The year 1985 marked 30 years after the brutal murder of 14-year-old Emmett Till in Mississippi. Three years later, Clenora Hudson’s Ford Doctoral Dissertation shed the most scholarly light up to that time.

On Friday (Aug. 28), the 60th anniversary of Till’s death was noted in various ad ways. And while many do not associate their awareness of Till’s death to Dr. Hudson, there is a good case to be made that in some fashion they should.

Hudson’s fourth book on Till’s death – “Emmett” with the subtitle “Legacy, Redemption and Forgiveness” – is now being extended to the reading public. It is, she says, the last she plans to write on a subject that has been her passion for three decades.

“Emmett” is a quick and intriguing read. While it accounts for Till’s gruesome murder, the discussion of the Tallahatchie River after he whistled at a 21-year-old white woman in Money, Miss. and the “mock trial” that ended in the acquittal of the two accused of murder, none of those elements is the crux of this story.

What readers really get fresh in “Emmett” is the intensity of the stand Hudson takes in asserting, “The true ugliness of racism, symbolized by Emmett’s bloated face, must be eradicated.” This position is set up by the stories of the book’s essential characters – Till’s mother Mamie Till, Mooty, a labor union leader, civil rights activist and Ma- mie Till’s second cousin and advisor; attorney John Whit- ten Jr., who delivered the closing remarks in defense of the accused killers, and Hudson herself.

Readers new to Hudson’s works are made aware of what those familiar with her research/literary efforts already know about her characterization of Mamie Till, Mooty and Whitten. Namely that Till made “a lifetime commitment to her only child to change racist minds and laws in America with the help of God”; that Moody was “the supreme strategist” in that endeavor; and that Whitten evolved into “an exemplar for correcting racist attitudes and acts.”

Over the years – and as others have followed Hud- son’s pioneering research establishing the Till case as the true catalyst of the civil

“Emmett” Legacy, Redemption and Forgiveness

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