Ancestry actually knew what they were doing! Silly me.).

So, this is what I’m going to do, and this is how I’m going to make all of the information that I have available. It’s not going to happen immediately, but it’s going to happen over time. So far, all of the posts on my blog, really since January 3rd of 2018, have been podcast episodes. Now, there’s going to be a mix. And if you’re listening, and you’re doing research on your tree, and you’re descended of enslaved persons, please go to my blog at [ancestorsalivegenealogy.com](http://ancestorsalivegenealogy.com) and subscribe because you never can tell when a family name or a place or a time is going to come through, and one of my posts and it’s going to be helpful to you. I suggest that for anybody who’s doing any research on any of their enslaved ancestors.

Now this isn’t new. I’m not massively creative for coming up with this. This is something that works, and other people have proven it. I’m simply putting myself in that place as well because I’m already working on a lot of trees for people who are descended of enslaved persons. I working on trees for people who were lynched. I’m working on trees for people who are famous African Americans who were ignored by white culture. I’m also working on

another aspect of the Reparational Genealogy Project: there's another family of trees in there and that is people who were African American and who were put to death by the judicial system and it was later proven that they were innocent, or who simply died a terrible death, or who had some kind of horrible tragedy in their lives. I know that it sounds macabre. But there's actually a point to this: what I'm trying to do is I'm trying to say, in this work, Black Lives Matter. That's the point - their lives and their tragedies matter just as much as my family's do, and they deserve to be on [FamilySearch](#), available for family members to be able to find. That's the point of the Reparational Genealogy Project, and that's the point of everything that I do on pretty much a daily basis.

I'm not very much into looking at or working on my own tree right now, so now what I'm going to be doing in 2020 is jumping between the two. I'll be working on aspects of my tree for myself and aspects of my tree in order to be able to get all of that out: "Here's an enslaver. Let's get his information, or her information, fully fleshed out in a single blog post. And then, let's make that available to the world."

If you want to work on the Reparational Genealogy Project, all you have to do is this: if you can, join the Facebook group but second, message me somehow. [Message me through the contact form at \[ancestorsalivegenealogy.com\]\(http://ancestorsalivegenealogy.com\)](#), or go to my [Facebook page](#), or send me an email at [ancestorsalivegenealogy@gmail.com](mailto:ancestorsalivegenealogy@gmail.com). You can leave a message on any of the platforms that carry my podcast. You can contact me pretty much in a bazillion ways. You can also tweet at me, which is [@ancestorsalive](#). Let me know that you're interested in working on it, and what we'll do is we'll get you onto my blog. There is a whole platform for conversations and for posts and everything like that. And, that's where we're coordinated. I've been slow to get that going, and I've been doing most of the research myself, but really, I want to get other folks involved as well and I want to continue to increase the number of people who are involved and interested in working on researching these various trees.

So, that's pretty much what I'm thinking about right now: reparational genealogy; how we can carry it forward into 2020 making information available from people who are descended

of enslavers to people who are descended of enslaved persons; making the world a better place; making 2020 a place about success in making connections and in building community. That's pretty much everything that was on my mind. So that's that. Please consider your place in this. And in the meantime, do your research, don't be a Jeffrey, and above all, Expect Surprises.



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If you want to be on the podcast from ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD using the Zoom platform and a good mic and earphones (how about that Family Cookbook series??), you can contact me at <https://bit.ly/2Kxb6rm>.

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