

## Some Discussion Questions

### ***Blood Done Sign My Name*** **by Timothy Tyson**

1. Tim Tyson says (page 319), “The future of our country depends upon an honest confrontation with our own history.” What do you think of this idea?
2. What steps, if any, do you think are needed for reconciliation in the community of Oxford? In North Carolina? In the United States?
3. How does Tyson’s story of North Carolina compare with what you know about the Civil Rights Movement? What else would you like to learn?
4. What is the relationship between social class and racial attitudes among white southerners? How did the histories and values of the Teel, Tyson, and Chavis families shape their views of the world and of each other?
5. Why is it important that the author points out that his family “was as Southern as fried okra and sweet tea?” What does being Southern mean to him, and to you? How does the fact that Tim Tyson is white affect your reaction to the story?
6. What impact did the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Vietnam War, and religion have on life and race relations in Oxford? What does the book tell us about the politics and culture of 1960s and 1970s?
7. Why did some of the persons in the book commit acts of political violence, such as the burning of the Oxford tobacco warehouses? Was it understandable? Is there any similarity between these people and the colonists who participated in the Boston Tea Party?
8. While the book centers on black/white tension, how does it apply to other kinds of racial and ethnic tensions in North Carolina and elsewhere?
9. Tyson challenges each of us to examine our own conscience. How do you decide when it is time to speak out or to stay silent? How do you decide that speaking out is worth the risk? How and when do you decide to act or not to act? What is your duty when you see injustice?
10. Although Tyson’s experiences center on the dynamics of race, *Blood Done Sign My Name* also tells the story of how a young person’s goals become shaped by life events. How do our experiences ultimately inform our future?

*These discussion questions are from the [University of North Carolina Chapel Hill’s Summer Reading Program’s web site](#), and are reprinted here with permission.*