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Anne Lawson Whites Heintzman  
*University of Louisville*

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INSIDERS OR OUTSIDERS?  
THE RHETORIC OF COMPROMISE IN POST-RECONSTRUCTION  
INSTITUTIONALLY-SPONSORED AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERACY

By

Anne Lawson Whites Heintzman  
B.A., Idaho State University, 1991  
M.A., University of Colorado at Boulder, 2002

A Dissertation  
Submitted to the Faculty of the  
College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Louisville  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of English  
University of Louisville  
Louisville, Kentucky

May 2010

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A Dissertation Approved on

March 26, 2010

by the following Dissertation Committee:

---

Carol Mattingly, Dissertation Director  
Professor of English

---

Karen Kopelson  
Associate Professor of English

---

David Anderson  
Associate Professor of English

---

Susan M. Ryan  
Associate Professor of English

---

Ellen McIntyre  
Professor of Literacy Education

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband,  
Alex Joseph Heintzman,  
for he is the love of my life and the reason I thought myself capable of this task,

and to my children,  
Alix Elizabeth Heintzman,  
Eli Beck Heintzman,  
and  
Larkin Lee Heintzman,  
for without their unfailing patience, support  
and ability to take care of themselves, I could not have endured the task.

And to my mother,  
Barbara Hurt Whites,  
for her love and lifelong determination.

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Outside of the academic world, I want to specifically thank Sifu Steven O'Nan, and his wife, Sifu Tamara O'Nan, for their gift of friendship that was, after all, the deciding factor.

ABSTRACT  
INSIDERS OR OUTSIDERS?  
THE RHETORIC OF COMPROMISE IN POST-RECONSTRUCTION  
INSTITUTIONALLY-SPONSORED AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERACY

Anne Lawson Whites Heintzman

March 26, 2010

This dissertation examines the history of Berea College in Kentucky. Founded before the Civil War, it was a small, private southern college that educated blacks, whites, women and men equally, an early model of cooperation and social harmony. Its rigorous college curriculum was modeled after northern elite institutions, and black graduates before 1904 held a variety of positions: professors, principals and superintendents, ministers, attorneys, physicians, and civil engineers. However, in 1904 Kentucky passed legislation requiring blacks and whites to be educated separately. Berea College set aside funding and established the all-black Lincoln Institute near Louisville. While Lincoln Institute was presented as a positive achievement, it offered no college department and only provided secondary and industrial levels of education, similar to Tuskegee in Alabama and Hampton in Virginia. Although Lincoln Institute's trustees specified arrangements for “the higher education of such graduates of this department as show special character and ability for leadership,” this promise was never realized. Using literacy theory and archival research, this research emphasizes differences between working class and classical educations, in education for freedom versus servitude, and



places the loss of access to a collegiate-level education for blacks into a larger historical milieu.

Chapter I identifies the boundaries and theoretical foundations of this archival research, and sets the historical context for the more detailed evidence in Chapters II-III.

Chapter II examines institutional, national, and state sponsorship of education and uses W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington as examples of national pressures brought to bear on Kentucky.

Chapter III focuses on community sponsorship through individual voices affected by the policy changes at the College.

Finally, Chapter IV concludes the research with a brief summary and argues the importance of both institutional and community sponsorship in understanding the current challenges of encouraging diversity and social equality on college campuses.

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CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

The actual community of the professional man . . . are those persons who constitute the real environment of an individual and determine his functions beyond the effort of making a living. The one who has no such associations may be earning a livelihood, but he moves in a world by himself (Woodson xi-xii).

In the spring of 1866, a black Civil War soldier, Angus A. Burleigh, was discharged along with thousands of others at Camp Nelson, Kentucky. One of the first blacks recruited for Berea College by founder John G. Fee, Burleigh enrolled in the grade school when the college was just a handful of buildings. He graduated nine years later with a classical education: “the standard course of the American college, in which provision is made for a thorough and liberal education, developing each human faculty, and touching upon each branch of human knowledge” (“Catalogue” 23).

Sixteen years later, in 1892, black students at Berea College were worried. The school was struggling. The college president of only two years, William B. Stewart, was on his way out, and the administrators of the school disagreed about nearly everything. However, despite their worry, these students had reason to trust that all would be well. Berea College and the surrounding township had survived much worse than a little bickering. The college had sprung up from nearly nothing, against all odds in 1866 when the country had been ravaged by the Civil War. The founder, staunch abolitionist Reverend John G. Fee, had created a college and a town and, most amazingly, an

atmosphere of trust between blacks and whites, students and citizens. The previous college president, E.H. Fairchild, a man who shared Fee's strong convictions, had been a stabilizing influence for twenty years, and had hired the college's first black instructors, Julia Britton and James Hathaway. At Berea, black and white teachers, students and town residents could discuss their fears in mixed classrooms, local businesses, and the interracial city council. There had always been some dissent because the level of interaction between the two races was based on social equality, a foundation that was rare, if not unheard of, outside of Berea. Because social equality was the dominant standard in Berea, active dissension was isolated and individuals generally were pressured to maintain a peaceful co-existence. However, this oasis of equality required energy to maintain, and Fairchild had been gravely ill in the last few years of his presidency. His replacement, Stewart, had not the strength of character of Fee and Fairchild, nor their ability to attract donors to keep the College growing. Berea College searched for new leadership.

The new college president, William Goodell Frost, came from Oberlin College in Ohio. His background reassured the worried students because most of the founding abolitionist families involved with Berea College and township had also come from Oberlin – nearly exclusively. Frost was an energetic man, at 38 arguably in the prime of his academic life. He came to Berea in 1892 ready to help the small college and township thrive, and began to do so immediately. The changes he wrought quickly paid off in increased student enrollment (the first in years) and an influx of much-needed funding. The college was growing at last.

But the worries of most of Berea's students were increased a thousandfold. Amongst the positive changes were embedded many negative ones. Frost began racially

segregating groups on campus, such as the brass band and sports teams. Tables in the cafeteria were segregated and living spaces, previously unrestricted except between genders, were rearranged such that the few black women still residing in Ladies Hall were moved into a small house out back. Within a year of Frost's arrival the only black instructor, Hathaway, resigned in a storm of controversy, and a replacement instructor, also black, only lasted a year.

The dramatic increase in enrollment was dominantly white students, while the numbers of matriculated black students remained static. For the first time since 1866, black students became the minority. By 1904, there were approximately 800 white students and only 150 blacks. The institutional and community sponsorship that supported social equality in Berea College and township changed to reflect the national standard of segregation. Dissent between the races began to flourish and the fragile peace was shattered. When the Kentucky legislature passed the Day Law, requiring segregation of races in private educational institutions, no one was really surprised, though many were outraged, that Berea College became just another high-quality all-white institution. For its former and future black students, Berea College established Lincoln Institute, and referred to it as the New Berea, but it was quickly evident that the new school was just a high school, with a principal, not a president, and an education similar to that already publicly, if sparsely, available in the state. If black students wanted to regain the opportunity for a college education that had been taken from them, they had to leave Kentucky, for none came near the quality of Berea College.

A college education was difficult both to prepare for and to obtain for black citizens of the U.S. However, despite limited availability of higher education before, during and after the Civil War, Du Bois claims in *The Souls of Black Folk* that nearly

2,400 African Americans had graduated from various colleges and universities in the North and South by the turn of the century (*Souls* 131-132). Royster, in *Traces of a Stream*, counts fewer and reports that, by 1900, only 390 blacks had graduated from colleges nationwide, most from northern white colleges (186). Bullock, in his study of Southern education, claims that “1,883 Blacks had graduated from thirty Negro colleges of the South by 1900” (175) and breaks down percentages of how those graduates were applying their education: “Of those, 37.2 percent were serving as teachers, 11.3 percent were clergymen, 4 percent were physicians and 3.3 percent were lawyers. Only 1.4 percent of these graduates were farmers” (175). The different numbers represent some of the contradictions in archival research, and the lack of clarity involved in tracing black histories. Du Bois' and Bullock's additional graduates achieved at least a bachelor's degree from less well-established, even temporary, institutions earnestly taught by missionaries shortly after the Civil War to produce black teachers for the freedmen (Du Bois, *Souls* 128-132; Bullock 175). Such achievements are often overlooked because of the difficulty in tracking temporary institutions and the tendency of the dominant narrative to record only large-scale economic, political and social change.

The complexities of repression are more often explored than the contrasting (and rarer) narratives of achievement, especially since small numbers can be dismissed as individualistic exceptions rather than as representative abilities. Royster agrees that early educational achievements of black women were “emblematic of special opportunity and special success” (Royster 194). These people, who began to achieve the first “critical mass” (257) of educated blacks, were derailed by national educational policies that generally denied black access to liberal arts higher education. This shift came despite, or because of, evidence that this type of education was well within the capabilities of many.

Good education produces leaders, and increases opportunities for political and economic successes that would entitle the educated to speak as leaders for their people (Du Bois 135-139; Royster 189-194). Rather than offer an education that the 1892-1893 Berea College Catalogue identified as “the standard course of the American college, in which provision is made for a thorough and liberal education, developing each human faculty, and touching upon each branch of human knowledge” (“Catalogue” 23), a more popular version of education for blacks and poor whites promoted only enough training to allow them to serve within their own communities (Wilson 95-96, 98-99, 101).

### **Theory**

After the Civil War and before the 1930s, relatively few records were kept of those who had the least opportunity to be heard. My purpose in this research is to glean black viewpoints from the archival records kept as Berea College admitted only white students in 1904 and Lincoln Institute opened for only black students in 1912. Between the years of 1892 and 1912 the sponsorship of education for blacks through Berea College shifted dramatically, partly through changes in its own policies since its founding in the aftermath of the Civil War, and partly in response to growing national sentiment against social equality between the races. This study will examine the sponsorship changes that occurred between the promise of Reconstruction and the separate but equal law of the land by tracing the difference in quality of and opportunity for education, the contradictions in conversations, and failed promises. The microcosms of Berea College and Lincoln Institute are used as case studies of what could have been, what occurred, and what reverberations of these changes are still affecting Kentuckians today.

Using primary materials available in Berea College's archives, and other digitized

primary sources such as University of Illinois's *The Booker T. Washington Papers Online*, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's *Documenting the American South*, and U.S. Library of Congress's *Chronicling America* newspaper archives, this study of Berea College explores how institutional and community sponsorship affects acquisition and application of literacy. It will ultimately inform composition pedagogies based on an increased understanding of cultural history, an increased appreciation and inclusion of historically successful black students in higher education, and additions/challenges to the dominant narrative. This research is important to Rhetoric and Composition because such racial histories are often silenced in today's classrooms, and the damage done by both the history and the silence continues. In the same world where the numbers of black students graduating from liberal arts institutions consistently fails to mirror the population ratios, there are also increasingly voluble white complaints of reverse racism.

Black college students are sometimes caught in a social and economic trap where accomplishments are often seen as “firsts” (Prendergast 51) when their actual “firsts” are buried, inaccessible from the dominant narrative. Claimed to be both historically underprepared and unfairly favored through affirmative action policies, black educational experiences continue to be underexplored and, even when available, remain underrepresented. Royster and Williams in their 1999 CCC article protest against “inadequate images” (Royster & Williams 582) of black accomplishments. So much so that, in presentations of her research, Royster reports being frequently approached by people unaware of how “actively and consistently [African American women] participated over the years in public discourse and in literate arenas” (Royster 3). Royster argues that this gap occurs because the “lines of accreditation, the rights of agency, and the rights to an authority to make knowledge and to claim expertise have



often not been extended in a systematic way” to these authors (3). In the same volume of CCC as Royster's and Williams' “Histories,” Keith Gilyard issues a call for “impassioned archival research” and claims that the “best and most informed African American intellects of the last two centuries, whether or not they were directly or exclusively connected to writing courses—and usually they were not—are on my side” (“African American Contributions” 626-627). In his edited collection *Race, Rhetoric and Composition*, also in 1999, Gilyard argues that writing pedagogy must recognize complexities within cultural representation and that “composition instructors . . . will want to urge students to begin writing themselves outside the prevailing discourse on race” (“Higher Learning” 52). Prior to these calls for archival enrichment and recognition of accomplishments, Lisa Delpit, in 1988, asked the dominant race to listen, to improve communication with “those whose perspectives may differ most” and “to hear what they say” (297) rather than assume that education, cultural dominance, and/or power hold the answers.

This research responds to Prendergast's recognition of silence, Royster's call for increased inclusion in the dominant narrative, Gilyard's request for better, deeper archival research, Delpit's frustrated communication, and the dearth of pedagogical discussion that addresses race-based composition issues. This research unearths archived, handwritten requests for white people to listen ... a kind of pre-echo of Delpit's polished work.

The primary research site for this dissertation has been the archival holdings of Berea College. Berea's archives contain extensive original documents produced or collected by the College since its inception. Materials are particularly rich in response to the passage of the Day Law in 1904, along with committee notes, minutes, funding details, and other documentation of the initial establishment of Lincoln Institute. Further,

Berea College has an extensive collection of original documents produced by College President William Goodell Frost (1892-1920), who presided over vast social, cultural and political changes within the College. The archives include letters, fundraising materials, documents from the Holland court case that attempted to block Lincoln Institute's location, and the first few years of Lincoln Institute's publication, *The Lincoln Institute Worker*, along with early Institute curricular college catalogs and the original prospectus for the school's opening in 1912.

As a researcher, I have an ethical duty to acknowledge my position in regard to my chosen research topic and site. I am within Berea College's target population, being of Appalachian heritage, born and raised in the Eastern Kentucky mountains, and descended from those included in Berea President Frost's discovery of Anglo-Saxon heritage in the mountain whites. My family and community were the focus of the second educational mandate emanating from Berea College: to educate the white mountaineers. In the 1920s, when Berea College was restricted to whites only, my grandfather and great uncle attended, as well as numerous family friends and acquaintances. The mother of one of my closest friends was attending the College when it voluntarily reintegrated in 1950, and remembers seeing the first new black students on campus. My daughter graduated from Berea College in May 2009 (B.A. History). The quality of education offered to members of my own family and community, and their resultant economic and community success, causes me to come to this research with a high value already placed on this educational opportunity.

Therefore, as I examined archival records of the period when Lincoln Institute was substituted for Berea College, I have had to manage my own perceptions of the value of the college section of Berea that was not replicated at Lincoln and base my arguments

upon textual references and curriculum comparisons. Further, I have had to acknowledge that, nationally, educational theories at the turn of the century were leaning strongly toward industrial education for poor whites, as well as blacks, since it was believed that such training would be of more economic and social value than a liberal arts education. A commonly accepted theory until the 1930s was that blacks needed leadership provided for them, rather than education to be leaders themselves. Education beyond a person's expected station in life was believed to lead to dissatisfaction and, possibly, social unrest. Yet Berea College was a rare institution that successfully bridged the gap between industrial education and leadership training, as evidenced by the continuous benefits it provided to my poor white mountain community during the decades when blacks were barred from its campus. The loss of this unusual institution and community to Kentucky's black population was part of a broad-based national erasure of opportunity. This research joins others in rewriting the missing narratives.

Chapter 1 sets forth the boundaries of this archival research and presents the theoretical foundations upon which it rests. Further, this chapter provides extensive historical context for the more detailed evidence offered in Chapters 2 and 3.

Chapter 2 addresses sponsorship as it was enacted by institutions, national and state policies, as represented by some of the most visible black leaders: W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington. Long before Kentucky passed the Day Law, the final piece of legislation required to fully segregate education in this state, Berea College was changing its policies on how interracial education was to be accomplished and, therefore, was sending a very different message compared to earlier years. This chapter explores those changes and their relationship to the national pressures brought to bear on Kentucky.

Chapter 3 focuses on community sponsorship through individual voices, those

living at Berea College and in the township, those affected by the policy changes at the College, and the dramatic changes in community that are wrought by institutional policy.

Finally, Chapter 4 concludes the research with a brief summary and suggests how this research informs the continuing challenges of continuing diversity and social equality on college campuses.

### **History of Berea College**

In the face of growing national unrest about slavery, Berea College was begun in 1855 by abolitionists with the specific goal of bringing coeducational and interracial education to Kentucky. The founding president, John G. Fee, intended Berea College to “be to Kentucky what Oberlin is to Ohio: antislavery, anti-caste, anti-rum, anti-sin” (Wilson 1). By 1859, several determined abolitionist families had joined Fee, including J.A.R. Rogers and John G. Hanson, and extensive acreage was purchased for a school and a city center. “The school was to be established on 'strictly Christian principles' and 'open to all persons irrespective of color’” (Drake 25). As the small school and the small town began to take shape, a district election was held on the debate about the potential entrance of blacks (25-26) and the vote supported interracial education at the college. However, in October of 1859, when John Brown stormed the National Armory at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, sentiment shifted strongly against abolitionists. Fee mentioned John Brown's raid in a speech, was misquoted, and that misquote was carried in national newspapers. The local population around Berea produced a 700-person petition, supported by the Governor, that required the abolitionist group to leave the state before the end of the year in 1859 (30).

While all abolitionists were affected by the national reaction to the John Brown

raid, Fee's particular brand was most troublesome for whites, and he was aware of it. When a young man, Fee decided how his beliefs in both man and God would be expressed and recorded it in his autobiography: "I saw also that as an honest man I ought to be willing to wear the name which would be a fair exponent of the principle I espoused. This was the name Abolitionist, odious then to the vast majority of people North, and especially South" (Fee, *Autobiography* 14). For the fifteen years preceding the establishment of Berea College, Fee had preached against slavery in Kentucky, and had attempted small interracial schools in at least two locations. He refused employment in churches where slaveholders were uninterested in change (*Autobiography* 21-22) and held strong views on the importance of social equality. In response to some who would use derogatory references toward black women, he wrote that "the best way to inspire woman, colored or white, with virtuous sentiments, and establish in her habits of purity, was not to treat her invidiously - shut her up in pens, schools, by herself, but treat her like other women of respectability" (*Autobiography* 131). Even other abolitionists, however, were unprepared for social equality between blacks and whites, and Fee took advantage of opportunities to challenge the status quo. As the Civil War ended, Fee quickly returned to Kentucky and the work of Berea College. He spent some of his time, with other missionaries, helping and teaching large numbers of black soldiers and their refugee families at Camp Nelson in Kentucky, a short distance from Berea. Fee could not be in both places, but he was drawn to the intense need in the camp. "While Berea's school was beginning anew, 1,500 new recruits were arriving in Camp Nelson, along with many adult females with children. The Berea school enrolled some seventy or eighty pupils, no negligible number for that particular project, but the project at Camp Nelson remained top priority for Fee where the strength of the Union Army now protected his work" (Sears

8). The larger numbers, and immediate needs, at Camp Nelson gave Fee a chance to engage the issue of social equality directly. He hired a young black woman with some education to help teach at the Camp, and her contribution was welcomed by the white missionaries. Then, in keeping with his creed of equality, “At dinner time on the first day, Fee escorted her to the common dining hall and gave her a place at the table over which he presided” (30). A great furor resulted. In his autobiography, Fee remembered that “All the lady teachers (white) sent there by the American Missionary Association [AMA] and the Freedman's Aid Society, refused, with two exceptions, to come to the first tables whilst the young woman was eating” (Fee, *Autobiography* 181). The AMA eventually intervened on Fee's behalf, but the government closed Camp Nelson later in 1865. Fee then turned his efforts fully to Berea, freshly aware of the challenges he faced in changing social structures. The incident at Camp Nelson illustrated the line that Fee intended to cross, the one drawn between those white people who were antislavery and those few, like Fee, who were not only abolitionists, but also pressed for equal social standing.

Since Fee was well known amongst the black soldiers and families at Berea, by the time Camp Nelson closed much of its population was already migrating toward Berea to settle. These people were a good start on the integrated community required for Fee's work to “elevate African Americans to a position of equality” (Lucas 647). Part of Fee's original design for the school was to purchase land to be divided into residential lots for families associated with Berea to build homes (Sears 102). Families “had suffered incredible hardships and, at Fee's invitation, they came to Berea because it was a haven where they could buy land of their own, attend a school where they would be welcome, and live on an equal basis with sympathetic white citizens” (37). The concerted effect of

the college and community working together toward social equality went far beyond schooling and served as a model for the nation. The imperative of education was a construct around which the social structure could be built. President Fairchild thought that education was a powerful tool, and wrote that “There is nothing, in the absence of coeducation, which can secure the mutual regard, confidence and honorable deportment which must exist between these races, if we are to have a peaceful, intelligent and virtuous community” (Fairchild 84). And so it proved to be.

By 1866, after the Civil War and nearly eleven years of struggle and conflict, Berea College was established as an interracial, coeducational college. By the end of the first full year, the various departments at Berea School and Berea College enrolled black students in equal or greater numbers than whites. The college catalog of 1866-67 shows that “of the 187 pupils embraced in this Catalogue, 91 are white and 96 colored” (“First Catalog” 1). The difficulties of achieving this mix are illustrated by the deeply divisive local reception of the school's egalitarian convictions (presaged by Fee's experience at Camp Nelson). As well, some of the original trustees were unable to accept the standard of social equality. “[T]hey had accepted the Berea project when it was antislavery; they rejected it as soon as it seemed pro-social equality” (Sears 44-45). Finally, when the first three black students were admitted to a student body comprised of seventy-five whites (mostly children of previous slave-owners) (Drake 51), “Twenty-seven white pupils left . . . of whom eight have returned and been received again into the Institution (“First Catalog” 1). At Berea, students were expected to treat each other respectfully, and the presence of black students in the classrooms was the first challenge to that behavior. Two sons of John G. Fee, Burritt and Howard, were enrolled in classes at Berea School and encouraged white students to stay in the classroom when the black students joined in.

The Fee brothers helped to set an example that eased the initial shock of integration (Lucas 630). It wasn't just that some small black children slipped in to join the white children. The experience was more remarkable than that. Angus Burleigh was one of those entering black students. Having just been released from the Union Army, he began in Berea's grade school as an adult. "Nothing struck Fee as inconceivable – he would introduce grown men, ex-soldiers in uniform, into a grade-school situation. Many people would have regarded adult blacks as ineligible for work in primary school, but Fee was truly an egalitarian; when he claimed Berea would accept all who were of good moral character, he meant all" (Sears 49). Burleigh continued his education for nine years until his graduation from the classical course in 1875. The institution's reaction to the social experiment of interaction between the races was recorded in the First Catalog and reflects Fee's morality:

The results upon the character and general demeanor of the students in admitting to the same school colored and white pupils have been highly satisfactory. . . . Though it may seem strange to some, it is believed to have proved also for the advantage rather than detriment of the white students. In exercising kindness and courtesy toward a proscribed class, they have themselves become ennobled and attained greater gentleness and firmness of character. In helping others, in according with an unchangeable law of God, they have themselves been helped. ("First Catalog" 23)

The college continued to grow and attract both blacks and whites and recruitment efforts made it clear that the school was interracial. In 1867, Burritt Fee toured Kentucky as part of a "biracial team" to recruit students for Berea College (Lucas 630). Between 1870 and the early 1890s, enrollments for each race ran roughly even, with black students often outnumbering whites but with the white student body never falling below "40%" (Drake 53).

### **Curriculum: A Collegiate Education**



The first collegiate class graduated in 1873, and consisted of three white young men. Although one woman graduated, the ladies' course was not yet recognized by the Trustees. The second graduating class, in 1874, consisted of two white and two black young men (Drake 54). The college department remained small, but grew steadily in quality, courses, and professors (53). Professorships were added in 1869, 1871, 1875, and an M.A. was added in 1880 (53-54). During its integrated history, Berea College had several levels of collegiate study modeled on prestigious white institutions of the Northeast: Classical (Bachelor of Arts), Philosophical (Bachelor of Philosophy), and Literary (Bachelor of Literature) (“Catalogue” 23), in addition to more standard offerings of normal and academic. While Berea College also included industrial skills, training students in practical trades within its curriculum, those offerings were, initially, only addenda to a variety of other higher educational choices, implemented to help poor students pay their way through the school.

Though the college program was small, by 1889 it had graduated fifty-six students. The majority were white; approximately fourteen were black. Graduates held a variety of professional positions, and a majority became teachers (Fairchild 54; Wilson 39). Many graduates became leaders in their fields, such as John Bate (1881), who established “the school system for black children and youth in Danville, Kentucky” (Wilson 39). Carter G. Woodson (1903), researcher and author, earned a Ph.D from Harvard, wrote several significant books, founded Black History Month, and established the *Journal of Negro (Burnside)History*(Burnside, “Early Black Berea”). Angus Burleigh (1875) preached and taught across the United States for over fifty years. He was an ordained Methodist Episcopal minister, worked in Brooklyn, New York, Quincy, Illinois and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and served as chaplain of the Illinois State Senate. He also

taught at a colored school in Richmond, Indiana, where he was principal from 1875 to 1876 (Sears 180 n. 55). Julia Britton Hooks attended Berea in 1873 and then became its first black teacher. Later she established a school of music in Memphis, and one of her grandsons became national director of the NAACP. Her sister, Mary, (1874), “became a physician in Lexington, KY” (Burnside, “Early Black Berea”)(Burnside, “Map”). James Bond (1892), grandfather of Georgia legislator and civil rights activist Julian Bond, became a trustee in 1896. He was a professor at Fisk, Director of State YMCA for blacks, and Director of Kentucky Commission on Interracial Cooperation. (Buckner & Sowell) Fannie Belle Miller (1888) and husband Frank L. Williams (1889) became “teachers, business owners and civic leaders” in St. Louis, successfully fundraising for a black YMCA and “building a 21-unit apartment building” (Burnside, "Map"). Mary Eliza Merritt (1902) was “superintendent of [Louisville] Red Cross Hospital for 34 years before turning it over to the city in 1945” (Burnside, “Early Black Berea”). A. R. Davison, who was a student only between 1870-71, was quoted in the *Berea College Reporter* as saying that he was now postmaster, owner of a small newspaper and job office, all within the same area where he was previously a slave in Lovan, Alabama. He credited the “good instruction” and “personal kindness and unselfish devotion of the faculty members to the students” he received from faculty at Berea College (Oct. 1891). The varied but significant accomplishments of Berea's college graduates emphasizes the type of education they received at Berea and the value of that education in improving the lives of the graduates and those around them. These students were educated to be leaders and, indeed, became leaders.

## **Community**

In these crucial years before segregation began, when Berea College could offer quality higher education to blacks, its graduates influenced nearly every area of society. Though Berea's numbers were small, nationally the numbers were small as well and every graduate counted. In addition to good education, however, Berea College and township offered acceptance on social and political levels through patronage of local businesses and cooperation on the interracial city council. Many of the first generation of black families that had arrived at Berea had become landowners, business owners, and were successful community members. This inclusion was at least as significant, and perhaps more so, than the education alone.

By 1885, several hundred families had settled around Berea, and a railway had been built (Drake 58). The community “was known as the place where the colored man was treated with kindness and where his children could obtain knowledge” (Rogers 117). White and black alike sent their children to the boarding school, and young adults came to study, but in many instances entire families relocated to Berea. White abolitionist families who had supported Fee in his earlier attempt to establish Berea College now became trustees and/or new faculty members and sent their children to Berea's schools. The importance of the community that was drawn to and formed around Berea's educational offerings cannot be overstated. Fee and his supporters had planned for more than a school. They had planned to welcome black and white families to live and learn together permanently. The newly freed black people could find the support they needed between and amongst other families and begin the process living as emancipated citizens.

In the generation that followed the successful beginning of Berea College, Fee saw that the school was making a difference. In 1878, he wrote in the *American Missionary* that “Daily, the prejudice against a school of colored and white pupils is

subsiding; and young men and young women of good habits and character are coming in, and such as appreciate an education, in connection with just and righteous sentiments”(Fee, “Kentucky Temperance” 146)(146) Preparation for schooling varied widely amongst the students matriculating at Berea, and the school offered all levels of education in order to meet those needs. Rogers noted that “The differences of scholarship were by no means always on the line of color, but those from cultivated families with an educated ancestry certainly had great advantages over the others” (Rogers 160).

Despite the difficulties of local and national prejudice, or perhaps because of them, the people who came for their education were aware that Berea offered something unique. Not everyone agreed, and in this national time of violence, there were some difficulties with “the Ku Klux Klans or the coarse jeers of drunken, hostile men and the careless firing of their pistols through the streets and the whizzing of bullets sometimes dangerously near,” but no violence actually occurred within the Berea community (Rogers 142). This uniqueness led to a number of years of slow, but steady, growth in the size of the student population and in the quality of the education offered. Fee pointed out positive influences of the community at the time of his autobiography in 1891. He noted that “Hundreds now continue to express their surprise at the interest manifested by the people at the commencement exercises of Berea College. Usually from three to five thousand people attend. Two-thirds of these are white. The large tabernacle, which seats some two thousand people, will not seat more than half the people who come. Good order generally prevails. The delivery on the platform of essays and orations from colored and white students, male and female, is an educational force to the thousands who attend” (Fee, *Autobiography* 135). In this year before William Goodell Frost became president of Berea, Fee was proud of the school's accomplishment and thought that, though it was

struggling financially, the interest it drew and the success of its students would carry it through. But change was coming.

### **Changes at Berea**

By the late 1880s, national sentiment began shifting away from integrative policies and toward segregation. After making significant progress and providing successful integrative evidence, Berea College's original ideals finally began to be overwhelmed by prevailing political and social movements that emphasized the importance of separation of the races. Because Berea College was unique in the South, it was therefore uniquely vulnerable to the pressures of post-Reconstruction white fears. Berea's emphasis on social equality made it a target for the political and social changes that swept the South, indeed the nation. As Fee had earlier discovered, there was little support amongst whites for social equality, but Fee's strong leadership had been weakened by his distraction and depression during the long illness and death of one of his sons, who had contracted tuberculosis at Camp Nelson in 1865, and by his advancing age (Lucas 654). There was also growing dissension within the college itself, and support for Fee's social equality policies was far from unanimous amongst Berea College supporters, including faculty. Some criticized Fee's broad-based interpretation of morality that, by using mainly willingness to work for social equality as a test, disregarded differences in denominations (Sears 102-104). Sears argued that, for Fee, "Actual willingness to participate in Berea's interracial experiment was virtually enough, since Fee's test of Christian character was practical rather than theoretical. Over and over again, Fee identified Christian character as manifest in impartial love, and he further identified impartial love as manifest in social equality" (Sears 104). Although Fee's position as an

abolitionist had never been popular, and he had weathered much resistance, his white supporters were dwindling as the decades passed.

The college president who followed Fee, William Edward Fairchild (1868-1889), was a good friend of Fee's and shared his beliefs, but near the last half of his presidency he was not able to be a strong leader. Fairchild's fairly constant illness in the second decade of his leadership, before Frost's presidency (discounting the brief, controversial two years of William B. Stewart between 1890-1892), weakened Fairchild's impact at a time when even very strong leadership may not have been enough to resist the national shift toward oppressive laws against black citizens. The old friendships had begun to fall apart and Fee was not pleased with Fairchild's leadership. Even though Fee's autobiography was written only one year after the end of Fairchild's twenty-year presidency, the text does "not mention Fairchild" (Lucas 654 n. 65). Many of the northern abolitionist faculty members had returned home, variously disgruntled (Sears 140-142). By the time President Fairchild died in 1889, followed by his successor's resignation in 1892 (President William Stewart), the college was sorely in need of leadership. President William Goodell Frost began his tenure that same year.

In 1892, President Frost discovered that Berea College had not increased its students, nor its endowment, in 12 years (Frost 71). Faced with financial difficulties and lack of growth, Frost endured early pressure to turn the school over to the American Missionary Association (AMA). The endowment was set up so that if the school failed, it reverted to the AMA, but was not otherwise owned by it (Frost 73). Although "it did not found the school, and was never responsible for it, this association [AMA] gave its support to those who did found it, and it was a most important factor in its success" (Rogers 17). Refusing to give up before he began, Frost analyzed the student ratios, and

determined that when students came from outside the area, they were predominantly black (Sears 140). Much of the white mountain population had fallen off and Frost wanted to recruit more outside whites (Frost 67). Frost wrote that “apparently it was not the colored students altogether that kept the white away – rather it was the lack of an awakened desire for education, or Berea's failure to offer an education of the right kind” (Frost 72). Despite his abolitionist background, Frost appeared to see the black students as a problem in recruiting whites. By 1894, the second catalogue since his arrival, Frost began to expand industrial education offerings to have something for everyone, including “Printing and Bookkeeping for boys (Farming and Woodwork the next year), and Domestic Industry for young women, as a part of the work in the Academy and lower schools” (Frost 74). An early donation was used for designing a model house so that students could learn how to function in a family of “moderate means” (Frost 74). Partly due to the leadership and recruitment efforts of Frost, white enrollments began to soar. The growth was welcome to all, but the influx of white students heralded a crucial turning point for the college.

Early influence on Frost's policies came from Rev. Dr. A.D. Mayo, “a prominent Unitarian minister and educational reformer” (Wilson 52, 86) who first arrived at Berea in 1894. He traveled through the South, gathered information on the schools, advised their trustees/administrators, and helped to frame “school laws in more than one” (Frost 89). Frost valued Mayo's input and their association continued for many years. “He came year after year, but this first visit was of unspeakable importance” (Frost 89). Mayo's ideas for southern education ran along national lines, and aligned with Frost's tendencies toward industrial education. In an 1881 *New York Times* article, he identified the three most pressing needs in the South as “higher education of the superior children

of the South, the training of teachers, and the increase of schools for instruction in technical and mechanical arts. The capital for the latter schools must come from the North” (Mayo, “Education”). Mayo said that compulsory governmental education was likely the best way to overcome the vast numbers of illiterate people in the South and make them into useful citizens (Mayo, “Compulsory”). He was not in favor of interracial experiment at Berea and argued that both white and black populations would have difficulties adapting to realities outside of the College's influence (Wilson 86).

As the ratio of races shifted to favor whites, some administrative factions of the school protested that Frost was failing to uphold the original college charter. In defense, Frost said that “keeping the two races in substantial equality . . . had never been an essential part of Berea's program” (Frost, qtd in Wilson 84). The founder, Fee, felt differently, and “spent the last decade of his life castigating Frost for his betrayal of the mission of Berea College” (Lucas 656). Fee died in 1901.

Along with Frost's intentions of recruiting increasing numbers of northern whites, he also was interested in the Appalachian people. He pronounced that these people were descended from Revolutionary War patriots and were “true” Americans, which claim galvanized northern philanthropists into donating funds for white education. Frost had found a way to increase both enrollment and funding at the same time. The Scotch-Irish ancestry of white Appalachians fed into the Cult of Anglo-Saxonism sweeping the nation in the 1890s (Wilson 80-81). In his Second Annual Report (1894), Frost said that “Our Southern white students are the most interesting class . . . . A proper invitation might bring them by the hundred” (Frost 91). He became increasingly interested in them as he visited in the mountains and saw the extreme poverty, heard the English folk songs, and understood their distinct dialect. He wrote that their needs made him consider what



courses of study might serve them best and “[t]hat program involved a great deal besides College and College Preparatory work” (98). Because of the poverty in the mountains, Frost saw that families could not afford to send their youth away to school for long because they were needed to help run the small farmsteads. This situation was in contrast to the black families who re-settled at Berea. The mountain people had been settled in their homes and on their farms for generations already and did not value education to the extent that the freed black people did. To meet the needs of the mountaineers, Frost created short courses and two-year certificates (103). The 1897 Annual Report emphasized the need for offering training in industrial careers so that there would be more choices for the students than teaching. Frost visited Tuskegee and Hampton and introduced courses such as Home Science and Agriculture by 1900 (142-143).

In the meantime, the college department was shrinking, by comparison to the growth of the other segments of the school, since Frost saw higher learning as less crucial. “The colored people and the mountaineers were calling for leaders not so much set off from the rank and file as college graduates are likely to be” (144). Frost notes, though, that most years “there was a steady increase of college students except . . . when colored students were excluded” (144). The black students whose numbers populated the collegiate department of Berea were the very ones who no longer would have such an opportunity in Kentucky after being forced to leave in 1904. Moreover, Frost thought that the black college graduate would “most naturally stick to his people. But a mountain graduate from the College was most often lost to his mountains” (153). Because Frost believed that the mountaineers tended to stay in their home territories after having received only vocational training, and that “the mountain region itself can only be improved by those who stay in it” (153), the main focus for the curriculum remained on

vocational and industrial education, short courses, and that education most useful to the white mountaineers who would stay in the mountains. More than ratios and population, now, the school was beginning to be designed for Appalachian students.

In 1902, one of the founders, J.A.R. Rogers, published a history, *The Birth of Berea College*. The introduction of that history emphasized the service Berea College performed for mountain people, and how important the industrial training was to provide workers for the industrial push coming to the South (ii). No mention is made of blacks in the introduction at all. In the text of the history, blacks are not mentioned until page 71, and then only in relation to the location of Berea: “Then when the time came that there were colored students to seek its advantages it was of easy access to them” (71). This autobiographical information is further evidence of early difficulties Fee faced in establishing a community that supported social equality for blacks and emphasized the importance of leadership. Rogers, deeply involved in Berea College from the beginning, also “enthusiastically supported the programs of President William G. Frost and became the only founder to give an imprimatur to Frost's new segregated Berea, devoted to Appalachia” (Sears 112).

By the time that Berea College faced a legal challenge to interracial education, the student population was 5/6 white and 1/6 black, due to the combination of Frost's recruitment techniques and changing educational goals. His policies had “eroded the college's earlier ideals into a more accommodationist stance. In short, both the college and the surrounding community now resembled the larger society” (Wilson 99). Compared to previous years, Berea had already effectively segregated its students, and racial tension and unrest within the faculty and students alike was increasing (84). Although the leadership of President Frost cannot be entirely blamed for the College's

inability to withstand pressures of the time, “[i]t is clear . . . that like many white progressives of his era, William Goodell Frost retreated from the college's radical assertion of social equality” (89). Seven or eight years before Berea College faced legal challenges to its interracial education, “Berea's publicity literature neglected to mention that the college was an interracial school. Instead, the college promoted its mountain work almost exclusively. Black enrollment was already in decline, and Frost's fund-raising trips in the Northeast emphasized Berea's resolve to solve the 'Southern Problem’” (97-98). After Frost's presidency, divisive national policies and local legislative challenges, the ratios at Berea never again approached a balance. In 2009, Berea College hosted 19% black students (the highest percentage since 1893) (“Interracial Education”).

### **National Changes**

At the same time that Frost was discovering “new” Americans in the Appalachians, black students were facing increasing hostility. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, despite clear evidence provided by interracial experiments such as that provided by Berea College and its community, and the slowly increasing numbers of intellectuals, or perhaps because of such examples of the potential for social equality, national sentiment against black Americans strengthened. Lynchings increased, with a peak in 1896 of six in as many days in Kentucky. All victims were black; nearly all were male. Between 1880 and 1906, “fully 3500 residents of the United States were lynched or put to death by mob action” (Howard 193). Although many whites were disturbed about the growing violence, they were also overwhelmingly opposed to social equality. Most did not want higher education available to blacks at all or, if it had to be, then some reading and writing, along with a trade, would be satisfactory (194). Various inferiority theories

were well established before the Civil War, and fighting for freedom is not the same as working toward equality. The difficulties that Fee experienced when he acted on his social equality beliefs, even amongst people who were working to enhance black opportunities, are good examples of the larger challenges across the nation. People who thought along the lines of John G. Fee were getting harder to find in the several decades since the Civil War.

In 1883, the US Supreme Court handed down a series of decisions that essentially eliminated federal support for equality of blacks since the Civil War. The federal government “completely nullified those provisions of the civil rights acts which prohibited discrimination in places of public accommodation and which had imposed penalties directly against persons guilty of such discriminations regardless of whether the state was in any way involved” (Bullock 67). This opened the path for the better known Jim Crow laws to be passed throughout the South. Separate but equal became the standard, and segregation policies were implemented. One by one Southern states passed laws compelling separation of the races in schools, hospitals, jails, and mental institutions. It didn't matter whether the situation were voluntary or involuntary. By 1900, all Southern states had banned interracial marriage (72-74). Kentucky had its own version of all of these laws. Political laws were paired with segregation policies that disenfranchised blacks, once again, from their right to vote. Mississippi, Georgia, Louisiana and South Carolina passed property tax and literacy requirements for voters, excepting, of course, those whose grandfathers had been entitled to vote before 1867. By 1910, all previously Confederate states had eliminated the black vote (70-71).

Due to pressures from freedmen and immigrants, many white people felt that English as a dominant language was in danger and that white culture was being

challenged for supremacy. The preservation of the purity of the English language and the white race were tenets of the Cult of Anglo-Saxonism that grew in popularity in the 1890s. This movement privileged those of English descent and denounced interbreeding as dangerous since it weakened that purity. Since part of this cult was also the preservation of properly spoken English, the idiom of black culture was considered an additional sign of their unsuitability for education, and the leftover bits of Scottish language in the Appalachians served as proof of their fitness for society. Arguments in favor of superiority appealed to the vast majority of whites. In keeping with this movement, Berea College President Frost's "discovery" of white mountaineers in the Appalachian mountains in 1890s was particularly well-suited to white preferences.

In an increasingly intolerant society, white political figures across the U.S., and some prominent blacks, were trying to find ways to fit the black population quietly into the U.S. economic engine with as little disruption as possible. Pressure was building to provide educational opportunities for all, and that education became a major tool for assimilation. Such was the national climate when Kentucky passed new legislation banning interracial education in early 1904.

### **Southern Educational Opportunities**

In the three decades after the Civil War, approximately two hundred institutions of higher learning for blacks were created, but were mostly without federal or state support, being funded by churches and philanthropists. The funding, faculties and administrators were predominantly white. A result of white funding of black education meant that, to continue to receive funding, institutions must be responsive to white expectations for that education. "As black colleges became increasingly dependent on donations from

northern industrial philanthropists, the missionaries and black educators found it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to accept philanthropic gifts and assert simultaneously that many of the political and economic aims of the philanthropists were at variance with the fundamental interests of the black masses” (Anderson 276). The combination of political disenfranchisement and physical separation from whites meant that black citizens had little control over their educational opportunities. They could not vote to change curricula, allocate more funds, or elect themselves to political positions. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the relatively new, publicly funded school systems that had been edging toward equality had radically changed, setting the tone for the next fifty years. Taxes, including those taken from the freedmen, were used to fund white schools. Particularly in the South, segregated schools paid teachers differently, set different schedules and spent differing amounts per student. By 1905, black educational costs were less than half of that spent on white schools (150-151). Wright points out the prevailing national attitude: “Whites firmly agreed on the necessity of separate education for the races. In doing so, they relegated the education of Afro-Americans to the back seat, and supported it only when it was the 'proper kind' of education, one that made them useful to whites. Not surprisingly, the education available to Kentucky blacks was poorly funded and greatly inferior to that offered whites” (Wright, *A History* 148).

Wright's statement presents a rather grim situation for black education in Kentucky. It's difficult at this historical remove to gauge the quality of educational opportunities, since the systems were separate and comparisons were rare. Certainly, the facts show that serious inequalities prevailed in the public school systems. Black and white schools emphasized different types of education, and most often school year lengths for black children were significantly shorter than those for whites (although

Kentucky's school year lengths were near equal). Black youth were more often involved in family sharecropping and missed more school days: “The average Southern white child who finished the grammar grades spent 65.6 months in classroom study as compared with 57.6 months spent by the Negro child” (Bullock 178). Teachers were paid less, state funds were smaller and the facilities were inferior.

This was the pattern across the South, even though laws requiring strict separation also required “a duplication of the education which was offered to white children” (166). Black education was not measured against a white standard, and equality was not a politically acceptable factor, yet progress was made and black intellectual communities grew, albeit much more slowly than they were capable of. One specific positive feature of using industrial educational theories to soothe Southern anxieties was that Southern whites were then encouraged to allow black youth to attend schools, since the education offered there was designed to turn out good, morally-centered workers. As resistance lessened, numbers of black youth in schools increased phenomenally. In 1870, only 10% of Southern black children attended schools. By 1910, however, over 45% were enrolled. Over this forty-year period, black literacy rates soared 93.8 percent, while whites' increased only 32 percent (171-172).

Even with these phenomenal gains, it remained difficult for blacks to achieve the level of education required for a college degree. The dominant educational opportunities, however, brought students either to the level of a certified teacher (similar to a good high school education today) or taught them a skill that did not place them in direct competition with whites. Berea College had offered the only liberal arts college degrees available to blacks in Kentucky in the only integrated setting in the South.

## **W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington: Theories of Education**

Two broad theories of higher education for blacks predominated in the South. Generally, these theories are represented by two well-known black intellectuals: W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington. Often represented as polar opposites, they aligned in several crucial ways: both believed that education was a way for the black race to improve its place in society, that industrial education was helpful, and that those who were particularly suited to higher education should have access to it. Washington, however, was educated under the sponsorship of an influential white educator, Samuel Armstrong, and had graduated from Hampton, Armstrong's Southern industrial/vocational school for blacks. Du Bois, contrastingly, was from Massachusetts, had taken his initial college courses at Fisk, and graduated with a bachelor's degree. After being accepted at Harvard, however, Du Bois was required "to enroll as an advanced undergraduate because of the supposed academic deficiencies of Fisk" (Green & Driver 5). These two leaders and their educational theories embody the effects of sponsorship. They worked to gain for their race the type of sponsorship they had enjoyed themselves.

## **W.E.B. Du Bois and the Liberal Arts**

In the South, three colleges offered liberal arts education for African Americans: Howard, Fisk and Atlanta University (Bullock 78). These institutions were representative of the educational ideas of Du Bois. Fisk University at Nashville was established in 1865 by the American Missionary Association and it graduated "intellectual, artistic, and civic leaders in every generation" ("Fisk's"). The AMA also established Talledega College at Talledega, Alabama, setting up the Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University) in



1867 (Bullock 31) . Howard University in Washington D.C. was open in 1867 to integrated and co-educational students. Beginning with four white girls as students, it expanded into theological, medical, pharmacy, general hospital and law departments by 1870. *The Journal of Negro Education* was established there in 1932, and “the most influential research concerning racial inequalities in American Education found their way into print. The facts which these researchers presented later supplied the basis on which many court cases were filed and prosecuted” (206).

Du Bois' philosophy is evident in a 1905 speech wherein he explained how industrial education was integrated within a dominantly liberal arts curriculum at Atlanta University. He said that a variety of course work was necessary because there were so very few high schools for blacks in the South, and that any college or university must offer preparatory education along with higher educational opportunities. He admitted that even elementary school preparation was sometimes lacking: “The varying quality of work done in the public schools makes it necessary that our first year should be one of sifting and examination (Du Bois, “Atlanta University” 172). Similar to an earlier description from Berea's founder, John G. Fee, Du Bois explained that manual education is “an integral part of our educational work, and is designed for its educational effect alone” (“Atlanta University” 175). The value of learning physical skills was offered in partnership with intellectual advancement. “With the education thus gained, the boy might use his chemistry in the study of medicine, or his sociology in the ministry, or his manual dexterity at a trade school, but we do not pretend to train either physicians, clergymen or carpenters” (“Atlanta University” 176). Du Bois' ideal of higher education blurred the lines between industrial/vocational and liberal arts educations, and included both concepts as necessary for a full education, as did Berea College. Atlanta was a black

university and did not suffer from interracial conflicts amongst its students, yet it strove to create integrated social settings within the school, similar to Berea College. Du Bois claimed that it was “a place where teachers and students eat together, talk and learn to know each other; where the etiquette of family life is carefully observed – indeed this is one of the few places in America where black and white people meet as simple, friendly human souls, unveiled from light and unguarded from feared contagion; bound in human sympathy and help” (“Atlanta University” 179-180). Because Atlanta's student population did not include white students, the meetings Du Bois described were between the interracial faculty and black students.

### **Booker T. Washington and Industrial Education**

Washington was educated at Hampton and was then sponsored in part by Armstrong to establish Tuskegee, in 1881, modeled on Hampton. Tuskegee became the standard for black industrial and vocational education. Hampton was established by Samuel Chapman Armstrong, a white officer of black troops in the Civil War. He founded the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute for black youths in 1868 with the help of the American Missionary Association. Armstrong lobbied for more black teachers for black youths, since he believed that the South had an obligation to educate its citizens, but argued that white teachers would be overwhelmed by the task. He believed strongly in segregation, and described a typical black person as

capable of acquiring knowledge to any degree, and, to a certain age, at least, with about the same facility as white children; but lacks the power to assimilate and digest it. The Negro matures sooner than the white, but does not have his steady development of mental strength up to advanced years. He is a child of the tropics, and the differentiation of races goes deeper than the skin (qtd in Bullock 76).

By 1890, Armstrong had developed his theory of black education to focus on industrial

education “as the character-building force capable of elevating Negroes to a level of acceptance by the South and the nation” (77).

While Hampton and Tuskegee worked in an apparently concerted effort with Fisk, Howard and Atlanta University, the sponsorships of the institutions were at odds. Rather than for leadership, Hampton and Tuskegee educated their students for economic stability. These institutions were the major sources of higher education available to black citizens in the South. Atlanta, Fisk and Howard offered liberal arts college degrees, while Hampton and Tuskegee developed predominantly manual skills. Despite this apparent balance of offerings, the national debate on education usually polarized toward one or the other, and white philanthropic funding poured into industrial and vocational education for Southern blacks. Interestingly, Washington served on Atlanta University's board of trustees, and sent his own children to Atlanta as well (“Fisk's”).

Washington's predominant focus on industrial education caused some influential voices to be raised against such a narrow viewpoint. Industrial education for the black population was seen as a method of restricting economic and social growth. Like J. Sohmers Young, editor of *The Kentucky Standard*, not everyone thought that blacks should be limited to employment as “hewers of wood.” The United States Commissioner of Education, William T. Harris, in an 1895 address to Atlanta University students, said that “As our civilization is largely derived from the Greeks and Romans, and as Negroes of America are to share it with the Anglo-Saxons, it is very important that the bright minds among them would get acquainted with it, as others have done, through the study of Latin and Greek” (qtd in Bullock 78). However, education for blacks based on white college standards was thought of as problematic. “Liberal education was viewed by many whites as the province of people who, by virtue of native biological endowment

and/or cultural experience and predisposition, were able to be educated for leadership and other positions in society that required well-developed intellectual capacities” (Miller 79). Therefore, despite occasional opposition from powerful political positions, Armstrong's and Washington's educational theories expanded because of how they fit within and answered white philanthropic industrial ideals. President Frost of Berea considered Armstrong a “significant educational role model” (Wilson 77). Washington, as an advocate of industrial education for blacks, became a conduit for white funding because, due to strong white acceptance, funding flowed more freely for this type of education.

### **The Day Law**

The very few educational facilities across the South that had been tentatively co-educating blacks and whites were facing these new waves of segregationism. In 1891, the AMA had established a co-educational industrial school in Florida, and legislation had been enacted to force segregation. In 1901, Tennessee also legally ended interracial education at Maryville College (Wilson 82), the only other interracial college in the South (Frost 90). Kentucky, like many other states, had banned public interracial education, but since Berea College was a private institution with no financial ties to the state, it had not been affected legally. Social pressures had increased around Berea and, as had happened in other states, public sentiment ran strongly against the interracial campus and town. “[T]here was much opposition to Berea College and to the 'mixing of the races.' Men from other Southern states, who heard of Berea, would observe that Kentucky could never rank as a true Southern state until Berea College was abolished” (Wright, “Founding” 57). In 1904, Kentucky state representative Carl Day introduced a

bill that prohibited interracial education in the Commonwealth's private schools. The law “imposed a \$1,000 fine with \$100 per day penalty for continuance upon any institution which admitted both white and colored students and any instructor who taught in such institution, with lesser fines for students who attended the classes” (“Founding” 57). Kentucky quickly passed the Day Law and it took effect on July 1, 1904. Although Berea College fought it all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, the law was upheld as constitutional, with only one dissenting vote, on November 12, 1908 (“Founding” 57-58). To comply with the law in 1904, while longer-term plans were being made, the trustees of Berea College financed alternative education at Fisk, Tuskegee and Hampton for existing black students. “Fifty two students accepted the trustees' offer in the first year. Black students who had attended Berea prior to 1904 and a few special students received aid until 1911” (Wilson 86).

### **Lincoln Institute**

The establishment, funding and opening of Lincoln Institute was promoted carefully by Berea College, and was presented to black citizens as cause for significant and positive celebration. The familiar name for the school was the “New Berea” and it was announced that the initial framework for the new school was to be “identical in spirit with Berea” (Wright, “Founding” 59). In actuality, the Institute's curriculum was to be normal, industrial and vocational education, but the trustees carefully specified “definite provision for the higher education of such graduates of this department as show special character and ability for leadership” (“Founding” 59). In 1908, after the last chance had expired for fighting Kentucky's Day law requiring segregation of educational facilities, the *Berea Citizen* newspaper reported on a meeting of College alumni regarding Lincoln

Institute: “We place ourselves on record as in hearty sympathy with the plans of the President and Trustees, looking to the organization, somewhere in the State of Kentucky, of a Negro School, Normal, Academic and Industrial in character and looking forward to the establishment of a College Department at the proper time and hereby pledge ourselves to cooperate in every way possible in furthering this end.” (“Colored Graduates”). With the aid of northern white philanthropists, over \$400,000 was raised and land was purchased twenty-two miles east of Louisville.

Lincoln Institute was incorporated in 1910, opened to receive students in October of 1912 (Wright, “Founding” 68) and held its first graduation in 1915 (“20th Annual Catalog”). The faculty of Lincoln Institute was interracial, and a white man, Reverend A. E. Thomson, was the first principal (Wilson 89). The first commencement bulletin listed the offerings as “Three normal courses, also courses in Agriculture, Dairying, Carpentry, Steam and Electrical Engineering, Cooking, Sewing, Music, etc.” (“1st Commencement”).

Lincoln Institute was an impressive sight, with extensive acreage and new buildings under construction. However, it did not replace Berea College. Lincoln Institute was not the “New Berea.” It offered education already available at Kentucky Industrial and Normal Institute for Negroes, a public land-grant institution, as well as at some other high schools in the state. Lincoln also had no interracial community outside of its own purchased land. Unlike the integrated community around Berea College, Shelby County citizens were not friendly to the idea of a black school in their neighborhood. After protesting the property purchase and condemning the Louisville businessmen who contributed financially, a member of the Kentucky legislature from Shelby County introduced the Holland Bill, which would make it “mandatory for three-

fourths of the voters of a county to approve the location of any school in the county” (Wright, “Founding” 63). The law was shortlived, struck down three months later by the Kentucky Supreme Court (“Founding” 64). However, the trustees of Lincoln agreed that, as a result of tensions in the area, only students who could live on campus would be accepted. (“The Constitution” 3).

### **Conclusion**

This localized narrative of a specific incident of limited education for blacks in Kentucky is representative of similar incidents in the national narrative. The brief successful period of social and educational equality between blacks and whites was preceded by generations of slavery and followed by more generations of separatist policies. Berea College provides one of few examples of the way society could have developed with stronger interracial leadership. Fee's leadership created an interracial, cooperative town and school in a time of actual civil war, and the example should be more widely known. As I began work in this area, it was surprising to me how few of my fellow, college-educated Kentuckians knew about Berea College, admittedly a small private college in an out-of-the-way location, but more surprising still was how few (including myself) knew about the Day Law and Lincoln Institute. For all my familiarity with Berea College, its background as historically friendly to blacks was never explained as having a 46-year gap. This narrative is representative of ideology and power sweeping the nation, and the sponsorship of education as one of several methods of social control. This research contributes to an increase of awareness in this generation, and hopefully generations to come, so that Kentucky's historical race relations can have a more complete foundation from which to build our future.

From Berea College's integrated policies through the opening of Lincoln Institute, sponsorship for education both changed and expanded. It changed from the northern missionaries such as the AMA, who favored broad educational opportunities, to the northern industrialists, who funded industrial and vocational training. Educational opportunities expanded from nearly nothing to something approaching equality, then quickly faded to limited levels designed for specific purposes. For a brief time, in Berea's interracial heyday, good universities across the nation were admitting qualified blacks. While exceptions remained, the segregationist standard that settled across the nation made such exceptions more difficult. The long-term difficulties in acquiring education have ramifications still felt today. A former Lincoln Institute student, Dorothy Dowe, after many years' delay, finally earned a Master's in Nursing from Bellarmine in 1980, at age 49, the only black person in her graduating class (“Welcome”). A collegiate education – a liberal arts education – was and is designed to encourage critical thinking, such as that required for good leadership. Few whites wanted the ten million blacks in the country to think very critically about their economic and social position. Oddly enough, white fears were contradictory. While they worked to block higher education for blacks, they also claimed that blacks did not have the intelligence required for higher education. With so much evidence of black student successes, a concerted effort was required to keep white fingers in the dike. The following chapters explore those efforts.

This study informs the historical foundation for the status of and community surrounding black students on our campuses today – or the lack of them. We struggle to understand why students of color seem to be underprepared for a liberal arts four-year degree today, yet here is an example of a time and place where access to powerful literacy was granted for 38 years and removed for the following 46 years. The national shift to



industrial and vocational education was for blacks and poor whites. Did we ever shift back? Aren't we still seeing blacks, poor whites, and others of low socioeconomic status relegated to schools that are underpreparing them? As Finn points out, “teachers who see themselves as allies of their working-class students can help their students see that literacy and school knowledge could be potent weapons in their struggle for a better deal” (xvi).

## CHAPTER II

### SPONSORSHIP

Whose voice gets to be heard in determining what is best for poor children and children of color? (Delpit 100)

#### **Foundations of Literacy**

At the turn of the century, racial tensions were mounting, in part around the acquisition of literacy for those long denied such opportunity. Foundations were being laid for a national education, driven by the need to socially and economically integrate an entire race. Literacy had had a moral imperative that resulted in a fairly high literacy rate amongst white Americans by 1870, which meant that more people knew how to read and write than economics necessitated (Brandt, "Drafting" 489) but slaves were not part of this process. As blacks became free members of a society that was rebuilding after the Civil War, the moral imperative slowly became an economic imperative, seized by the masses as a way to gain control over their own futures. Education was thought to increase both knowledge and opportunity. Graff posits that "[l]iteracy changed black culture and black consciousness" ("Nineteenth" 227) and reports that during slavery, "apparently 5% . . . could read and write" (225). For slaves, acquisition of literacy represented opportunities for freedom (224) and they developed a high cultural value for literacy, since those rare slaves who could read and write could be conduits of information.

Although literacy levels of postbellum blacks were much higher than in slavery, Graff points out that access to education remained difficult and was fraught with inequalities (225). Nevertheless, as opportunities arose, education that had long been denied was enthusiastically sought. Free blacks had already worked to establish systems of self-teaching within a dominant culture of prejudice and fear; freed slaves continued to value education and sought it in great numbers as a way to increase their worth in the post-slavery society (226). Free blacks acquired literacy at an astonishing rate. Beginning with an illiteracy rate of over 90% at emancipation, they had reduced it to well under 30% by 1920 (227).

Acquisition of literacy seems simple and good. People learn to read and write in a multitude of settings and can use those skills to improve their lives. But when millions at once, of all ages and abilities, require sharp and rapid improvement of their literacy skills, acquisition is not so straightforward since the individual opportunities to learn are intertwined with institutional opportunities to influence the methods and results of learning. As Brandt has argued, “Literacy as a resource becomes available to ordinary people largely through the mediations of more powerful sponsors. These sponsors are engaged in ceaseless processes of positioning and repositioning, seizing and relinquishing control over meanings and materials of literacy as part of their participation in economic and political competition” (“Sponsors” 173). Education had historically been applied as a bastion of resistance to change by providing “the prime mechanisms for preserving the wisdom of the ages and inculcating people with shared traditions, bodies of knowledge, modes of thinking and behavior” (Brandt, “Drafting” 499); Graff agrees that education was useful for “assimilating the values and manners of one class to those of the others” (“Nineteenth” 224). When millions of untutored people were on the doorstep of

potentially acquiring those shared traditions, modes of thinking and behavior, cultural change took on increased meaning. Powerful sponsors of literacy had both responsibility and opportunity. Graff argues that, though often thought of as an empowering force, basic education provided to the masses in the 19<sup>th</sup> century “was most often a cultural process that reinforced their lowly, underfoot positions in the class, social, and economic hierarchies, and thus *taught* many a fair measure of grudging acceptance of their stations” (Graff, *Labyrinths* 236). The moral imperative of literacy – providing mechanisms for people to read religious texts and absorb cultural norms -- remained interwoven in the general concepts of providing education generally. “For better or worse, mass literacy mattered most for what it supposedly did to people, not for what people supposedly could do with it” (Brandt, “Drafting” 490). At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as industrialization increased and cultural pressures reached critical levels in the aftermath of the Civil War, the moral imperative was intertwined with and partly superseded by economics. Literate workers were seen as useful, and “education itself was considered to be as central to the development and the maintenance of the economic system as it was to the social order (Graff, *Labyrinths* 176). This particular view of education focused on literacy as a necessary tool for all men to communicate and speak the language of business. More than that was considered to be a threat to social stability. Graff notes that slaveholders had feared education would create unrest amongst their slaves and believed that it “unsuited them for menial labor” (Graff, “Nineteenth” 225), and these fears held over well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As the 19<sup>th</sup> century rolled into the 20<sup>th</sup>, and education in a broad sense became more available to all classes of society, the purpose of that education was generally limited to that which best suited the sponsors, not the people themselves.

Brandt defines sponsors as those “who appeared in formative roles at the scenes of literacy learning” (Brandt, “Sponsors” 167). Sponsors are “any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold literacy – and gain advantage by it in some way” (166). The moral and economic pressures involved in both literacy acquisition and sponsorship means that access was governed by social and economic status. Scholarship on the complexities of power and literacy focus on “how certain forms of literacy are used as an instrument or justification for the maintenance of structures of social inequality; how different forms of literacy .... become associated with various social groups, contexts and purposes that occupy different positions in hegemonic structures; and how specific literacy activities can become the vehicle for resistance and contestation” (Besnier 15). Much of Brandt's research in 20<sup>th</sup>-century literacy acquisition reveals “deep structures of literacy inequity” (Brandt, “Reading” 2) and points to the “economic and political forces, some of them originating in quite distant corporate and government policies, [that] affect people's day-to-day ability to seek out and practice literacy” (Brandt, “Sponsors” 172).

Education's historical role of maintaining social order meant that the structure for sponsors operating in the economic imperative was already in place to “set the terms for access to literacy and wield powerful incentives for compliance and loyalty” (“Sponsors” 166-167). Outwardly, educational institutions may appear similar, such as those offering college educations, but differences in sponsorship of each facility result in great differences in not only what information is offered but how it is offered. Brandt argues that “obligations toward one's sponsors run deep, affecting what, why, and how people write and read” (168). Patrick Finn, in *Literacy with an Attitude*, argues that education can be either empowering or domesticating. The rich or privileged get an education that

empowers, that teaches them to question their world on a symbolic level, and the working class get a functional literacy “that makes a person productive and dependable, but not troublesome” (Finn xvi). Society has nothing to fear from them (xi) because “basic literacy does not automatically lead to higher levels of understanding” (123). Finn argues that the working class are not encouraged to have the tools to question their world, to ask questions about equity and equality, or to create meaning for their lives.

Black Americans at the turn of the century were already beset by difficulties in gaining access to literacy since the nation was, as a whole, not only conflicted about what kind of literacy was appropriate, but about whether literacy was a good idea at all. There was much “jockeying and skirmishing for economic and political advantage going on among sponsors” (Brandt, “Sponsorship” 169). National educational opportunities improved and increased emphasis was placed on literacy acquisition. In general, though, access began to be widely available for whites of all ages and remained elusive for blacks in this crucial period. By 1872 most Southern states had established a system of public, tax-supported schools for white students. Equal schools for black students were rare and, even when available, poorly equipped (Graff, “Nineteenth” 228). Adults were more challenging to educate, and their need, white or black, was no less than the children's. In 1911, seeing the vital need for white adult education, Cora Wilson Stewart, “a former school superintendent, a Christian, and a leading Kentucky Progressive,” used local education facilities to provide lessons in the evenings (Brandt, “Drafting” 491) and created the Moonlight Schools for adults. Her successful model was used nationwide. “In a few years' time, 130,000 adult Kentuckians were taught to read and write.” (492-493). These schools taught only rural whites, since Stewart believed that Kentucky Appalachians were more deserving than blacks, *in keeping with the dominant theories of*

*the times* (492). Stewart saw her schools as a way to “uplift” communities (491) and the popular reception of her message suggests the strength of the moral imperative underlying literacy (491). Stewart's efforts were similar to the self-help many blacks achieved; however, Stewart had the white educational infrastructure to assist her efforts, as well as numerous available teachers.

For those blacks who managed to prepare for higher education despite their lack of access to more basic education, a variety of institutionalized policies continued to bar the way. Most colleges admitted only white students and those few that admitted blacks along with whites were increasingly rare as Jim Crow laws flourished, such as Kentucky's Day Law that forced Berea College to segregate. Such laws left only a handful of black colleges and universities to handle the wide variety of adult education sought by this population. These black schools struggled with funding and were mostly dependent on white funding (there being few blacks yet in financial position to part with the large sums of money necessary for institutional support). Most of the philanthropic monies available were industrially based, and such sponsors were interested in an industrially trained work force. Dominant social forces were interested in maintaining social stratification between blacks and whites. Leadership and funding, then, resulted in constraining most educational offerings for blacks to a functional rather than empowering education. Within three decades of the end of the Civil War, sponsorship of educational institutions for blacks had coalesced around education for social control rather than individual success. Brandt points out that “Where one's sponsors are multiple or even at odds, they can make writing maddening. Where they are absent, they make writing unlikely” (Brandt, “Sponsors” 183). Certainly the black population sought education, but the cultural imperative for education was driven by a desire and need to integrate into the

society from which they had been barred for so long. Educational offerings that did not offer integration, and instead promoted increased segregation, were controversial among blacks. Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois were representative of these two main theories of education: Industrial training designed to increase economic stability and maintain the social status quo (functional literacy) and a collegiate, liberal arts education designed for leadership (empowering literacy). A closer look at their backgrounds and positions on education provides a national framework for Kentucky's local events.

### **Industrial vs. Intellectual Education: A National Debate**

Booker T. Washington, a product of industrial school education and a main conduit for white monies earmarked for black education, was a complex figure who dominated the press, black and white, concerning black issues. Washington was involved in nearly all aspects of funding black education in the South. Although his unwavering support for industrial education was not as simple as his detractors have suggested, his consistent message to whites and blacks alike was cooperation – in keeping with his education at Hampton Institute under Samuel Chapman Armstrong's sponsorship. Armstrong's belief in the innate inferiority of the black race, and support of segregation, helped shape Washington's public position. Like Armstrong, Washington complained about the impracticalities of classical education for a people who were bereft of basic needs. Those viewpoints were expressed in a 1901 history of Tuskegee that Max Thrasher wrote at Washington's request:

How often has my heart been made to sink as I have gone through the South and into the homes of the people, and have found women who could converse intelligently on Grecian history, who had studied geometry, who could analyze the



most complex sentences, and yet could not analyze the poorly cooked and still more poorly served corn bread and fat meat which they and their families were eating three times a day. It is little trouble to find girls who can locate Pekin or the Desert of Sahara on an artificial globe, but seldom can you find one who can locate on an actual dinner table the proper place for the carving knife and fork or the meat and vegetables. The course of study in cooking as taught at Tuskegee aims to meet the needs of such conditions as these (Thrasher 97).

Such a proclamation suggests that a classical education in foreign languages and conceptual math was commonly available to all, almost certainly a misdirection, and that proper social skills would be more valuable.

Washington's consistent and early focus was on practical skills, and his concerns about the running of households was well placed. However, his reference to easy access to classical education for blacks, if not actually misleading, contrasted with his Jan. 22, 1904, letter to William Henry Baldwin, Jr., the head board member of Tuskegee and one of Washington's closest white advisors, wherein Washington complained about the neglect of having colored people sitting in on conferences concerning education in the South.

The fact is that, either consciously or unconsciously, I very much fear it is the policy of those in charge to drift out of touch with with the colored people engaged in education in the South. I can remember six or seven years ago when almost every important step bearing upon education in the South some colored man was consulted. Now such consultation is becoming more and more rare, and if matters go on as they now are, within a few years no attention will be paid to the colored people at all (“BTW Papers” Vol 7, 409).

Public sentiment was shifting away from inclusion and more toward the segregated legal and social standards that would prevail for the next several decades in the south. Edwin Anderson Alderman, a southern white man, was president of University of Virginia in 1904 and was an original member of both the Southern Education Movement and Southern Education Board (Vol 6, 150). He also served on the more significant and powerful national General Education Board from 1906 to 1928. Alderman “was reluctant

to risk a campaign for black schools that might jeopardize the board's standing with white southerners” (Vol 6, n.1, 150). Wallace Buttrick, also white, was “executive secretary of the General Education Board when it was established with funds from John D. Rockefeller in 1902” (Vol 6, n.2, 150). The Board generally used its influence and monies for “southern white rural high schools” (Vol 6, n.2, 151). As executive secretary, he was in a position to influence how the Rockefeller monies were spent, but he “avoided at all costs the alienation of southern whites,” and “did nothing to prevent the gross neglect of black schools in the General Education Board's philanthropic grants in the South” (Vol 6, n.2, 151).

Washington's cooperative public position on racial issues had some vocal detractors. Although Washington's leadership was not nearly as controversial at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as it would be when race relations worsened early in the next century, he nevertheless provoked irritation amongst intellectuals for his failure to promote higher education (Vol 5, xxii). A September 5, 1899, letter from Timothy Thomas Fortune, a leading black journalist, reveals dissent coming from Dr. Nathan F. Mossell, a black physician, and Ida Wells Barnett, an outspoken black female journalist (amongst other activities). Fortune's letter to Washington complains that “the doctor himself has a mule's propensity to kick in all directions. But when he comes my way, I can manage him from my point of view. He is much like Ida Wells Barnett, who has just written me a sassy letter complaining about the cutting out of her disparaging reference to you in her Chicago letter . . . . She is a sort of bull in a China Shop like Mossell” (Vol 5, 220). Fortune controlled a Chicago newspaper and edited at least some of the dissent that was intended for his pages. Alexander Crummell negatively referred to Fortune in 1895 and 1897 letters because of Fortune's support for those who were writing “outrageous and

degrading descriptions” (Crummell 85) and accused Fortune of writing a “diatribe against the Negro” (88). Ida Wells had published a study of lynching in 1895 that upset the accepted justifications for such violence, and was no doubt a consistent thorn in the side of accommodationists like Washington. This was the same year (1895) when Washington delivered his well-known Atlanta Exposition Address wherein he emphasized the importance of labor and economic stability. The speech was heralded in late 1895 in an Atlanta paper as evidence of a “new negro” (Vol 4, 34), and announced Washington and his work at Tuskegee as the answer to the race problem. (Vol 4, 36).

Washington's Atlanta paper drew a response from William Hayes Ward, an advocate of black social equality. On August 24, 1899, an editorial in the *Independent*, a New York weekly edited by Ward, reported that industrial education was not as popular amongst the blacks as among the whites because “it comes too far short of what is needed for their intellectual and material development above the sphere of an inferior class that has no right to rule” (Vol 5, n.5, 183). Tuskegee did its work well, but it fell short in intellectual offerings. John Henry Pickard graduated from Tuskegee in 1899, then attended Berea College (Vol 11, n.8, 31). Tuskegee was a good industrial and vocational school, and complaints of the school itself were rare; however, the education students could receive at Tuskegee was below the academic level offered by Berea College, evidenced by Pickard's continuation of his education at Berea after his graduation from Tuskegee. On February 11, 1903, Charles Fleischer wrote to Washington after speaking before a group of black intellectuals, members of the Boston Literary and Historical Association, who heartily disliked Washington. Fleischer was concerned that the group's dislike was “a symptom of a serious and growing disaffection” (Vol 7, 67).

A main concern amongst blacks and sympathetic whites was how to increase

opportunities for higher education of the black race. Du Bois, a vocal leader of the black intelligentsia, called for education that included, but was not limited to, industrial training. Tuskegee was good, but should not be the standard for all other types of education. The segment of the black population that both Washington and Du Bois were concerned with was very small, but significant and symbolic. Educational opportunities were representative of perceptions of inequality. Du Bois represented the ideological position that industrial education relegated black Americans to a lower class of society, providing a small step from slavery to serfdom. In relating a speech he gave to Hampton Institute in 1906, Du Bois stated his support of industrial and vocational education as a part of a larger array of black offerings, but voiced concerns that it could not be all of the offerings. "I believed that we should seek to educate a mass of ignorant sons of slaves in the three R's and the technique of work in a sense of the necessity and duty of good work. But beyond this, I also believed that such schools must have teachers, and such a race must have thinkers and leaders, and for the education of these folk we needed good and thorough Negro colleges." (Du Bois, "The Hampton Idea" 5) Du Bois recognized the need for basic and thorough education, but also voiced the practicality of leadership.

Du Bois' own educational experience had shown him that quality college-level work for blacks was difficult to find when he was accepted at Harvard as only a junior and had to earn a second bachelor's degree. Du Bois went on to complete a master's in 1891, studied for two years at University of Berlin, and in 1895 was awarded a Ph.D in History and Government from Harvard, the first black man to achieve that distinction (Green & Driver 4-8). Having become personally acquainted with different standards of education between black and white schools, Du Bois worried about the type of education that might be disseminated in schools like Hampton and Tuskegee. In his speech to

Hampton's industrially-focused school, Du Bois emphasized his concern that students see the larger purpose for education:

[T]he college curriculum or the curriculum of the industrial school depends not so much on its content . . . as on its aim. The aim of the higher training of the college is the development of power. . . . we must give to our youth a training designed above all to make them men of power, of thought, of trained and cultivated taste; men who know whither civilization is tending and what it means. . . . I sincerely hope that you will ever be alert to select from your students those of talent and promise and . . . Send these talented boys to college (Du Bois, "The Hampton Idea" 13-14).

Colleges of the sort Du Bois had in mind were hard to find. In 1911, Du Bois was editor of *The Crisis* and published an article in that journal titled "The College-Bred Negro." The article quotes the *Buffalo News'* survey of northern colleges on the numbers of blacks admitted to their institutions and reported that

Yale, while it says that it has never felt justified in refusing admission to Negro students, frankly declares that it has never sought to attach them. Leland Stanford says that it has no hostility toward Negroes, but it fails to set forth how many of them are registered. Fordham, in this State, says that it has never had any Negro applicants for admission and it cannot, therefore, say what sort of reception such applications would receive. St. Vincent College, in Pennsylvania, says that it has never deemed it wise to accept colored students. . . . and the president of a Missouri college writes that he has not found a student in the State who would tolerate a Negro in the college (Du Bois, "College Bred" 62).

Princeton did not admit black students until after WWII, and its first black graduate was in 1947 ("Looking Back"). Given these barriers, Du Bois consistently pushed for raising the standards of education for blacks because it seemed that doors were closing rather than opening. While some northern schools were open to a few remarkable blacks, such as Du Bois' matriculation at Harvard, in general the access was much reduced as segregation increased. Du Bois worried that standard of education "that encourages aspiration, that sets the loftiest of ideals and seeks as an end culture and character rather than bread-winning, is the privilege of white men and the danger and delusion of black"

(*Souls* 126).

In *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois expounded upon the benefits of college education and offered statistics of those who sought it.

[T]here were, in the years from 1875 to 1880, 22 Negro graduates from northern colleges; from 1885 to 1890 there were 43, and from 1895 to 1900, nearly 100 graduates. From Southern Negro colleges there were, in the same three periods, 143,413 [enrolled] and over 500 graduates (*Souls* 136).

He quotes the Conference at Atlanta University in 1900 that gathered the information about how these students were employed:

Fifty-three per cent of these graduates were teachers, -- presidents of institutions, heads of normal schools, principals of city school-systems, and the like. Seventeen percent were clergymen; another seventeen per cent were in the professions, chiefly as physicians. Over six per cent were merchants, farmers, and artisans, and four per cent were in the government civil service. . . . this is a record of usefulness (*Souls* 133).

This is the education for leadership that Du Bois emphasized in his Hampton Institute speech, and he argued that the leadership is not only much needed but also well used on behalf of the black race in cooperation with the white. In this, Du Bois echoes Washington's emphasis on cooperation, although Du Bois desired cooperation to occur on equal footing. He answered the concerns of the white population on issues of loyalty, or discontent, by pointing out that

with all their larger vision and deeper sensibility, these men [college graduates] have usually been conservative, careful leaders. They have seldom been agitators, have withstood the temptation to head the mob, and have worked steadily and faithfully in a thousand communities in the South. As teachers, they have given the South a commendable system of city schools and large numbers of private normal schools and academies. Colored college-bred men have worked side by side with white college graduates at Hampton; almost from the beginning the backbone of Tuskegee's teaching force has been formed of graduates of Fisk and Atlanta. . . . In the professions, college men are slowly but surely leavening the Negro church, are healing and preventing the devastations of disease, and beginning to furnish legal protection for the liberty and property of the toiling masses. . . . If white people need colleges to furnish teachers, ministers, lawyers, and doctors, do black people need nothing of the sort? (*Souls* 134).

Du Bois saw the college education of black people as a way to ease social angst and improve racial relations by encouraging equal relationships between cultured, college-bred men of both white and black races, and he warned that denial of higher education could only increase problems: “[By] refusing to give this Talented Tenth the key to knowledge, can any sane man imagine that they will lightly lay aside their yearning and contentedly become hewers of wood and drawers of water?” (136)

Booker T. Washington, in his autobiographical writings of 1911, remembered his 1895 Atlanta Address bringing him “into conflict with a small group of coloured people who sometimes styled themselves 'The Intellectuals' or 'The Talented Tenth’” (“BTW Papers” Vol 1, 427) who emphasized a northern style of college education and opposed any attempt to appease white southerners “as a kind of treason to the race” (428). Washington argued that young book-educated black men were unsuited for practical matters, having “mere book knowledge” (428) with “little thought or attention to preparing for any definite task in the world” (428). Washington explained his disdain for college learning by complaining that “[i]n college they studied problems and solved them on paper. But these problems had already been solved by someone else, and all that they had to do was learn the answers. They had never faced any unsolved problems in college, and all that they had learned had not taught them the patience and persistence which alone solve real problems” (429).

Although in many ways Du Bois and Washington can be considered to be ideological opposites, they also worked together to increase cooperation between the races. In a March 4, 1902, letter from Du Bois to Washington, Du Bois apologizes for not being able to attend Washington's recent conference and asks Washington to attend a

conference in Atlanta, which Washington did, speaking for fifteen minutes. Du Bois stressed in the letter that it was important for Washington to attend and attempted to minimize their ideological conflicts, while also mildly chastising Washington: “I think you will grant that I have sought in every way to minimize the breach between colleges and industrial schools and have in all possible ways tried to cooperate with Tuskegee in its work. I have not been so successful in getting you to cooperate with ours, altho' this is of course largely due to the fact that you are a busy man” (Vol 6, 412-413).

Washington's reluctance to cooperate publicly with Du Bois on educational matters extended far below the surface to another level of cooperation between the two publicly visible men. Although Washington avoided publicly involvement, he sometimes aided Du Bois' more radical cohort and contributed funds to fight racial injustice. On November 28, 1902, Washington replied positively to a request for funding from Du Bois to fight railcar segregation, saying “if you will let me know what the total expense will be, I shall be willing to bear a portion of it provided I can hand it to you personally and not have any connection with your committee. I do not want my name to go before the committee in any shape or to be used publicly in connection with this matter” (Vol. 6, 597-598).

### **Black Intelligentsia**

By comparison to Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois was a relatively powerless academic. Outspoken, but not in control of a political machine or funding such as Washington's, Du Bois' arguments represented those of the intelligentsia, a small number of well-educated black men whose voices influenced and joined Du Bois against the increasing pressure for vocational and industrial education at the expense of higher



education.

Alexander Crummell had a powerful influence on Du Bois. A Northern free black like Du Bois, Crummell was born in New York City in 1819 to free black parents, educated at Oneida Institute in New York and later graduated from Cambridge in 1853. He founded the American Negro Academy (ANA) in 1897 to promote black intellectual higher education and scholarship. Invitations to join this academy were sent to Du Bois, Kelly Miller and William Sanders Scarborough (both discussed below), but also, more surprisingly, to Washington (Crummell 91; Scarborough 152-153). Washington declined to participate, and ANA members were soon seen “as a challenge to the increasing power of Booker T. Washington” (Moses 4). At the organization's first annual meeting, Crummell's speech concerned “the intellectual loss of the Negro” and “the deficiencies of our race scholarship” (Crummell 91) -- topics that challenged education offered at Washington's Hampton Institute. The ANA was limited in membership to those “of African descent . . . to aid with all means in its power to raise the standard of intellectual endeavor among American Negroes” (Scarborough 153). Du Bois dedicated a chapter in *The Souls of Black Folk* to Crummell, and his “Talented Tenth” idea was influenced by an 1897 Crummell essay, “Civilization, the Primal Need of the Race,” presented at the first annual meeting of the ANA. In that essay, Crummell promoted ideals of education in “the scientific processes of literature, art, and philosophy” (Crummell 285) as the method to create a civilization for blacks within that of whites:

The greatness of peoples springs from their ability to grasp the grand conceptions of being. It is the absorption of a people, of a nation, or a race, in large majestic and abiding things which lifts them up to the skies. These once apprehended, all the minor details of life follow in their proper places, and spread abroad in the details and the comfort of practicality. But until these gifts of a lofty civilization are secured, men are sure to remain low, debased and grovelling (286).

Crummell viewed industrial and vocational pursuits as materially necessary for survival but classified those pursuits as “incidental,” arguing that “the incidental in life is incapable of feeding the living soul” because “civilization is . . . the nourishment of humanity” (285).

The other main founding member of the ANA, William S. Scarborough, attained significant scholarly and social achievements, even in the white-dominated world of higher education. “Born a slave on February 16, 1852, in Macon, Georgia, Scarborough had become the nation's preeminent black classicist by the time of his death in 1926” (Gates, Jr. xiii). He attended college at Atlanta University, graduated from Oberlin College in 1875 with a bachelor's degree, then earned a Master's from Oberlin a few years later. While a professor of Latin and Greek at Wilberforce University in Xenia, Ohio, he married Sarah Bierce, a white divorcee (Ronnick 15) and wrote a textbook, *First Lessons in Greek*, published in 1881, that was extensively adopted by institutions of higher education, including Yale. He was a member of the Modern Language Association (MLA) and the American Philological Association (APA), both white organizations (Ronnick 6-7). While Scarborough was the first black member of the MLA, joining in 1882, he was the third such member of the APA in 1882 (9). While serving as a physical model for integration, Scarborough “openly opposed the narrowness of Booker T. Washington's mandate for technical training. He valued Washington's role as a much-needed leader but, in the face of Washington's widespread popularity, Scarborough remained the staunch defender of higher learning for African Americans” (9). Between 1894 and 1896, Scarborough was forced out of his professorship at Wilberforce because of political wrangling over industrial versus classical education and, during the two years he was dismissed, Du Bois filled his position as “professor and department chair of

classics” (10). Along with Crummell, Scarborough also heavily influenced Du Bois' later theories, although Scarborough was never as visible nor well known as Du Bois. “He lived in a time of great racial divide, and many of the white people with whom he interacted, however cordial they might have been to him in person, did not mention him in their own writings. He was visibly invisible. His fellow classicists, for example, did not mention him in their published writings” (12). In the last four years of his life, Scarborough struggled to write his autobiography, leaving behind a detailed account of his remarkable life. However, the manuscript passed through several hands, a typewritten version was created, the original was lost, and the autobiography was not published until more than seventy years had passed (19-21). Scarborough's accomplishments were no less for his lack of visibility, yet his elusive history weakens the editor's claim that “[a]s one of the earliest advocates for African American academic endeavor, he [Scarborough] became an intellectual icon for a people who were continually accused of not having an intellectual tradition” (14). Icons, no matter how remarkable, must be visible to be effective, and Scarborough's life was nearly entirely lost in the dominant narrative despite his contribution of over twenty articles for academic publication (7). Although his obituary ran in the *New York Times* (Gates, Jr. xiv), Scarborough's contributions, historically, were overshadowed by the larger-than-life figures of Du Bois and Washington, overlooked by those seeking signs of radicalism or unrest, and were possibly misunderstood since he moved in circles dominated by whites (Gates, Jr. xiv-xv). Much work has been done since the 1960s to reclaim black histories, and Scarborough would likely be gratified that “in 2001, the Modern Language Association instituted the William Sanders Scarborough prize, awarded to an outstanding scholarly study of black American literature or culture” (xv). Now he is an icon.

In his autobiography, Scarborough noted ideological differences between his own and Booker T. Washington's views on education as “Tuskegee Industrial Institute was rapidly coming to the front with strong financial backing by leading white philanthropists” (Scarborough 102-103). Scarborough was concerned that Washington's influence would reduce classical subjects for education:

I must say that we stood as advocates of education in these two different channels. The trend of opinion had eagerly turned to this comparatively new idea of disposing of the Negro's preparation for the future and I with others saw the dangers of this over emphasis on industrial training to the exclusion of culture and higher training. For some years it seemed necessary to oppose this strenuously and I did so with voice and pen (103).

Scarborough, like other black intellectuals, took issue with what he perceived as Washington's overemphasis on industrial education, and wrote an opinion at the request of a Boston magazine that said, in part, “[Washington] is a needed leader in this direction. But this is not saying that because of his success in this line all the race must run mad over industrial education, or that because this line is doing much good the whole world must jump at the conclusion that at last has been found the sole sort of education of the race, as a race, should have” (156). Scarborough valued Washington's leadership, and invited him to join the formation of the American Negro Academy (153), although Washington never attended the meetings. Despite their differences, they shared a mutual respect. Upon Washington's death, Scarborough “served as an honorary pallbearer at Principal Washington's funeral on November 17” (241) and noted that “We were always good friends though our work lay in different lines” (241).

Kelly Miller was also an early member of and contributor to the ANA. Miller graduated from Howard in 1886, took two years of mathematics at Johns Hopkins, and was a member of the faculty at Howard University from 1890-1934. He occupied a

middle ground between Washington's cooperative ways and the more militant voices of Washington's critics ("BTW Papers" Vol 4, n.2, 256). Miller contributed numerous publications to the ANA, including an essay on President Roosevelt's policies and the related prominence of Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee Institute:

Dr. Booker T. Washington has been chosen as referee at large and as the sole spokesman for the entire Negro race. His selection was not due to his political activity or experience, for the whole tenor of his teaching has been to persuade his race to place less proportional stress on politics and to concentrate its energies upon things economic and material. . . . the only road to official favor was the straight and narrow path that leads to Tuskegee. No Negro, whether in Vermont or Texas, whatever has been his service to the party, can expect to receive consideration at the hands of the president unless he gets the approval of the great educator (Miller, *Roosevelt* 11).

In 1914, Miller published *Out of the House of Bondage* wherein he softened his earlier irritated tone about Roosevelt, and pointed out that otherwise reasonable people became polarized on the controversial topic of industrial versus classical education. He said that "[i]ndustrial and higher education are complementary factors of the same product. They are both essential parts of the educational program, each in its proper place and proportion. Howard and Hampton, Fisk and Tuskegee are in no sense antithetic institutions, but supplementary coworkers in the same field. It is perfectly evident that no one school, nor any single type of schools, is adequate to the wide circle of racial needs" (Miller, *Out* 153). Miller was not the only evidence of reduced tensions. He remarked that "Dr. Booker T. Washington, the chief apostle of industrial training, has accepted a place on the governing board of Howard University, the leading school for higher culture [and Miller's alma mater]. Neither has surrendered, but both have struck hands on the high ground of mutuality and good will" (154). Since Washington passed away only a year later, in November of 1915, a key component of particularly vocal members of this rich controversy was reduced, but the larger national resistance to higher education for

black Americans remained.

### **From National to State Sponsorship**

The controversy over classical versus industrial education polarized by the iconic figures of Du Bois and Washington was locally represented in turn-of-the-century Kentucky in the policies of Berea College and Lincoln Institute. Du Bois' worries about vocational education to the exclusion of the liberal arts came to pass when Berea College (an integrated, co-educational liberal arts college) became the New Berea, officially Lincoln Institute (an industrial and vocational boarding school for blacks only) offering no course work above secondary education. The historical backgrounds of those institutions were laid out in Chapter 1. If both Berea College and Lincoln Institute had co-existed, offering matriculation to blacks and whites alike, the promotion of manual and high school work by Lincoln Institute would have been a reasonable response to national pressures and a successful expansion of educational choices for a people long denied such options. Despite the public differences between Washington and Du Bois, neither wanted fewer educational offerings of any type, and both worked to expand the quality and range of choices.

When William Goodell Frost became president of Berea College in 1892, Southern racial hostilities were beginning to intensify and the school was desperately in need of funding. Frost inherited an integrated, coeducational institution populated by 184 black and 163 white students (Frost 71). Significantly, Frost's earliest task was to increase student matriculation and he chose to focus on the white population to accomplish this difficult task. Frost's recruitment successes changed the ratio of white to black (see Ch. 3, Communities). Before Washington's Atlanta speech, Frost already had

industrial education in mind as an appropriate answer to broaden Berea's offerings, and initiated vocational courses by 1894 (Frost 71).

Washington's Atlanta Exposition Address in 1895 drew positive reactions from white people nationwide and caused some of both races to see his position on education as an answer to the increasingly virulent social and economic race problems. Vocational and industrial education became increasingly popular. Philanthropic funds, while more difficult to obtain for interracial education that promoted social equality, such as at Berea College, flowed freely to provide training for practical employment. Monies were often pledged upon condition of matching or additional funds being raised. A prominent Chicago philanthropist, Dr. D. K. Pearson, who had made his fortune in lumber, pledged \$50,000 to Berea College on two separate occasions if triple that amount could be raised, and each time the College met the challenge (Frost 113-130). Additionally, Jay Gould's first-born daughter, Helen Miller Gould, a well-known New York philanthropist whose family money was based in railroads, caught the attention of several major northern papers when she gave a substantial sum to Berea College. On June 6, 1900, an article in the *New York Daily Tribune* was headlined "Miss Gould Befriends Berea" and announced that "Miss Helen Gould has agreed to give \$300,000 to Berea College, an institution for white and colored children, situated about forty miles south of that city" ("Miss Gould" 4). A similar article appeared on June 8, 1900 in *The Evening Times*, Washington, D.C., and mentions her visit to Kentucky: "A long trip into the hills was made to give Miss Gould an idea of the primitive people whom Berea College is intended to benefit" ("Helen Gould" 6). Despite her large gift, Frost's only mention of Gould in his autobiography is of this June 1900 visit. He complained that many small calamities occurred while she was present: "the carriage step came off . . . the roof of the Tabernacle

leaked . . . . a tank broke and flooded the room” (Frost 129). He made no mention of her donation.

Gould's attention to Kentucky increased northern interest in the college's mission. In June of 1900, the *New York Daily Tribune's* “Women's Page” ran an article entitled “No Color Line at Berea” that acknowledged Berea College had been of much interest since Gould's gift and visit. The article provided a brief description of the college, calling it “the pioneer in educational work among the mountain whites” (“No Color Line” 7). But the article also noted that “Since the Civil War colored pupils have been admitted to all its privileges, the Institution courageously maintaining since that time the principle of equality. It is also coeducational and is not under sectarian control” (7). Gould's gift and the resulting friendly coverage of the northern papers seem to challenge claims that funding for interracial education was difficult to obtain. However, the emphasis in these articles, and in Helen Gould's physical visit, was on the mountain whites and the industrial educational facilities aggressively being built by Frost. Mention of the interracial nature of the school was little more than a sympathetic aside and the model of admitting black students “to all its privileges,” as did most of the better northern institutions, was suggested to be an act of courage in the racially torn South. Beyond this June 1900 article, only one additional article in 1902 (below) mentions the interracial nature of the school, as race relations continued to worsen in 1901.

In 1901, racial tensions increased exponentially when Washington accepted President Roosevelt's invitation to dine at the White House. Nationally, whites were outraged at the social equality espoused by that simple act, and the vehemence of the response surprised those who had been working toward easing tensions. On October 16, 1901, Washington penned a simple note in acceptance of Roosevelt's invitation, saying “I



shall be very glad to accept your invitation to dinner this evening at seven-thirty” (“BTW Papers” Vol 6, 243), and the storm began. The Atlanta *Constitution* ran an article on *the same day as the luncheon* announcing that Washington had been not only the first black to have been entertained at the White House, but that he was the only guest on that particular evening, arrived in evening wear, and dined with the President's entire family in their private apartments (Vol 6, 248). The next day, Emmett Jay Scott sent the *Constitution* article to Washington with a positive note, excited at the prominence of the article, saying “it will get before our friends in the South in a way it might not ordinarily” (Vol 6, 250). Oddly enough, Scott was correct, though not as he imagined. Hopes of political or social advancement were quickly dashed in the barrage of negative press. One supporter tried to appear confident, and bravely suggested to Washington that “the flare-up of these newspapers, I confess, somewhat astonishes me. . . . No such violently spoken sensitiveness would have been shown ten years ago – at least not so generally shown. . . . It is pumped-up – put on: it isn't real” (Vol 6, 254), but then admits that “it does argue a desperation of mind that I am afraid of in the meantime” (Vol 6, 254-255).

This high-profile national event hardened white attitudes against black civil rights. Much as the public's fearful and angry response to the 1859 raid by John Brown on Harper's Ferry had forced Berea Founder John G. Fee and his supporters to flee Kentucky, so too did Washington's reception at the White House harden national sentiment against progress toward equality.

In keeping with Frost's ideals for Berea College, but also in increasing deference to the strengthened opposition to interracial work of any sort, Berea College's fundraising efforts emphasized the mountain people nearly exclusively. On Oct 23, 1902, *The National Tribune* in Washington, D.C., ran a short article announcing that Berea College

Trustees are looking for adequate funds for the work of educating mountaineers. It claimed that “the college has made a great 'find' in the forgotten people of the Southeastern mountains.” The article identifies Berea College as “founded by anti-slavery Southerners before the war, and admits colored students exactly as the Northern and European institutions” (“Berea College” 2). Identifying with northern and European institutions was an attempt by Berea College to distance itself from southern standards and more closely align with sophisticated standards accepted on international levels.

In keeping with his focus on industrial education and broadening the appeal of Berea College, by 1902 President Frost had made significant changes to the school's curriculum to add “short courses in carpentry, brick laying, agriculture, nursing, printing and home science” (Wilson 91). In the December 25, 1902, issue of *The Citizen*, a holiday article was published entitled “A Merry Christmas to all from Berea College!” It mentioned that Helen Gould had recently visited, and announced a new short course “Applied Science” that would be “like the normal, but better and more practical for those who do not expect to be teachers all their lives” (“A Merry Christmas” 1). This full-page article includes several small pictures of trustees and a large central picture of twenty-nine male students, only one of whom appeared to have some non-white features, more Native American than black or white. The article does not mention that Berea College is interracial, although those subscribing to a local paper like *The Citizen* should be well aware of that fact. The lack of any black photographs in an article allegedly representative of the college is indicative of the increasingly cautious attitude this interracial school chose to present.

On August 14, 1903, an article in the “News and Views of Women” section of the *New York Daily Tribune* presented the problem of feuding amongst Kentucky mountain

people as a moral imperative for education: “According to President Frost of Berea College,” the feuding mountain people in Kentucky are separate from poor whites. The article claimed them to be land-owning Southerners who fought for the North and never owned slaves and claimed that “[t]he cure of the feud is education” (“Feuds Dying” 7). The article defined the extensive lands of Appalachia America as Berea College's discovery, and explained that the people there are willing to come a long way for the opportunity to attend school (7). The focus for Berea College was completely on the mountaineers now, as hostilities between races continued to escalate.

In 1903, Thomas Dixon published *The Leopard's Spots*, a racially biased text that provoked ascerbic criticism from Kelly Miller, a compatriot of Du Bois, in a 21-page open letter to Dixon published in September, 1905: “I am writing you this letter to express the attitude and feeling of ten million of your fellow citizens toward the evil propagandism of race animosity to which you have lent your great literary powers. Through the wide-spread influence of your writings you have become the chief priest of those who worship at the shrine of race hatred and wrath” (“As to the Leopard's” 1). Miller took Dixon to task for his attack on all those who had sympathy for blacks, saying that “According to your standard, the only Americans who could be accounted safe, sane and judicious on the race issue would be, the author of *The Leopard's Spots*, Senator Tillman, and [Mississippi] Governor Vardaman!” (4). Tillman was an outspoken South Carolina senator while Vardaman was the similarly outspoken governor of Mississippi. Both espoused violence against and subjugation of black citizens. They were Southern political leaders whose outrageous rhetoric made them larger-than-life symbols of white prejudice. Miller's suggestion that these men would be Dixon's choice of role models was a bitter acknowledgement of similar outrages in Dixon's work. Berea College

President Frost identifies Tillman and Vardaman in his autobiography as “part of the revival of the spirit of animosity toward the colored race which is sweeping over the entire South at this time” (Frost 173). Like the author of the letter to Washington, Frost surmised that the sentiment was “pumped-up” but admitted that it was, nevertheless, quite real (173).

The increased “spirit of animosity” toward blacks was resulting in increased legal restrictions, and Frost was aware that Kentucky's politicians could follow suit. When the Day Law was introduced, Frost knew that “[a] similar law had been passed in Tennessee two years before, affecting Maryville College [the only other integrated school in the South], but it was supposed that Kentucky was safe” (174).

### **The Day Law: Kentucky's Sponsorship Change**

Frost was notified in 1904 when legislation was introduced in Kentucky by Senator Day that could destroy Berea College's interracial work. By this time, Frost had reduced the black population of the school to 1/6 of the total enrollment of 961 students, in keeping with Frost's ideals that the ratios of black/white on campus should equal the ratio of black/white citizens living in Kentucky. The college student body had trebled since Frost became president, and he saw those numbers as evidence of approval for his policies. The 961 students represented “all of Kentucky's mountain counties – an increase which showed that she was actually overcoming prejudice” (Frost 169). Berea College was growing, but the actual numbers of black students had decreased slightly from Frost's first arrival.

Because the national sentiment backing the pending legislation in Kentucky meant that Senator Day's bill would probably become law, Frost wrote to Booker T. Washington

on January 18, 1904, asking for his advice:

My Dear Dr. Washington: I write to ask your advice, in confidence, on an important matter.

As you know for nearly 40 years Berea has admitted colored students on the same basis as whites, with no unfortunate results.

The wave of anti Negro sentiment has reached Kentucky, and a bill is up prohibiting this. Should this become a law we shall *certainly* not drop our work for the colored people. We might divide funds and have twin schools, we might sacrifice buildings and move to Ohio, we might use a part of our income for publications and extension work, lectures, traveling libraries, etc. (a work *much* needed, and which could be made very effective). I have never pushed our principle of "admitting all of good moral character["] offensively. There is no tendency toward "race wars,["] nor intermarriage in Berea.

Now the question is should Berea resist this proposed law to the utmost (of course in christian spirit) or might we find a way to do as much good as now in a manner less offensive to the Southerners?

My instincts are for "standing pat" on platform vindicated by so many years. But I wish to know what others would say. Do you think Berea's advanced position ought to be fought for?

Most cordially yours, Wm. Goodell Frost ("BTW Papers" Vol 7, 396-397)

Washington replied four days later, on Jan 22, 1904:

My Dear Dr. Frost:

Your kind letter has been received, and I have kept it in my hands for a few hours trying to decide what advice I ought to give, but I find myself unable as yet to reach any satisfactory conclusion. One thing, however, I am sure of, and that I advise as strongly as I can, and that is every effort should be made to convince the members of the legislature that your present organization of the college ought not to be disturbed, and that no harm has taken place by reason of your present policy. If I can reach any further conclusion, that is in case the legislature takes such action that it becomes necessary for your Trustees to act, I shall be glad to write you further.

Yours truly, Booker T. Washington (Vol 7, 408)

As suggested in his letter to Washington, and as summarized in Ch. 1, Frost set Berea College's resources against the Day Law. However, the letter that Frost sent to

Washington suggests the inevitability of the law's passage and the variety of options that Frost was considering. That national sentiment had shifted strongly against integrative policies was evident in the strong support shown locally and by the U.S. Supreme Court for this Kentucky law. Even the community surrounding Berea College had members who worked to assure its passage. A House of Representatives document dated February 18, 1904, recorded the petition that some citizens of Madison County presented in support of the law. The petition claims that Berea College was “founded here in open defiance of the organic law of this Commonwealth, as it then existed, and has been maintained in opposition to the customs, views and most cherished convictions of the good people of this county. Under the plea of educating the mind of the youth its main purpose has been to teach the social equality of the white and colored races” (“Petition” 525). Further, the petition claims that the monies donated to fund Berea College had been given by “northern people, actuated largely by hatred of and prejudice against southern people and their institutions . . . . to force upon the southern white people the social equality of the negro” (525). Almost forty years after Rev. John Fee, founder of Berea, had seated a black woman at his dinner table in Camp Nelson in 1865 against social custom because of his belief in social equality, even before Berea College was firmly established and incorporated, Fee's work was finally undone in the midst of white resistance to social equality between the races.

The Day Law went into effect on July 15, 1904. Only five Kentucky legislators voted against this bill, while seventy-three voted for it (527). Between the February vote and the July enforcement, there was little time to prepare for change, and the decision was made to establish a new school for black students near Louisville, Kentucky. Frost published a newspaper article (preserved only by an undated clipping in the Berea

College archives) entitled “A Preferred Consideration for 1905.” The article is addressed to “friends of Berea,” and explains the financial portion of the decision to establish a new school: “We cannot simply turn the colored people out – our heart as well as our legal obligations require us to continue work for their benefit. But what we do for them is a new burden. . . . The withdrawal of a portion of our income for the benefit of the colored who have hitherto been taught at Berea brings a financial strain like that which would be caused by the burning of buildings or the loss of endowment” (“A Preferred”).

Berea College, in consultation with its lawyers and trustees, determined that half of the existing \$200,000 endowment existing when President Frost arrived in 1892 should be bound over for black education. Additionally, \$100,000 of the endowment increase during Frost's presidency was added to it, since any monies that had been earmarked specifically for black or interracial education must be fairly divided. Finally, Frost and the Trustees determined that, to be a success, an additional \$200,000 should be raised so that the school could begin on solid financial ground (Frost 179). Lincoln Institute would begin with an endowment of \$400,000. The process of raising these monies was called the Adjustment Fund.

A challenge grant of \$200,000 from Andrew Carnegie started the fundraising off strongly. Other northern philanthropists, after Carnegie's donation was announced, gave generously, and most gifts were contingent upon other monies being raised. The final caveat for the grants to actually be dispensed was that \$50,000 must be raised in Kentucky (Frost 181-182). Despite this apparent northern enthusiasm to establish a black school, these grants were not all given on behalf of black education. Carnegie's \$200,000 was specifically given to replace the loss to Berea College so that there would be no interruption of Berea College's work for the white mountaineers. A flyer used for

soliciting funds for Berea College and Lincoln Institute specifies that Carnegie Adjustment Fund money will assure that Berea can continue its work for the mountain people “unimpaired” and further explains the specific work intended to be done by Lincoln Institute and Berea College:

One word about the worth-while-ness of what we are doing. The new colored school, in a region remote from Hampton and Tuskegee, and where the need is great, will adopt best methods from the start and mark a new era for Kentucky.

And in the mountains, Berea has a work of national importance. We are making in the Southern Appalachians the Scotland of America. And in finding cures for the adverse conditions of mountain life we shall solve the rural problem (as real as the city problem) for all the world (“Victory”).

The trustees purchased three farms in Shelby County totaling 444.4 acres as the site of the Lincoln Institute, and Lincoln Foundation was established in 1910 to manage its endowment. Raising \$50,000 in Kentucky was difficult and time consuming, since it involved many small pledges rather than the large sums promised from the North, but the sum was eventually gathered and all the funding was secured (Frost 184).

The structure of Lincoln Institute was never intended to mirror that of Berea College. The curriculum offered by the Institute would be vocational and normal because “Colored people who were to have a college course can and should go to Fisk, Oberlin, or some other good college outside of Kentucky” (Frost 179). Frost's long-time advisor, A.D. Mayo, was never in favor of Berea's interracial experiment and suggested that a Hampton or Tuskegee was needed in Kentucky more than college programs (Wilson 86). The small number of black graduates from the college courses at Berea suggested that the impact of Lincoln Institute not offering similar courses was very small. And, too, President Frost and the Trustees agreed that any deserving black scholar would be sent on to a collegiate level school, should the need arise. There is no evidence of any Lincoln



Institute graduate receiving any such aid, although Berea College did pay for existing Berea College students to attend other institutions while the Day law was on appeal. The loss of the college course of study may have impacted small numbers of people, but those who graduated Berea College before the campus was closed to people of African descent (summarized in Ch. 1) show how deeply college course work had impacted those who graduated from it, as well as the surrounding communities.

### **Lincoln Institute Opens for Students**

When Lincoln Institute plans were finally complete, after years of delays, the school opened for students in the fall of 1912. There was housing for 125 students, about half what had been projected by the planners, but only 40 enrolled (“Lincoln” 1). The October 1912 newsletter, *The Lincoln Worker*, reported that “All departments are at work. There are strong classes in Agriculture, Carpentry, Engineering, Domestic Science, beside the regular academic work” (2) on a campus that consisted of 450 acres of land, fifteen buildings, and total property amounting to \$475,000.00, thus consecrated to a great cause” (2). On the day of dedication, representatives from Fisk, Knoxville College and Hampton either were present or sent greetings, and someone was present from Berea College although the *Worker* publication did not provide a name (2). The company that Lincoln Institute kept, and the size of the physical plant, suggested that indeed the beginnings of a significant school for blacks had been achieved. The attendance of only 40 students, however, meant that that the offerings at Lincoln Institute were not well received amongst the population it was intended to serve.

The courses of study were few but consistent for many years after the opening. The 1912 prospectus for the school promised that “Courses of study will be offered in the

Grades from the fifth to the eighth, and in full Normal training. This Normal course will include the work ordinarily given in a High School course” (“Prospectus” 4-5). The additional classes in Agriculture, Carpentry and Domestic Science were included in the Prospectus, but Engineering wasn't described in the *Worker* newsletter of October 1912 when the school opened. Additional classes in Music were promised in the Prospectus, along with Blacksmithing, Horticulture, and Dairying, although those also did not appear in the newsletter. Studies began at the fifth grade, but students could not be younger than 15 years (6) and attendance for students, who were required to reside on campus, including room, board, course fees, and book costs, was \$103-\$106 for one full year, or thirty weeks of instruction (11). These costs were similar to those charged by Berea before the Day Law.

Since Lincoln Institute was modeled after Tuskegee, and that claim was made in much of the Institute's literature, how do the two compare? Tuskegee was located close to the town center in Tuskegee, Alabama, which “was still a country village at the turn of the century” (Denton 93) and the small town's population of 2,000 people was evenly divided between blacks and whites (94). Tuskegee was not a high school. Its unique model was adult education (87-88). “The majority of Tuskegee's first thirty students were public-school teachers from Macon County, some nearly forty years old. With them came some of their students, who often were placed in higher levels of achievement than the teachers” (96). This model of education did not match Lincoln Institute; Although the youngest age accepted at Lincoln was 15, the literature of the school emphasized that it was a safe place for black citizens to send their “sons and daughters” -- not to come themselves. The very nature of a boarding school limited course work to those who were free enough of obligations to live entirely on campus. Further, the letterhead for the

school announced “The Lincoln Institute of Kentucky (for colored youth).” Tuskegee maintained an all-black staff and administration to show that blacks “could teach and administer effectively their own educational programs” (97). Lincoln Institute's staff and administration were interracial, in keeping with the spirit of Berea College, but a white man was in charge, and his title was not “president” but “principal.” Lincoln Institute did not have a black principal until 1935 when Whitney M. Young became both the first and last black principal of Lincoln. Lincoln became a public school in 1947 and then closed in 1965 after integrated schools siphoned off its students (“Interracial Education”).

The 1916 U.S. Bureau of Education report on Negro Education stated that “the majority of the public high schools are in the border States of the South. Over half of them are in Texas, Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia; 11 are in Oklahoma and Virginia. Florida has 2; South Carolina, Mississippi, Georgia and Delaware have 1 each; and North Carolina and Louisiana have no public high schools for Negroes” (U.S. Bureau of Education 16). The report noted that there were 17 private educational institutions in Kentucky, but that “only 6 play any important part in the educational activities of the state” (261). Further, those private institutions did not include any college opportunities: “It is important to note that less than one-tenth of the pupils are of secondary grade and none are in college classes” (261). The state provided relatively numerous public schools, and nine offered four-year secondary programs while an additional two had three-year courses, and the 10-15 others enrolled only a few students doing work above elementary. Interestingly, “the courses of study of most of these schools follow closely the college preparatory or classical type. Practically all of them make Latin the central subject” (263). Slightly over a thousand students were enrolled in public high schools, and under 200 were in private facilities (263). Trained teachers were acknowledged in

this U.S. report to be the most pressing need, but only the Kentucky Industrial and Normal Institute and three private schools provided this training and, even at that, none of these schools specialized in teacher training (263). The numbers were very small as well: “The graduating classes of these schools in 1913-1914 aggregated only 35” (263).

Lincoln was not classified as a teacher-training facility. While the report noted that Lincoln Institute was “genuinely interested in rural problems and is organizing its agricultural activities on the basis of rural requirements” (263), it also classified Lincoln as a well-managed high school. As the report shows, quite a few high schools were available throughout the state. While no form of education for black citizens was plentiful, many Kentucky high schools for blacks were public, without the tuition fees or boarding requirements of a private school. Lincoln Institute, the report noted, although intended for a minimum age of 15, also “cooperates with [Shelby] county in providing an elementary school on its campus” (274). The report recommended that the Institute strengthen its offerings in farming and teacher training (274) and concluded that Lincoln Institute's “normal” course was equivalent to a three-year secondary course of study with an emphasis on “development of character” (274).

Louisville schools in nearby Jefferson County were noted in the U.S. report to be above average, with teacher and industrial training available (272). Lincoln Institute was located only 25 miles to the east of Louisville. The Louisville Colored Normal School offered “two years work above secondary grade” (272). Baptist State University was also located in Louisville and offered some slight work in some college subjects (273). The girls' dormitory at Baptist State “was erected by the colored women of Kentucky at a cost of \$25,000” (273). Clearly there was local desire for college facilities and college work that Lincoln Institute did not offer.

Lincoln Institute was a good quality secondary boarding school for young black students for over thirty years. However, its educational offerings were unremarkable, and the philosophy of the school emphasized vocational pursuits, with some normal training, and a strong moral center. The Lincoln Foundation that was established in 1910 to manage the assets still exists, and the website for the organization contains a brief history of the Institute that clings to the promises made by Berea College: “The educational philosophy of the Lincoln Institute centered on the need for adequate leadership of African-Americans in both schools and churches. While vocational education was stressed – Lincoln offered the first course of study in maintenance engineering while cultural values were also emphasized” (“Welcome”).

### **Conclusion**

Brandt argues that “African Americans have rarely seen their literacy development figured into the needs of the nation – except in periods of temporary crisis” (Brandt, *Literacy* 105). The social upheavals in the aftermath of the Civil War that culminated in post-reconstruction Jim Crow laws sweeping the South was one such crisis. For 38 years, Berea College responded to the crisis by sponsoring education to “all persons of good moral character” that would promote “assimilating the values and manners of one class to those of the others” (Graff, “Nineteenth” 224). Washington and Du Bois, along with other black leaders, were promoting education designed to increase economic stability (industrial education) and improve leadership (liberal arts), and Berea College had offered education to black citizens from elementary grades through graduate degrees that accomplished both goals. As the nation moved toward segregation, and sponsorship of black education shifted to emphasize predominantly industrial education,

Berea College was legally barred from enrolling black students. The Day Law required separate facilities for any public or private education of black and white students. Berea College and its trustees, with the support of alumni and northern white philanthropists, planned and executed a black school for those who could no longer attend Berea. By its opening date of 1912, however, the gift of Lincoln Institute, with its promise of leadership training, \$400,000 of endowment, new buildings, and white principal, was unwrapped to reveal nothing more than a high school education. Adequate leadership such as that championed by Du Bois was certainly not best achieved by a high school education. Promises of additional education through adding a college department at Lincoln or funding coursework at black colleges such as Fisk were never realized. Finally, although Lincoln Institute was advertised as a vocational and industrial school, such as that supported by Washington, it offered minimal training in trades and did not approach the breadth of manual training offered at Hampton or Tuskegee. Because neither a college education nor adequate industrial training were offered at Lincoln Institute, institutional sponsorship for black students in Kentucky became limited to a maximum of teacher training, unless they chose to leave the state.

## CHAPTER III

### COMMUNITY

The teachers in these institutions came not to keep the Negroes in their place, but to raise them out of the defilement of the places where slavery had wallowed them. The colleges they founded were social settlements; homes where the best of the sons of the freedmen came in close and sympathetic touch with the best traditions of New England. They lived and ate together, studied and worked, hoped and harkened in the dawning light. In actual formal content their curriculum was doubtless old-fashioned, but in educational power it was supreme, for it was the contact of living souls (Du Bois 132).

#### **Royster and Cobb on Community**

Educational systems have legacies – histories – of change. Histories of social, political and cultural changes usually focus upon the most visible voices and become, as Royster says, the “official narratives.” These slices are taken to represent the larger wholes, while other voices are muted and, in some cases, disappear from our histories altogether. Royster and Williams argue that these “inadequate images continue to prevail and actually become increasingly resilient in supporting the mythologies and negative consequences for African American students and faculty, and also for their culturally defined scholarly interests, which in their own turn must inevitably push also against prime narratives” (582). This research specifically challenges the prime narratives that tend to overlook the successful Berea College integrative experiment, and emphasizes particular examples of both the success of that experiment and the resulting invisibility of the population most affected by its ending.

A challenge in the area of race recovery work is that archival materials are often thin, overlooked, or poorly catalogued. Alternative viewpoints are rarely found in the dominant narrative, and therefore scholars have to read what is not being said: the muted voices. Where there are better records, the work progresses reliably, such as the 1980s major recovery of nineteenth-century black women authors. These voices struggled to be heard in their time, were successful, but were then left out of the official slice of the dominantly male, white majority viewpoint. Even with good records, then, alternative viewpoints get subsumed, and that loss contributes to an incomplete understanding of black voices during the nineteenth century, when major political, social and cultural changes were occurring that still affect higher education today. Where the status quo took away voices before they were even formed, those records can be the hardest to recover. Because higher education for blacks was difficult to find at the turn of the last century, given the lack of adequate preparation and facilities, recovering the voices of black college students is elusive work.

Royster and Williams point out that “the 19th century rather than the 20th century is a good place to begin” to find “African American students as active participants in higher education” (572). That understanding can directly inform theories of continued problems with the “color line” (Du Bois 54) still statistically significant in education today. As Carter Woodson pointed out and Royster emphasizes, black Americans are often overlooked historically as active participants in their own education, as successful in education. They are often considered academic outsiders because their own histories are not fully enmeshed within the dominant ones. In a call to action, Royster and Williams argue that “resisting these [official] narratives invites a search for better interpretive frames and different methodologies that will account more richly for the



participation of historically suppressed groups” (582).

Native Americans, like black Americans, are a historically suppressed group, and Amanda Cobb worked to record the narratives of a Native American population who struggled to balance literacy acquisition designed for acculturation with their community's need to acquire the skills of the dominant culture in order to survive. In *Listening to our Grandmother's Stories*, Cobb examined the varied sponsors involved in Bloomfield Academy, a Chickasaw school operating between 1852 and 1949. She points out that “[l]iteracy is a question of value and a question of purpose. Missionaries valued religious literacy for conversion, Chickasaws valued social literacy for competitive success and survival, and federal government officials valued domestic literacy for home living” (Cobb 120). Similar conflicts were present in acquisition of literacy within black populations. Neither Native American nor black students were taught the history of their own cultures, and a major goal of education of such populations was to fit them for their limited role in the social and economic structure of the country, and to inculcate white culture into the other culture's ways of thinking and being. “Literacy has always and everywhere been the center of the education enterprise. No matter what else it expects of its schools, a culture insists that students learn to read, write, and speak in the officially sanctioned manner” (Berlin, 1). Despite this conflict, Native Americans saw education as a “weapon,” useful to “their ability to negotiate in a white world” (120), and the same is true of blacks seeking education. Slavery and oppression created a value for education in black culture that superseded limitations intended by its sponsors. Similar to the nation's treatment of black Americans, schools for Native Americans were intended to assimilate the students into mainstream culture, although in actuality the result was segregation. “Ironically, the government got the students ready for the mainstream by making sure that

they associated with no one but other Indians for the whole of their formative years” (121). While the segregationist laws of the South overtly required segregation of blacks away from whites, the results were similar. In Cobb's study, she found that the segregation strengthened community amongst students; these students formed bonds that added to their family structures rather than diminished them. Cobb's interviewees reported that their fellow students at the boarding schools were more like siblings than friends, because they spent their formative years together (121-122).

The level of schooling at the Chickasaw school remained somewhat constant. It was a type of finishing school for girls, and remained so despite changes in sponsorship and curriculum. “Literacy is interesting: although it is something one individual teaches another, its legacy affects many” (119). The legacy of the finishing school education received by Cobb's population spanned generations. One of the constant goals of educational facilities is a lasting legacy – to effect change in the population of its students. Berea College's legacy had a generational legacy of education in the tradition of the white dominant culture, increased prosperity, and social inclusiveness within the community – a legacy of social equality that ran directly against the national and regional grain. Berea's community was the opposite of Cobb's isolated school, because it included the school, the town, and generations of families living nearby. It drew on the strength of the community to overcome prejudice. The design of Lincoln Institute, however, was a closer approximation to the Chickasaw school: they both were boarding schools that limited education to a high school level, and also focused on life skills and vocational pursuits. Although at Lincoln Institute, education was offered in the guise of similarity to Berea College's legacy, at Bloomfield Academy “the desire for Indian students to learn the appropriate social skills, conventions, and ideologies was hardly hidden” (13). Cobb

argues that these “related skills” – while not directly related to literacy acquisition – must be included within the definition of literacy because they were at least as important to the sponsors of education as the literacy itself (14).

The students in both schools, along with their families, sought the tools of the dominant culture for their own survival, their own purposes, and not necessarily to apply those skills in the service of the white culture. Cobb points out that conflicting purposes of literacy directly affect “the curriculum and pedagogies of schools, which are important, formal sites of literacy instruction” (11). These conflicting purposes force communities to adapt and change to continue to acquire skills that will benefit their community. Cobb's Chickasaw community was small in numbers and geographically isolated – more easily defined as a community than black citizens of Kentucky, or the black population nationally. Nevertheless, segregation defined both communities distinctly, by limiting where, when and by whom they could be educated, and for what purposes. “Schools have historically been used as places to effect change in large groups of people” (11), and the change intended by sponsors of education for these two groups was a quiet assimilation into the mainstream culture in ways that would maintain the status quo. Black citizens had developed a cultural value of literacy because of racial oppression and sought education as a means to control their futures, much as Cobb's population saw literacy as necessary to their survival as a culture. “Education not only transmits values, traditions, and ideals; education, literacy, is a value, a tradition, and is always tied to an ideal – we believe in education because of what we hope it will bring us. Consequently, seeking education is one of the most positive, hopeful actions an individual can perform” (119-120).

## **Berea College Community**

The overt controversies of segregation of and education for African Americans, and the very public debates and positioning of W. E. B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington, cause enough historical noise so that at least the broad facts are commonly in the dominant narrative. Less known, and less considered, however, is the effect of the social and political policies that kept people separated by the color of their skin. A natural result of the segregative policies was a segregation of community as well. From the beginning of the founders' planning of Berea College, the planning was also for the community that surrounded the college.

Berea College was “a successful educational experiment unlike any other in America,” featuring 250 students of both genders and races in the 1870s. Half of the faculty was female (though, significantly, almost all of them taught in the primary school), and two were black (one male, one female). The College boasted an impressive endowment for the time, topping \$100,000 (Lucas 8). Berea College had rigorous standards for academics, and was not a “vocational” school, aimed to create employable and skilled black Americans, but an institution that offered undergraduate and graduate levels of education. These high standards were maintained even though many students had difficulty paying for their education. To assist with these financial difficulties, and to emphasize values of service and labor, Berea College’s labor program was created. Lucas's primary focus was not the students’ academic lives, but the social life at the College, particularly race and gender relations. Social interactions were “remarkably active, open, equal, and integrated” (8) at Berea, with a few exceptions. These exceptions included interracial dating (which incited scandal), and socialization between males and females. Aside from these exceptions, Berea students interacted on a fairly equal basis.

Sports teams, clubs, and musical groups were all interracial. Students also mingled during political events. They campaigned repeatedly, alongside their faculty, for the Republican Party. Lucas explains that the “faculty wanted to see all students excel, intellectually and religiously” (22).

The community of Berea was created with purpose. As explained in Chapter 1, after the war, when John G. Fee returned to Berea to reestablish the school, black and white families both arrived to settle and send their children to school. Berea College Trustees and other white supporters were able to implement Fee's community plan of parceling out land to these families from the acreage the College had purchased before the Civil War in the 1860s and 1870s. Therefore, some portions of the township of Berea, as well as nearby farms in an area called Berea Ridge, were planned out and sold in integrated lots so that white and black families shared at least one boundary. Not only did Fee's supporters sell land to blacks and whites who would otherwise have been unlikely to afford the purchase price, they also helped negotiate the legal process of the purchase and continued to assist these populations (Burnside 95-96; Sears 80-81). “Most slaves were unfamiliar with business practices. What experience had they had, after all, in buying land? The Bereans not only sold to them, but helped them conduct their affairs until they could stand on their own” (Sears 80). Only in a very few instances did these whites sell to blacks and then leave the community. In contrast with common practices across the South, the Berean whites “sold portions of their holdings to black people, who then became their neighbors” (81). This policy remained common amongst supporters of Fee for as long as the College remained integrated, nearly 50 years (82).

Burns points out in her dissertation, a sociological study of this era of Berea, that Fee's policy of interspersing between and education among the races resulted in an

unusual degree of economic stability and success among blacks in the area (Burnside 237-238). Du Bois, while recounting his study of a county in Georgia, acknowledged that black land ownership, while respectable in itself, was not what it would have been “[i]f they had been given an economic start at Emancipation, if they had been in an enlightened and rich community which really desired their best good” (Du Bois 185). Berea was that enlightened community, for a while. However, Burns argues that the unusual level of social and economic achievements among Berean blacks was one of the causes for the 1904 law aimed particularly at the College. Not only was Berea College educating blacks equally with whites, but the social policies at work within the community meant that the education could be applied outside the confines of the College. Due to the success of the Berea experiment, Burns argues that “[b]y the turn of the century . . . the economic prosperity of Berea's early black settlers posed a strong contrast to the poverty of the latecomers, many of whom were white” (Burnside 237-238).

### **The Hathaway Controversy: 1892-93**

Berea College had two black teachers on its faculty, though not at the same time. When Frost arrived, James Hathaway had been teaching college courses for eight years, having graduated from Berea's classical course in 1884, with honors. Born in 1854, Hathaway began life as a slave in nearby Mt. Sterling. Upon his graduation, President Fairchild employed Hathaway “as a tutor in Latin and mathematics, and Hathaway served Berea for nine years. In these remarkable days of Fairchild's administration, Berea proved that black teachers were as welcome as black students” (Wilson 36). Controversy arose about Hathaway's qualifications for promotion to a professorship after Frost became president in 1892 and, amid the controversy, Hathaway accepted a professor

position at the Kentucky State Normal School in 1893 (“Hathaway Case”). Frost was accused of failing to promote a qualified black man into the position of professor at Berea College. An 1894 newspaper article signed by J.C. and J.H. Jackson, two black trustees of Berea College, claimed that the trustees had “as a body” voted for a black professor, but that Frost stood in the way. They argued that “[s]o long as the faculty defer to President Frost in this matter we do not believe the colored students at Berea will receive just representation and proper recognition by the appointment of a colored professor” (“An Answer”). However, by late 1894, J.H. Jackson was appointed professor of pedagogy and Frost announced it in the newspaper in an article entitled “An Answer Made”: “We do all rejoice in the appointment of John H. Jackson as Professor of Pedagogics – a position for which he is eminently fitted – although he can only spare a portion of his time from Frankfort. We need his lectures, we love the man and his appointment is in line with our plans and wishes” (Frost, “An Answer Made”). J. H. Jackson served for one year and was the last black appointed to such a position at Berea College before the Day Law made any such appointments impossible.

The newspaper article by Frost, “An Answer Made,” is part of a newspaper exchange of accusations and responses concerning Frost's policies at Berea College. J.T. Robinson, a black Berea College alumnus and staff writer for *The Lexington Standard*, wrote several articles about Frost's disenfranchisement of blacks at Berea College. In response, President Frost defended his actions. Robinson had been vocal about social equality on Berea's campus in 1877, when he wrote to Fee to complain of interracial dating restrictions (Burnside 121) and had been within the cohort of Berea students who experienced Fee's and Fairchild's leadership. Fee, Fairchild, and Stewart (through his brief, two-year presidency) held similar radical abolitionist views and their policies

reflected those views, but Frost had different solutions in mind. The caustic newspaper exchange in *The Lexington Standard* made those differences clear. *The Standard* was a black newspaper published from 1892-1912, edited by R.C.O. Benjamin (“About”), a wealthy black naturalized American citizen who was shot in the back and killed in 1900, allegedly in relation to protesting harassment of blacks registering to vote (“Notable”). Records of its ten years of publications, like most other black newspapers, were not preserved, and the articles included here are fragile clippings housed in Special Collections and Archives of Berea College.

J.T. Robinson wrote an article for *The Standard* that questioned the “mystery” of the College's failure to promote Hathaway and claimed that Hathaway was “a victim of prejudice” (Robinson, “His Alma Mater”). Frost responded and defended his decision not to promote Hathaway. He used the newspaper article to clarify his position about black professors generally: “Again, not many men of any race are born to be professors. A college professor ought to be the descendant of generations of culture. We have not yet found a son of a poor white family who was the fittest man to be made a professor! This does not mean that such may not be great and useful men, but that professional timber [sic] is rare. The colored race will produce orators, statements, inventors and authors long before it will produce men qualified for the higher work of education” (Frost, “An Answer Made”). Given this standard, Frost made it clear that, regardless of Hathaway's qualifications, if he were not descended from at least two previous “generations of culture,” he would not be eligible for appointment as a Berea College professor. While previous presidents of Berea College had held to high academic standards for both students and faculty, Frost wanted to emulate northern colleges in particular ways: “The qualifications of our teachers at Berea must be much greater than at any other Southern



school, for Berea competes with the North (“An Answer Made”). Most superior northern colleges and universities allowed a small number of black students to matriculate, but none employed black faculty to teach white students. Even William S. Scarborough, who wrote the introductory Greek textbook in use at Yale, taught at Wilberforce, a black institution in Ohio.

In his defense of the Hathaway controversy, Frost attempted to soften his position on black scholarly achievement by saying that

It will not satisfy us to appoint a colored person to some inferior position here. We cannot be content until we have colored professors and perhaps a colored president. But it is no reflection upon the colored race to say that it has, at present, very few men qualified for these positions. The demand for teachers in common schools is so great that our young men do not fit themselves for professorships. We have never had one colored graduate who has taken non-professional post-graduate studies (“An Answer Made”).

Frost's requirements do not match. No amount of post-graduate work adds generations of scholars to any student's background, so it seems pointless to complain that no black student pursued an education beyond Berea's offerings. It is true, however, that black teachers and scholars were both in short supply and needed in educational facilities across the nation, and also that Berea's college degree program favorably compared with northern institutions. Frost's contradictory position is further undermined by a glance into the future when, in 1926, the principal and trustees of Lincoln Institute were still holding to the same message: Black scholars were still not ready to be appointed to be principal of Lincoln Institute (discussed later in this chapter). With the bulk of the black population coming so recently from slavery, Frost's criteria for “generations of culture” seems designed to obstruct, or at least significantly delay, equal achievement, if not opportunity.

While it is probably not possible at this historical remove to independently

determine Hathaway's suitability for appointment to a professorship at Berea College, because Hathaway later became president of Kentucky State Institute for Negroes in Frankfort, it is logical to assume that he very possibly was qualified. Also, Frost's policies provide compelling evidence that he was at least intent on changing the way Berea College had been conducting affairs, both social and educational, between blacks and whites. In a community that had become accustomed to John G. Fee's policies of absolute equality, and where several decades of educated, successful black families had become well established, Frost's changes were significant cause for alarm.

### **Frostism: Policy Changes at Berea College**

William Goodell Frost became president of Berea College in 1892. By October 1893, Robinson's newspaper article "His Alma Mater" had appeared in *The Lexington Standard* raising questions that went far beyond the Hathaway question. J.T. Robinson challenged policy changes of the college that privileged whites. He complained that Frost recruited white students by promising that they would not have to have social contact with blacks on campus. Robinson asked "Why is so much importance attached to so trivial a matter? Is it to allay fears that too amicable relations may exist? Do the rules forbid such and where [is] the authority for such a rule, or is the prejudice so great that no such relation is possible?" (Robinson, "His Alma Mater") Robinson offered his recollection of his own experiences as a student on Berea's campus as a comparison: "When we left Berea I could name at least fifteen young men, white and colored, who were chums, and often passed a night in each others rooms, a few roomed together. There were a few girls on like terms" ("His Alma Mater").

On Dec. 7, 1894, *The Standard* published an article by Robinson entitled "A

Killing Frost” wherein Robinson claimed that “[t]he colored people of Kentucky have as great grievance at the hands of President Frost and Frostism as they have at the hands of advocates of 'Separate Coach Laws.' The principle underlying both is one and the same, namely subordination” (Robinson, “A Killing Frost”). Robinson pointed out that “it is a sad commentary upon Berea College that it is necessary to demand that the colored people have equal recognition and representation in that college, but that necessity is forced upon them by the open and shameful disregard of their rights by the head of the college, with an evident purpose to set them out” (“A Killing Frost”). Robinson also calls Frost to task for claiming that the poor mountain whites are of superior Anglo-Saxon stock who have been brought low by the institution of slavery. Robinson points out that such an attitude “would only increase the strain and magnify the importance of poor whites” (“A Killing Frost”), creating additional strife in the relations between blacks and whites being educated at Berea College together (“A Killing Frost”).

One of the most significant changes Frost made early in his career was his recruiting of students. From early in Berea's history blacks and whites had been present in very nearly equal numbers, but Frost focused his efforts on increasing the numbers of white students particularly. He said, “When I came there was reason for special efforts to secure white students. Berea's position as a mixed school was imperiled. For years there had been no white students in Howard Hall, and the whole number of whites from outside of Berea was decreasing. All this has now been remedied” (Frost, “An Answer Made”). Further, he explained, “In order to secure white students it was necessary to correct many false impressions – as, that we compelled white and colored students to room together; and that the school existed primarily for the colored and not for both races alike. Berea has never required white students to associate with colored against their

will, and no right minded colored person desires it to do so. The greatest thing which Berea can do is to gather white students who are prejudiced and help them drop that prejudice. This is being done in countless instances” (Frost, “An Answer Made”).

Robinson had argued that Frost's policies were increasing prejudice, such as when Frost praised the white mountaineers as being of good Anglo-Saxon stock and publicly stated that students of different races were not compelled to room together. Being compelled versus encouraged are very different notions. Robinson recites instances where friendships between the races resulted in cohabitation. Those friendships were encouraged by the community of the college. Robinson's complaint was that those friendships had been discouraged with the new policies and that, because of prejudice, the relations between the races faltered without the support of the Berean community. Robinson said that “There were always a few prejudiced students, but they received no encouragement, and fell in, to the extent of polite demeanor at least. That is all any man can demand of an other” (Robinson, “His Alma Mater”). As the number of white students grew, so did the number of prejudiced students, and difficulties that had been held in check by equal numbers of black to white were now overpowered by the greater number of white students. The experiment at Berea College was radical for both races and, without strong guidance, could not hope to overcome national resistance to social equality between the races.

Frost's vision for Berea College was very different from Robinson's experiences. Frost's definition of doing good work was defined in a less action-oriented, more passive, scenario: “Some of our colored students are accomplishing perhaps as great a work for their people as they will ever be privileged to accomplish in simply doing each day's studies well, moving among their fellows with unostentatious self-respect, and

*demonstrating* to the world that a Negro can be a gentleman and a scholar” (Frost, “An Answer Made”). Frost argued that the change in ratios between the races was proof of reduced prejudice, as white families had needed significant encouragement to send their youth to be educated on an equal basis with blacks, but now were more willing: “For a time many white people refrained from sending their children on this account, but this prejudice is wearing away and the proportion of white students is naturally increasing” (Frost, “Berea College”). This claim seems in defiance of both Frost's relentless pursuit of white students both in the North and in the Appalachian mountains and of the increasing signs of racial unrest on the campus.

These 1893-1894 articles represent early vocal resistance to Frost's policy changes. Black families who had moved to Berea for its positive interracial relations now saw that community changing rapidly. Frost's policy changes follow the examples set by northern universities and his alma mater, Oberlin: that good schools admitted a small percentage of black students to the same quality education as whites, but kept the numbers of black students nowhere near the larger numbers of white ones. This policy, speedily enacted at Berea College by President Frost, created a community where white students significantly outnumbered black ones. However, the social equality tradition at Berea College included black students in all activities on campus, including teaching positions, which the newly arrived white students found difficult to accept. The influx of white students were unfamiliar with the unique nature of Berea and, as the greater numbers of white students caused them to feel that Berea College was dominantly a white school, conflicts increased. Robinson lamented that there was no longer strong community support to overcome unavoidable prejudice between the races. In this changed community, now dominated by white students, the 1898 petition reprinted below

explains the changes that white students wanted in order to reduce the stigma they suffered from attending a school where whites were equal, not superior, to black students.

To the faculty

We, the undersigned do hereby petition the Faculty of Berea College, in regard to having Negro teachers in the Model Schools.

We would love to have all such teachers removed at once. We do not have any prejudice toward any such teachers but we do not want our friends and relation in these schools to be taught and trained by the colored race.

Then we do not want to go back to our homes and tell that we had Negro teachers in Berea College. This would cause us to suffer much ridicule and also would injure the school.

Therefore we earnestly and sincerely hope our petition will meet you with favor (“To the Faculty”).

Signed by twenty-three students, this petition was part of a general movement to remove black students and staff from positions of authority over white students at all levels.

Berea's Model School was the elementary school course at Berea College that provided supervised practice for students in the teacher training course (Wilson 91). One of Berea College's main successes had been in the impact their graduates had on schools in Kentucky. By 1904, when the Day Law was passed, Berea graduates were teaching in twenty-five Kentucky counties (Burnside 274, n. 57).

To whom did Berea College belong? The white students seemed willing to share classroom space with black students, but did not want to be taught by non-white teachers. Increased segregation on the campus, and decreased numbers of black students, alarmed black Berean alumni because the changes pointed to the loss of the only such educational opportunity available to them. An undated newspaper clipping, estimated to fall after the Hathaway controversy but before the Day law, represents the concerns of the Kentucky Colored Teachers' Association: “. . . we consider Berea College our heritage – a gift to us

in part at least from the philanthropic people of the nation. . . . we consider the course pursued and the methods adopted in the conduct of this institution for the past few years, as being unfriendly to our interests” (“Resolutions”). This article argues for increased quality of education for black youth across Kentucky, and requests a law to standardize licensing for teachers in black schools, increase education in agriculture for rural districts, and provide a uniform course of study in the first year at the institutions for adult learning in the state. “We request the faculty and trustees of the State Normal School, Berea College, State University, and Eckstein Norton University to make the first year of their normal course uniform at least as to subjects and text-books taught; and that our city and village schools, as far as practicable, include the first year's course of these instructions in their course of study” (“Resolutions”). The final paragraph addresses state-wide changes that would increasingly separate black students from their white counterparts: “We are opposed to the formation of all special curricula for colored children such as proposed by the Southern Teacher's Association; we insist upon the same curricula for colored children as for white children in the state schools” (“Resolutions”).

Berea College alumni, many of whom were teachers engaged in the difficult task of providing education where none had been before, were concerned that the changes at the college and in educational provisions for black students was setting lower standards and therefore limiting opportunities for black youth and adults in Kentucky. Their request, like the policies of Berea College from its inception, was for equal education and, therefore, an equal chance to improve themselves.

### **The Day Law: Segregation of Communities**

Following these changes within Berea College, in 1904 Kentucky's legislature

issued a legal challenge to Berea's experiment and ended integrated educational opportunities for black and white students. After the passage of the Day Law, not only did the College have to adapt to the required changes, the community was divided as well. Rhetoric from Frost shifted from placatory and explanatory and began to focus on the forward momentum needed for the College to change. In February 1904, the same month when the Day Law was passed, President Frost delivered a sermon that was reprinted in Berea's newspaper, *The Citizen*, in the following month. His message to the whites was one of tolerance, but the phrases are uncomfortably mixed with a future that promised inequality for the black community, as a whole, for a long time to come. Frost's sermon acknowledges that Berea was "especially established for the benefit of those who had suffered by reason of the institute of human slavery . . ." (Frost, "Remember" 2), but he includes in that description both those who were actually enslaved and those who were the enslavers. Frost argued that these sufferers (both black and white) should be remembered with brotherly interest (2). In explanation for the Day Law, Frost argued that many white people's minds were still in the mode of slavery and that it takes time to recover from such a mindset (2). He does not mention Berea College's past successes, such as those recounted by Robinson, of erasing or at least reducing those mindsets; rather, Frost congratulates southerners on being rather reasonable in their behavior since "their slaves were taken from them" (2). This phrasing distances Frost from traditional abolitionist views of the slaveholding past. He argues that many are still bound by the sin of "pride" that came naturally from being a slaveholding race as well as "blindness" -- an inability to see the "human capacity" of the black (2-3). Seeing the human capacity is very different from acknowledging a capacity for equality. Additionally, Frost identified "intolerance" as a third sin. Intolerance, for Frost, seemed to equate to prejudice, because



he argued that the combination of being in charge and unable to see human capacity meant that these men would listen to no other point of view than their own and could not manage change (3). Change was what Frost had been promoting since he became president of Berea College, and he had consistently spoken about the importance of reducing prejudice. However, the particular change forced upon him and the College by the state law was not in line with his intentions to keep a small percentage of black students in emulation of the northern institutions. The Day Law allowed no opportunity for the Berea community to continue to work against prejudice through educational means.

Shifting his sermon to the topic of black men, and radically departing from the traditions of Berea College founders, Frost claimed that “the black man was benefited by slavery” (4) because he was introduced to civilization, including religion and industry (4). Frost said that blacks, as a people, suffered from “ignorance, shiftlessness and vice” (4) which resulted from slavery and now contained a “large criminal element” (4). In this time of widespread violence against blacks, Frost's rhetoric comes very close to approving that violence when he says, “For one thing we may be thankful. The South is giving the Negro good prison discipline. If he commits a crime, he is practically sure to be arrested, (if he is not lynched), sure to be convicted, and sure not to be pardoned. And in the penitentiary he is taught to work. If this discipline continues it will in time make the Negro a superior race” (4). Frost's position is far removed from the egalitarian assistance provided by John G. Fee and his supporters when they both sold land to and assisted in the economic education of blacks and whites equally in order to encourage a healthy integrated community. Frost's sermon reflected a much harsher future over which the black man had little, if any, control. Despite the fact that Berea College had been

founded specifically to resist and defy caste-prejudice, Frost publicly withdrew from that position when he announced that such prejudice was a large stigma of slavery that the black man cannot do anything about (4).

Further distancing himself and the College from the work that had been done toward social equality of the races, Frost explained in his sermon that white people think blacks want social equality (and he equated social equality with intermarriage), but that “the white race does not desire it, and the colored race does not desire it” (5). He argues directly to members of his black audience that caste-prejudice “hurts you far less than it hurts the white man” (6). Frost's public positioning of the College in the aftermath of the Day Law's passage established expectations for the future that no longer addressed the radical viewpoints of the founders. Although Berea College challenged the Day Law over the next four years until it was affirmed by the highest court in the land, Frost's sermon gave notice that the days of equality had ended, regardless of the law.

A few years later, in 1907, before the Day Law was affirmed by the Supreme Court, Frost was invited to Harvard's commencement for an honorary degree (*For the Mountains* 181), and also attended a gathering in Boston of university leaders. An article in the *Boston Herald* reported this meeting and provided insight on Berea College's regional difficulties from the northern institutions that Frost had wanted to emulate. On the topic of Berea's enforced segregation, Harvard University's president, Charles W. Eliot, was quoted as stating that “If more than half the students in Harvard College were negroes, perhaps we should think of separating the majority from the minority. There are now twenty, perhaps thirty, negro students at Harvard, but they are absolutely lost in the mass of the five thousand whites, and they have no influence of any sort for evil on the mass of the whites” (“Eliot”). Harvard's president was most concerned with the impact

of blacks on whites, and referred to sexual distrust between the races, a common fear. He was further quoted as saying “There is a great deal to be said for separation in the South of the negroes from the whites, in the schools and colleges. In the two races living together it is vastly worse for the whites” (“Eliot”). Another speaker, Bishop William Lawrence, asserted his concerns about the problems associated with growing numbers of black citizens and said because Boston now had “twelve thousand negroes” that “the attitude of Boston was changing. Those negroes are shut out of trade and out of the Boston hotels and, yes, the Sunday schools in Boston. . . . I am speaking of the attitude of the negroes as a question of numbers” (“Eliot”). Frost was impressed by these northern leaders' interest in Berea College and recalled in his autobiography that how the College “had been characterized by the well chosen words of President Eliot . . . was indeed a help to Berea . . . through all his remaining years” (*For the Mountains* 181).

The Day Law went into effect in July 1904, and blacks had been barred from Berea's schools. Much of the rhetoric between 1904 and 1908 when the Day Law was affirmed, was focused on how Berea College would decide to continue its work with Kentucky black students. Berea had many black alumni, as well as those students who had been pursuing their education at Berea when the Day Law forced them to attend other schools. Only a decade before the Day Law, the College had had equal numbers of black and white students, therefore the black students wanted to know why the campus should be turned over to white students when it was, in fact, intended to be equally for both. The Kentucky Colored State Teacher's Association that had previously protested Frost's policy changes printed a pamphlet in 1907 entitled “President Frost's Betrayal.” The publication espoused the benefits of interracial education and argued that Frost's changes had violated the founding principles. This violation, the Association argued, is

what shifted the student ratio so strongly in favor of whites. Without that shift, Berea College should clearly be kept for the educational advantage of the black population, because white students had many more opportunities across the nation to meet their educational needs (“President Frost’s”).

The Colored Teacher's Association pointed out the larger impact of interracial education that had been practiced by Berea College: “Best of all, young men and women of both races were educated and sent forth into the world with higher and nobler conceptions of life, imbued with a desire to uplift in character, as well as in intellect . . . .” (“President Frost’s” 2). This was the result that John G. Fee worked so hard to achieve. When Frost came (the pamphlet recounted), change began with the Hathaway controversy, wherein Frost “told a member of the faculty that the color of his face kept away white students; and advised that member of the faculty to resign his position” (3). The incident with Hathaway had become a marker for many as the beginning of the end of social equality. But this pamphlet goes further than using better-known incidents to illustrate changes. It pointed out that subtle segregation changes were occurring within the community of the college, in the groups and societies that are so much a part of college life still today. The Association claimed that “when the literary societies of the institution which were composed of both races elected a colored graduate of the college to deliver their annual address . . . . President Frost refused outright to allow him to deliver it” (3-4). Further, administrative policies segregated the dining room and excluded blacks from campus sports and the brass band (4-5). These changes allowed Berea College to present an all-white face to the outside world, such as having all-white sports teams accepted into the Inter-Collegiate Athletic Association (4). These actions match Frost's public statements that he was repairing misconceptions about Berea so that more

white students would attend.

Further, the pamphlet explained that new buildings were established to house whites and their families, but that a new small house was constructed behind the main dormitory to remove the black women from Ladies Hall. The pamphlet reported that the black women refused to leave Ladies Hall for the new construction because it was “contrary to the original principles of the institution; that it was fostering caste” (4). In a further comment on the changing social life of the college, the pamphlet said that “colored ladies were not allowed to receive calls in the same room where white ladies received their calls” and there was a sense of unwelcome at college socials (5). These policies changed considerably more than the simple ratio of black to white students matriculating at Berea College. From administration to housing to socializing in free time, the community message delivered to Berea's black students was that they were consistently less valued than the white students. The smaller house built for the black women could have been, in all practicality, provided because of small numbers. But the concept of having separate buildings should never have come up if the community relationships built at the College were continuing on the path laid before Frost had come and, additionally, the small house out back chillingly replicates the master/slave pattern of living, a pattern that Berea College had been founded to change.

The Association's pamphlet claimed that these policies were part of the process that brought about the Day Law, and argued that the decision to keep Berea for the sole use of white students was based on student ratios that existed only as a result of Frost's “policy to have seven whites for one colored” (6-7, 10). The obvious argument, the Association stated, was that black students had nowhere else to go without traveling out of the state. It did not see the mountain people as neglected by other institutions:

Now, in the state of Kentucky there are a number of well equipped colleges all of which are open to the mountain whites and many have connected with them special training schools through the mountains, for the mountain whites. The colored people of the state have NOT ONE COLLEGE, but must send their children out of the state for college training. Their condition, in this respect is worse than that of the colored people in any of the southern states (10).

While the point of view is different from Frost's, and the intention of the argument was entirely opposite for the need of black educational facilities, the same claim was made by Frost and his supporters when the idea of Lincoln Institute was put forth. Frost knew that there was no college for black students and that Kentucky sorely needed such a school. However, the proposed replacement school that would be dedicated to black education, Lincoln Institute, was never designed to deliver college work. The Association realized this, and complained, "We feel that in the taking of Berea College from the colored people, they have been robbed of their birthright . . . . The Normal and Industrial School for which he claims to be raising funds, will not supply to the colored people the need of a college; for they have no college in the state" ("President Frost's" 10-11). The committee members listed at the end are A. W. Titus, Berea; Professor Frank L. Williams (alumnus), J.C. Jackson (former trustee of BC), Mary Britton (former student), all outspoken black citizens educated at Berea College, except for Titus, who was a close friend of John G. Fee's and active in the township's governance.

Both Frost and the Kentucky Colored Teacher's Association agreed that Kentucky needed educational facilities for its black citizens. What college opportunities existed in Kentucky for blacks at this time? In 1902, a few years after leaving Berea, Hathaway became president of Kentucky Industrial and Normal Institute for Negroes, later KSU. It offered essentially the same type of secondary education as Lincoln Institute, but also offered some liberal arts college courses. KSU's predecessor opened as a normal school

to train black teachers, became a land grant institution in 1890, and shifted to industrial education, while continuing to train teachers, in keeping with Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee philosophy (“Heritage”). The teachers and workers were all black (U.S. Bureau of Education 268), as were faculty and students at Tuskegee. Although Frost had said that Lincoln Institute was based on the same model, Tuskegee, Frost and the trustees installed a white principal for Lincoln Institute, and offered no course work above high school. Although KSU's predecessor struggled with poor funding, especially during the time frame when Lincoln Institute was being established, because it was initially established in 1886 its facilities were in reasonably good repair (269). The U.S. Bureau of Education 1917 report identified the Kentucky Industrial and Normal Institute to be mainly an elementary and secondary school, with an increased focus on developing college courses, an industrial program, and an enrollment of 400 students (267). Today, it is a respectable full university, if small, of just under 3000 students, 60% of whom are black (“Heritage”).

The Kentucky Colored Teacher's Association had the right of it. Lincoln Institute may have seemed to be of benefit to Kentucky's black population because Berea College monies were being dedicated to the task of creating an all-black institution, but the result was nothing like the co-educational, interracial college-level schooling previously available at Berea College and was not even equal to the limited education already available to blacks in Kentucky. Fundraising for the Institute was fraught with difficulties because previous supporters of Berea College had given money specifically for its interracial goals. A 1909 letter was sent from the Law Offices of Albert E. Pillsbury, Boston, politely refusing to donate funds for Lincoln Institute, exemplifies this problem:

12 April 1909 (c.4): To Henry M. Penniman, Financial Secretary, Berea College: I have your letter of April 7<sup>th</sup>. I appreciate and concur in all you say of President Frost, for whom I have the highest respect; but it was evident to me for some time before the recent Kentucky legislation and litigation that his heart was with the mountaineers and not with the negroes. I do not complain or criticise him for this, though I do not feel sure that the whole original funds of the College can lawfully or properly be held to the uses of a white school. However this may be, my interest in Berea was principally on account of its character as recognizing no distinction between the races. I feel some ancestral and other obligations to the negro which require me to bestow upon him what little I can spare for educational purposes in the south . . . . [but] I do not feel able to contribute anything to Berea, even to the new fund (Pillsbury).

For those who had supported Fee's "interspersal" experiment of blacks and whites within a community together and had heard of or experienced the success of that experiment, to receive news that Lincoln Institute was being established was bittersweet, at best, when it was to be in the style of Tuskegee. A 1908 flyer created for Lincoln Institute proudly proclaimed that the school would be "An educational headquarters for the colored people of the state. Berea will build a great College on the plan of Booker T. Washington's famous school" ("Educational"). Frost had claimed in advertisements for Lincoln Institute that it would "mark a new era for Kentucky" and he was right. The new era was one where communities of blacks and whites living and working together did not exist, at least for the next several decades.

The Day Law was affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1908, and Berea College solidified its plans to establish Lincoln Institute, an all-black school that would serve the population previously attending Berea. By 1909, some of the Berea College trustees were lobbying Kentucky citizens to help fund the new school (additional funding details are provided in Ch. 2). Donors and potential donors began to receive Lincoln Institute's newsletter: *The Lincoln Institute Worker* (hereinafter *LI Worker*). First published in March 1909, the newsletter kept the population informed about the progress



of the new school for three and a half years until it opened in October, 1912.

In his arguments supporting Lincoln Institute's role as an industrial and vocational school, Frost claimed that a college education for black people “is being provided for by Fisk and other schools which cost a great deal and are not yet full” (“Industrial” 4).

While, indeed, a college education was available at Fisk, by noting the cost Frost also acknowledged that Berea College took away two more crucial features of making higher education available to blacks. College programs were costly for institutions to support because the instructors had to have higher degrees. Additionally, students often paid more for such programs and Berea College's tuition, while not free at the time of segregation, was more affordable than others of equal or better quality, and also allowed students to work off a portion of their tuition. Preparation for the College was readily available after Berea College's trustees had voted in 1872 to waive tuition for all black children in Berea's district (“Minutes”). Soon after segregation, tuition at Berea College was free, as it remains today. There was no possible replacement for those ranks of students who could least afford and most needed higher education. Berea College today is nearly unique amongst colleges because it does not charge students for tuition, only room and board, and provides, free of charge to those who qualify, a private college higher education valued at \$85,000 over four years (“Financial”).

### **Lincoln Institute: Community**

The 1917 *United States Report on Negro Education* stated that the educational needs of a people included not only “the course of study, the training of the teachers, the vocational choice of the pupils, the condition of the school plant, [but also] the attitude of the white and colored people of the community toward the school, and the work of the

former students” (U.S. Bureau of Education 2). The report examined educational opportunities for blacks in the South and concluded, in part, that existing schools needed to improve their “neighborhood work” which “includes not only the efforts in the immediate neighborhood but in other communities to which the institution can extend its influence: Through these activities the school not only enlarges its field, but also gains a knowledge of actual conditions which enables it to adapt its curriculum to the needs of the pupils” (U.S. Bureau of Education 23). Frost and the trustees, along with Frost's advisor, A.D. Mayo, were aware of the importance of community and suggested that Lincoln Institute should be situated in a small town (“Professors” 7). The *LI Worker* reported this suggestion, but stated that the small-town factor had been set aside and an isolated community for the Institute had been selected: “These outlines are being followed except that we shall locate in the country, with our own station and post office” (“Professors” 7). Frost claimed that the location of LI was selected because of its central location to Kentucky's black population, but gave no other reason for dispensing with community.

The 1913 Kentucky Department of Education report listed 1450 rural black pupils in Madison County (where Berea College is located). By contrast, neighboring Rockcastle County held only 26, Shelby County, where Lincoln Institute was located, had 1199, and Jefferson County (twenty-two miles east of Lincoln) had 1399 (despite a much higher population) (Hamlett Appendix II 1-3). The numbers show that there were, to some extent, more black pupils near Louisville and, therefore, Lincoln Institute; however, the point of locating near larger numbers is moot because Lincoln Institute was limited to only those students who could reside on campus. The school was therefore unable to extend its work in its own neighborhood, as suggested by A.D. Mayo and the

governmental report, both because its facilities were located away from existing black communities but also because of white resistance to its location in Shelby County. The *LI Worker* newsletter acknowledged that expectations of this satellite Berea school could be expected to include a carefully planned community such as the one John G. Fee had produced around Berea College. However, the newsletter also established that such community was specifically excluded (“The Constitution” 2-3). Black Bereans, then, even if they desired to do so, could not relocate near Lincoln Institute. After Berea College closed to blacks, a new school for blacks had been promised. Now that the school had become a reality, its community was closed to blacks and so the black Berea population was left, once again, without the future they had planned for and settled near.

Attending Lincoln Institute cost money and many were not only unable to pay, but had little impetus to do so because the education offered was not so different from free public education. While elusive, when such public education could be obtained, it would allow families to live nearby. If monies could indeed be spared and people had to travel regardless, they could choose to attend a university or college that offered a wider variety of options than Lincoln Institute. Also, while Lincoln Institute's mixed faculty and staff were in keeping with Berea College's interracial policies, and the initial principal was white, the school had been advertised as a black school in the Tuskegee tradition. Tuskegee had an all-black administration. Black-run institutions were still very rare (with Tuskegee being a significant exception), and the general notion was that blacks could not run their own facilities.

A.E. Thomson remained president until 1927. When the trustees of Lincoln Institute met to formulate plans to search for a replacement, James Bond – a black graduate of Berea College, and integrally involved in Lincoln Institute from the

beginning -- suggested that a black president might be appropriate. The reaction of the trustees was such that he shortly found himself apologizing for being misunderstood. He explained in a letter, addressed to Dr. Thomson and sent by copy to all trustees, that he meant only that a black principal should be planned for in the future. "This policy would be in keeping with the recognized principal of all education that we 'learn to do by doing.' If this principle is true, colored people can never be expected to become proficient in business enterprises, in civic and governmental affairs and in the management of their own educational institutions by simply seeing white people do these things" (Bond 3).

Bond had been waiting for the promised training of leaders to occur at Lincoln Institute, as they had been during his education at Berea College. Twelve years after the Institute opened, and nine years after the first graduating class, a leader with enough education and experience to be principal of Lincoln Institute should have been available. But according to the trustees and principal of Lincoln, established for the benefit of the black race, and to which James Bond had given much of his energy, he had not waited long enough. On October 13, 1909, Bond had written a letter on Lincoln Institute letterhead that was simply entitled "What Education Does for the Negro," wherein he extolled the benefits obtained by education for just the average man, not the exceptions. The letter used a former Berea College student as an example, Robert H. Royston, who had not gone beyond his freshman year of college at Berea, but who had become, from that experience, a stalwart citizen who supported himself, his family, and served in local politics -- "a neighbor to whom no one could reasonably object" (Bond, "What Education" 2). Bond claimed that "It shall be the mission of Lincoln Institute to carry forward this mighty work and continue to give to the average negro his chance in life" (2). Bond supported the creation of Lincoln Institute as an educational facility for the

benefit of his race. After all, Lincoln Institute was advertised in 1919 as an institution that was “Organized to take up the work for the Negro which Berea College carried for nearly forty years and was compelled to drop because of the Day Law of 1904, and thus inheriting the task of righting a great wrong done to the Kentucky Negro when the doors of Berea were closed to him, and no other door opened” (“Credentials”).

The numbers of black students who had matriculated through Berea College proved the moral worth and intellectual ability of many, and an additional twelve years of Lincoln Institute should logically have continued providing such proof. In 1903, Dubois said in *The Souls of Black Folk* that

For some time men doubted as to whether the Negro could develop such leaders; but to-day no one seriously disputes the capability of individual Negroes to assimilate the culture and common sense of modern civilization, and to pass it on, to some extent at least, to their fellows. If this is true, then here is the path out of the economic situation, and here is the imperative demand for trained Negro leaders of character and intelligence, -- men of skill, men of light and leading, college-bred men, black captains of industry, and missionaries of culture; men who thoroughly comprehend and know modern civilization, and can take hold of Negro communities and raise and train them by force of precept and example, deep sympathy, and the inspiration of common blood and ideals. But if such men are to be effective they must have some power, -- they must be backed by the best public opinion of these communities, and able to wield for their objectives and aims such weapons as the experience of the world has taught are indispensable to human progress (195).

The lack of community around Lincoln Institute that resulted in all students having to live on campus (no families, no extended community into the township, no collegiate education) meant that the sponsorship of Lincoln Institute reflected the national white standard of prejudice. In 1917, an article in the *LI Worker* claimed that the quality of training received from LI is much in demand and then explained that “While a dark skin is a handicap, the demand for efficiency is too imperative to permit the door being shut on a really efficient man merely because he is a Negro” (“Demand” 1). This

quotation eerily matches up with the concerns of Carter Woodson – father of black history and Berea alumni. Woodson said that “real education means to inspire people to live more abundantly, to learn to begin with life as they find it and make it better” (Woodson 3). He experienced Berea College just before the doors were closed to every member of his race. Woodson extensively studied the education of blacks in the South. He researched differences in opportunities and argued that education within a system that teaches a student “that his black face is a curse and that his struggle to change his condition is hopeless is the worst sort of lynching” (3).

### **Conclusion**

Communities of education are affected by many forces, dominantly economic and social. During the brief upheaval after the Civil War, the social and economic forces that had contributed to ending slavery continued into the beginnings of an integrated society. In small numbers, blacks had been admitted to most of the better colleges in the U.S., and were increasing their literacy levels exponentially. Berea College, unique in its undertaking to educate all equally, was representative of that community that supported integrated living, with its mixed race and gender classes, mixed faculty, and, as important, easy social access between races, genders, and classes of people within the college and the town. Black students who attended Berea College were enveloped in a positive community, protected from much of the controversy building in social and economic life outside of Berea. This community was intentionally developed to encourage the ordinary relationships that naturally develop amongst people who live, work and learn together – to build community outside of race considerations. One of the complaints about Berea College and the town of Berea was that it was a disservice to

blacks because it did not prepare them for the realities of life outside of the community (Wilson 86). That complaint exemplifies not only the successful nature of Berea community, but also the awareness that the precedent it set affected the livelihood of those involved in it. When Berea College became just another segregated educational institution, the community dissolved. It follows that despite the visible positive impact of the creation of Lincoln Institute for black education in Kentucky, the less obvious loss was a community where living and learning together was the norm. Families lived and learned at Berea in the school, college and town. At Lincoln Institute, families of students were excluded because all students had to live on campus. There was no surrounding community friendly to the school, and the Institute had its own post office and train stop, according to adjustments made because of resistance from white neighbors. Perhaps this arrangement better reflected the realities of life outside Lincoln Institute, but it also diminished community support for such education and reduced the opportunities for blacks and whites to learn about each other by living together. Further, it diminished the opportunities for blacks to have support from even their own families.

An educational system goes far beyond the classroom and into areas of civil, political and social rights. Berea College offered, for a while, an opportunity to grow into one's own intellectual skin in a protected environment. Critics of Berea claimed exactly that – that life and learning in the educational facilities and social environment of Berea created an expectation that could not be realized outside the area. Interestingly, current Berea College students refer to existence on campus as “the Berea bubble” because the exterior society still does not reflect the educational intentions and social environment of the campus and town.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

Literacy is so much an expectation in this country that it has become more usual to ask why and how people fail to learn to read and write than to ask why and how they succeed (Brandt 1).

#### **Invisibility**

In May 1924, Violet Tyler, a Berea College student, wrote a thesis entitled "Race Relations in Berea College According to the Negro Graduates." Her introduction to that thesis revealed unexpected difficulties as she began to research:

When I first began my thesis, it was my intention to find out the occupation of the negroes, graduates and undergraduates, who have attended Berea College, the College proper; to learn if their college work had benefited them in the professional or trade world. In searching for the addresses of these people, I was told their records had been sent to Lincoln Institute, Lincoln Ridge, Ky. I wrote to A. Eugene Thomson, principal of Lincoln Ridge Institute, and asked if the records of the negro students had been transferred to that school. His reply was that they had not, though such a plan had been suggested, but had not proven feasible. It soon became evident that it would be almost impossible to get the present addresses of all the negro students who had attended Berea College, so the question was limited to the graduates.

I used Miss Burn's list of the negro graduates. I compared this with the alumni list and found that none of the names of Miss Burn's list appeared on the alumni list (Tyler 1).

Tyler discovered that black Berea College students had disappeared so completely that records could not be found twenty years after they were forced to leave the campus.

Comparing names from an informal list, Tyler discovered that black alumni, in 1924, were not on the official alumni list, as if those students had never matriculated at Berea



College. After being banned from campus, black students disappeared from not only the dominant narrative, but also from Berea's institutional narrative.

Tyler finally listed thirty-eight graduates of the College with addresses. Twenty-nine were sent letters. Nine were deceased, eight letters were returned unclaimed and eight were neither answered nor returned. Thirteen responses were received, but the one from Carter S. Woodson was thrown out because he said he did not receive a degree from Berea (although he did). Tyler counted twelve valid responses that answered questions relating to their current occupations as well as their memories of race relations on campus (Tyler).

The questionnaire elicited the information that all twelve of these graduates were currently married, and five of them had married other Berea College students. Further, ten of these twelve Berea College graduates had attended further schooling at the Universities of Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan and Cincinnati, as well as Purdue, Walden, Howard and Chicago Universities (3). Frost had claimed in 1894 that a reason that Berea College had no black professors was because no black graduate had pursued post-graduate work. While it is not possible to discern from Tyler's research when or why these graduates pursued further education, it is significant that over eighty percent did so (3).

Tyler concludes that these twelve graduates had “used their education to good advantage. They have devoted themselves to useful work. Most are teachers . . . . They have caught the “Spirit of Berea,” and are working to uplift their fellow men” (10). She admitted that, from her perspective as a Berea College student, “[i]t seems almost a tragedy that the negroes have been barred from the Institution, and that within a few years those who have come under direct influence of Berea will have died” (10). Tyler's

viewpoint was socially radical in 1924, and in keeping with the earliest traditions of the College. Her conclusion that “The replies from the questionnaire indicate that white and colored people can study together in the same Institution without being antagonistic towards each other” (10) was made almost twenty-five years before the campus would once again be allowed by the Commonwealth to welcome black students.

Tyler's thesis research exemplifies the additional difficulties black citizens faced when segregation not only barred access, but also held them in such low status that their previous accomplishments were erased from white institutional records even, apparently, from an institution that had previously pledged itself to work for them. If these previous Berea graduates needed to prove their educational accomplishments to another school, an employer, or to their community, how could they do so when the alumni list did not include their names? Even a white Berea College student, working from within the institution, could not obtain a list of black students who had attended Berea, and had to result to an informal record, likely inaccessible outside the institution. Tyler notes that those black students who came under the influence of Berea's education were dying off, without replacement. Therefore those in Berea's community who remembered the integration experiment were also dying off. Without institutional records, memories are transient. In the early years of the College, Fee and Fairchild had had to work constantly to encourage people to learn to live and learn together. Without that constant support, as Tyler notes, the impact withers and dies. What should have been a lasting effect became, instead, a transient moment.

Of the twelve respondents to Tyler's thesis research, five had Kentucky addresses. Of those five, two were associated with Lincoln Institute. Had Lincoln been black-run, added a college division as initially proposed, and/or encouraged community to develop

around its facilities, more interested scholars might have been attracted, and a “Black Berea” might have resulted. Perhaps more Kentuckians would have made their mark on the nation, like Carter G. Woodson. Woodson's education began at Berea, and he was instrumental in changing the fact that few historical records were kept of blacks before 1930, as evidenced by Tyler's difficulty researching her thesis even within the institution that had worked to eliminate prejudice.

### **Summary**

A few decades after the Civil War, the newly freed slaves, as a people, had made great strides toward literacy acquisition. They established schools with the help of philanthropists, governments and missionaries, they traveled distances to get their children to schools, and they learned with a speed that alarmed the white population. The arguments against higher education for blacks intensified as it became evident that blacks were fully capable of achieving higher education.

This study followed the progress of an experiment designed to set a new standard in social, educational and political equality that was begun in Berea township and Berea College just as the Civil War ended. A microcosm of the South, this town and school were established under a theory of absolute social equality, an assumption of equal opportunity and equal rights, and a belief in the innate morality of individuals. The only criteria for acceptance to Berea College was to be of good moral character. Students who were black or white, male or female, were all accepted to be educated together.

Employing Brandt's concept of sponsorship, this research applied it to institutions and communities, and argues that both the specific leadership of the institution and the voices in the community strongly affect acquisition of literacy. Acquisition is not equal

for all people at all times. Even within the same institution, when leadership changes so might the sponsorship. Communities react, in part, to the leadership of institutions closely connected with the community, such as student groups on campus, or town politics.

In this study, I argue that national changes in sponsorship of black education superseded the closely held, private institution of Berea College, even before Kentucky passed the Day Law. Crucial changes were made from within the institution, in keeping with national pressures, beginning over ten years before the Day Law. The College had always been a socially radical institution, founded and led by abolitionists for nearly thirty years before President Frost was selected to carry on the tradition. Although Frost came from the same background as previous presidents and faculty (Oberlin College), he nevertheless departed from abolitionist tradition and changed the College so that it more nearly reflected the segregationist standards of the nation. National and institutional sponsorship became more closely aligned under Frost. The community of students and faculty within the College fragmented, and the surrounding township of Berea showed signs of dissent. The passage of the Day Law, which put an end to integrated education, was partly encouraged by a petition signed by some of Berea's most disgruntled white citizens.

When Lincoln Institute was established for black students, and it became clear that the highest education available there would be a high school level, Kentucky black families, and the most promising young minds in them, had to leave the state to pursue educational opportunities equal to that provided at Berea College. Kentucky created its own brain drain effect by eliminating a college and failing to create a replacement that could have attracted some of the best students. Ironically, an argument that eased white

tensions over the opening of Lincoln Institute was the point that, without good schools, the best and brightest of Kentucky's black population would leave the state, which would result in an economic loss. However, Lincoln Institute's level of education was not an effective answer for the best and brightest.

### **Institutions**

Institutions greatly affect their members. Organizational Communication theory suggests that institutional culture often resists changes in leadership. In the case of Berea College, however, Frost's leadership changed the long-standing abolitionist culture. Berea College had been trying to change national culture by example, and formed its institution as an intellectual and social experiment to prove that black and white races (indeed any and all races) could coexist comfortably. Chapter 2 discussed a relevant history of literacy and connects Brandt's sponsorship theory with institutions generally. These concepts are closely examined and applied to Berea College and Lincoln Institute. Higher education that fits students to be leaders is ordinarily achieved within institutions. College degrees must be conferred by a group of other scholars who deem the student's intellectual growth as worth acknowledgement. Without an institution capable of or willing to acknowledge intellectual potential (due to race-based prejudice), then such achievement cannot occur. Berea College, as an institution, promoted education at multiple levels for all who matriculated there. Achievement was limited only by time and ability, not race or money. Lincoln Institute, by contrast, promoted a narrow, high school range of education. While it packed into that narrow range all that it could (vocational, industrial and teacher training) the end result was limited by the sponsors of the Institute, who valued manual labor as the highest goal of its course work. This type of education,

delivered within a culture of prejudice, denied blacks opportunities to apply even those hard-won skills that mirrored the “literacy of the teacher” (Finn).

### **Communities**

Chapter 3 takes Royster's challenge to find “African American students as active participants in higher education” (572) and looks at that participation from a community perspective. Cobb's research on Native American schools offered crucial insight into the importance of community and her research site, Bloomfield Academy, aligned interestingly with Lincoln Institute. A significant factor in the history of Berea College, and the town of Berea, was the community created around the educational offerings. Whole families came to live in the area so that their children could get an education. The founder, Fee, sold real estate in integrated patterns so that people could learn to live side by side and earn their neighbors' respect. The intentional community at Berea was an example of the difference that sponsorship can make in the result of education achievement.

At Berea College, education was offered within the classrooms, but also in the dining rooms, on the lawns of the common areas, and in the social life of the town. In such settings, individuals have the support of the community in obtaining and applying an education. By contrast, at Lincoln Institute, the community of Shelby County fought the establishment of the school. To ease tensions, the trustees decided that students could not live off campus and must be housed within the boundaries of the campus. This limitation meant that families could not purchase or rent houses nearby, and, to obtain an education at Lincoln Institute, individuals must leave their families and their homes. While that is not unusual in the pursuit of an education in any race or culture, it stood as a dramatic

contrast to the welcoming and planned community at Berea. As an additional disincentive, the educational offerings at Lincoln Institute were far fewer than those at Berea, especially given that the college department was not recreated. The impetus for families to send their youth to Lincoln was reduced. It was not an Oberlin set in Kentucky, as Fee had set out to establish at Berea, nor was it modeled after the better northern institutions, as Frost planned in his version of Berea. It was supposed to be modeled after Tuskegee, but fell short there as well without either an emphasis on adult education or the support of the surrounding community. While the high school education it offered may have been of good quality, or was intended to be initially, the loss of the college department, and the community, are not only emblematic of similar losses across the nation, but were particularly hard to bear because social equality, having just been proven possible at Berea College, was also lost. Given the national shift against education and equality, the educational compromise represented by Lincoln Institute may have been the only way to retain some educational opportunities for blacks, but the losses sustained from the compromise are still reverberating in higher education today.

### **Intersections**

Institutional and community sponsorship intersect. At Berea, the combined power of both institution and community overcame national prejudice and created an oasis of communion. At Lincoln, the combined power of the institution and community intersected to limit education for blacks, which tended to keep them in their place and slow progress to a sedate pace. Even by 1926, according to the principal and trustees of that institution, a black man could not be found of sufficient leadership skills to lead Lincoln Institute, a black high school, twelve years after it opened.

The evidence suggests that Berea College President Frost did not believe a collegiate education was appropriate for the black population in general. His actions and speeches place him well outside of radical or abolitionist viewpoints. Frost was a strong leader whose legacy can still be seen today in the culture of Berea College and the surrounding township. However, he made paradoxical statements about black and white relations (equality on campus, segregation to the outside world, increased segregation on campus), and quickly settled on Tuskegee as a better model for black students than the northern university model he preferred for whites. Although Frost was instrumental in getting Lincoln Institute established for black students, and allocated \$450,000 endowment to the school, he claimed that it would be a New Berea, and promised to provide a college education to those who showed promise, yet he failed to set up any procedure for doing so. Frost's dichotomous actions reflected the paradoxical times in which he lived – a time in which promises were made and broken to Kentucky's black citizens.

### **Implications**

Like Scarborough's invisibility in the writings of his peers, Kentucky's black college students were no longer of record after being denied access at Berea College. The brief period when Kentucky black citizens were graduating with college degrees from Berea College was buried in the dominant narrative. This occurrence is emblematic of the work called for by Royster and Gilyard to enrich black histories through archival mining. Individual successes of black students who, like Carter Woodson, earned a Ph.D from Harvard, or William Scarborough, who achieved a renowned scholarly reputation, are overlooked or explained as aberrations – and are lost in the dominant narrative. It is



less plausible, however, when whole cultures are overlooked, such as the generations attending Berea College. Those students were silenced and made invisible through legislative action in 1904. They did not, however, cease to exist. Did they leave Kentucky to attend college at one of the handful of institutions that would accept them? And if they did, did they bring their education home? One of Frost's justifications for offering industrial and vocational short courses was that mountain students so educated tended to remain in the mountains. When they were college educated, they left. However, Berea's black college educated alumni evidenced a pattern of local civic engagement and were active in their communities. If only five black students had graduated from Berea's college course each year that it remained segregated, 230 individual black Kentucky college graduates would have populated the state, along with their families, their descendants, their economic successes and their civic responsibilities.

Despite the remarkable years of integration on Berea's campus (1866-1904: 38 years), a longer span of time was segregated (1904-1950: 46 years). Black higher education was interrupted in Kentucky just as it was gathering momentum. With the benefit of hindsight, the records of both Berea College and Lincoln Institute have been examined to reveal that the Berea College remains a vital institution, offering a unique and high quality education to "all those of good moral character," while Lincoln Institute faded, in part because it was never designed to offer anything unique to Kentucky's black population.

In 2010, Berea College is a non-denominational Christian liberal arts college serving only students with demonstrated financial need, much as it was at its founding. The quality of undergraduate education is very high. In 2000, and again in 2006, *U.S. News and World Report* ranked it as the number one liberal arts college in the South

("Berea College Again"). Combined with the surrounding township, the resulting liberal, forward-thinking collective is locally known as the Berea "bubble" -- a term that originated with its founder, John G. Fee.

The College creed "God has made of one blood all peoples of the earth" is enacted by recruiting and welcoming people from 40 states and 71 countries around the world. Recruitment of international students is held to 7% of a steady population of 1,500 students ("International Education"). In keeping with its mission to serve the mountain population, 73% of Berea's student body comes from Appalachia and Kentucky. Nineteen percent of matriculated students are black ("Interracial Education"); however, the statistics do not specify how many of these students are also international. Regardless, the percentage of black students at Berea remains a far cry from its interracial heyday. Right after 1866, the numbers of black students nearly always equaled or exceeded those of whites, until 1892 when Frost's policies caused the numbers of white students to skyrocket ("Interracial Education").

Berea College recruits urban blacks, rural mountain whites, African blacks, along with a variety of international cultures. In keeping with a tradition that began with President Frost's successful recruiting methods, marketing materials are tailored for each group. Because Berea College currently requires all students to reside on campus (with exceptions only for married or nontraditionally-aged students), all these cultures gather at the same dining hall for meals, in addition to contact in small classrooms (10:1 student/faculty ratio) and campus social groups. Students have told me that it takes a year or so for some incoming students to grasp the liberal nature of the school and that there is some unease as all these differences are brought together. Berea College professors incorporate lessons in tolerance and cooperation in all their course work, much

as Fee and Fairchild worked to resolve racial tensions between blacks and whites in the decades after the Civil War.

The College chooses not to expand, but uses its endowment of \$1.1 billion (Lewin 1) to serve its students. Students are given a Dell laptop upon entering the college, receive upgrades in their junior year, and retain ownership upon graduation. The campus requires every student to work ten hours per week, and therefore is almost entirely student run. In keeping with its liberal arts foundation, Berea offers a variety of standard undergraduate four-year degrees and also retains its peculiar style of answering the needs of its students. In some instances, students create their own degree. In contrast to Frost's assumption that mountain students would leave their home area if they acquired a college education, many local students remain and serve their community after graduation. Berea offers cutting-edge environmental projects, including housing for student families that is environmentally experimental, with solar panels, composting toilets and an “eco-machine” that processes all non-composting waste. There are extensive vegetable gardens, forests that are managed by selective cutting, and farmland used in the Agriculture degree program. In addition to standard liberal arts degrees, Berea offers four-year degrees in Sustainability and Environmental Studies, African American Studies, Appalachian Crafts, and Peace and Social Justice (“Majors”).

The community – the bubble – reflects much of the tradition of the College. Promoted as “the folk arts and crafts capital of Kentucky” (“Berea”), it strongly reflects the mountain population culture, as does the 92% white population. Only 4.3% of Berea's township is identified as black (“Berea, Kentucky”). Although the town hosts a rich and lively international festival in the spring of each year, the other annual events revolve solely around crafts, mountain and southern traditions (“Berea”).

In many ways, Berea College and township of 2010 reflect the intentions of its founders. The College provides a highly valued education to financially needy students for little to no cost, promotes social equality among a variety of cultures, and encourages students to seek innovative ways to solve problems. However, neither the College nor the township approaches the racial balances that the founders had worked toward. Although 19% is a larger black student percentage than Kentucky's traditionally white public universities have achieved, it includes international students as well. Given the College's limit of 1,500 students, the percentage equates to only 285 annually, numbers that had previously been achieved through the leadership of President Fairchild in 1880. The early Berea College experiment should have positively affected the evolution of higher education for Kentucky's black citizens; however, the longer period of segregation still exerts a more powerful influence. Only Kentucky State University (formerly Kentucky Normal and Industrial Institute for Colored Persons), an historically black college, approaches the percentage previously served by Berea College, with a black student population of 60% ("Heritage")<sup>1</sup>.

### **Applications**

Literacy acquisition is a current and continuing concern of rhetoric and composition scholars. In January of this year, Mike Rose was interviewed on NPR about his new book, *Why School? Reclaiming Education for All of Us*, which continues his theories on literacy acquisition. Like Deborah Brandt, Rose equates the complicated

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<sup>1</sup> Percentages of black student enrollment at Kentucky universities, reported by [www.cappex.com](http://www.cappex.com): University of Kentucky 5%; University of Louisville: 12%; Morehead State University: 3%; Murray State University: 6% ; Western Kentucky University: 10%; Eastern Kentucky University: 4% ; Kentucky State University: 60% (34% white)

process of literacy acquisition with the essential nature of democracy, and asks about the education necessary for a democracy. His book examines the impact of the controversial No Child Left Behind Act, and he identifies a pattern that is not new – that resonates with the disparities in education presented in this research: “The end result is the replication of a troubling pattern in American schooling: poor kids get an education of skills and routine, a lower-tier education, while students in more affluent districts get a robust course of study” (Rose, “No Child”). Blacks and poor whites in Kentucky were receiving similar treatment in that they were considered to need only a basic education, in keeping with their social and economic standing. The difference, of course, was that blacks could not, by any means, matriculate into the white institutions, whereas particularly resilient and persistent poor whites could. A poor white was simply poor – money and culture could be achieved through the proper education (which is, of course, Rose's complaint about the difference education makes in students' lives). A black man remained black, regardless of his educational or income level. The national movement toward industrial and vocational education for blacks and poor whites reduced their opportunities for traditional foreign language preparation. Like the poor kids receiving Rose's “skills and routine” education, such students did not receive preparation for liberal arts college degrees. The 1918 Berea College Catalog required four years of Latin and a year of German for entrance into the college program (*General Catalog* 55). Without access to that preparation, entrance to a good liberal arts college like Berea was denied.

The kind of literacy people acquire affects not only their future prospects as far as meeting entrance requirements for good schools, but it also affects their self worth. A common theme that surfaces in literacy narratives assigned to freshmen is one of repression. Many of these themes center on incidents that made them feel like they could

not write or had little to offer that would please the teacher. Rose, in *Lives on the Boundary*, writes that these themes are not incidental, nor rare, but are central to the nature of an institutionalized education.

Psychologist David Pillemer has analyzed memories of school, and suggests that such memories have much to tell us about students' perception of success or failure. When I talk to people about their education, from factory workers to physicians, from middle-school to doctoral students, it is telling how many of them call up resonant and emotional memories of events in school that, they claim, have had a potent effect on so many things: their sense of their intelligence, their social competence, their bearing in public spaces (244-245).

When Kentucky's black students attended Berea College, the atmosphere was one of learning for all, regardless of race or economics. Berea's mission was to “uplift” all its students, and its publications and college newsletters reflected that. However, Lincoln Institute emphasized isolation and manual labor, and even its school newsletter was named *The Worker*. From sponsorship that helped elevate to one that promoted caution, black students experienced a dramatic change in the self-concept that comes with education. Lincoln Institute, unlike Berea College, was not unique; it reflected a national standard for black education. The prevailing atmosphere at Lincoln Institute was representative of similar institutions, and the events in school that have “potent effects,” as Rose points out, were widespread.

While writing this dissertation, I am serving as a one-year temporary full-time instructor of freshman writing at a local community college. I had previously taught at University of Colorado at Boulder and University of Louisville. Before the community college, the freshman composition classes I had taught were dominantly white – so much so that my many attempts at raising race consciousness were met with a dominant voice that bordered on and sometimes achieved racism. I have heard white students claim they suffered from reverse racism and make accusations that black students didn't deserve to

receive funding for their education. On one campus, I witnessed a student-led demonstration intended to discourage diversity. Almost, I gave up in despair, but then I accepted the community college position.

For the first time, I had classrooms half-filled with black students. The other half was white with a sprinkling of other ethnicities in very small numbers, such as Latino, Middle Eastern, and Indian, and an accompanying mixture of religions such as Catholic, Muslim, and Hindu. Here was the diversity I had been looking for.

But why were they in the community college only?

Suddenly, though I had been dragging my feet through the dissertation writing process, I had a purpose. I needed to add to the dominant narrative of Kentucky's black college students and do my part to understand and reveal their larger participation in the higher education process. Most of my community college students are first generation – their families have not obtained college degrees. Historical social and political forces that influenced that fact are largely unknown to them, and the impact on their education of current institutional sponsors of their education is invisible.

I have been, for the last year, part of a system that does not always believe in the capabilities of its black (and poor white) students. I have heard faculty members say that this group of students doesn't know why they're here, that the students are unable to comprehend basic grammar and sentence structure, that the five-paragraph essay is the pinnacle of their abilities. And yet, when I ask my students why they are attending college, each of them has a specific, individual reason for being there and most are paying their own tuition. They want to improve their economic potential. A few want to learn for learning's sake. All want to set a good example for their children, siblings, parents, and so forth. Most are uncertain and have histories of failure. Rose's words in

*Lives on the Boundary* resonate with me as I teach this population: “literacy, here, is intimately connected with respect, with a sense that they are not beaten, the mastery of print revealing the deepest impulse to survive” (“Lives” 215-216).

All peoples carry their histories with them. Teachers who remain unaware of the multicultural backgrounds of their students may underserve some populations. For example, while teaching a class on research in a computer lab, I overheard an explosive comment from a young black woman to a young black man sitting beside her. He was goofing off, and she had had enough. “Miss Anne,” she said loudly, (and I cannot get these community college students to simply address me by my first name alone) “he’s not even house-broke. I don’t know why you let him in here.” After adjusting their seating arrangements, I reflected on her choice of words. “House-broke”? Did those words carry the weight of hundreds of years of oppression, or was I imagining things? I don’t know for sure, and I didn’t inquire, but the possibility exists. It seems crucially important to be aware of the possibility in order to respond to Gilyard’s 1999 call for writing pedagogy to recognize complexities within cultural representation and to be one of those “composition instructors . . . [that will] urge students to begin writing themselves outside the prevailing discourse on race” (“Higher Learning” 52).



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## CURRICULUM VITAE

### **ANNE L. HEINTZMAN**

76 Powell Court, Clarkson, KY 42726  
270/242-0868 or 502/552-0765  
E-mail: [anne.heintzman@colorado.edu](mailto:anne.heintzman@colorado.edu)

### **EDUCATION**

*Ph.D. English, Rhetoric and Composition, University of Louisville, May 2010*

*M.A. Communication, Organizational Rhetoric, University of Colorado at Boulder, August 2002*

*Technical and Professional Writing, Graduate Certificate, University of Colorado at Denver, December 2001*

*B.A. English and History, Idaho State University, May 1991.*

### **EXPERIENCE**

*August 2009-May 2010: English Instructor, Bowling Green Community College, Academic Support Division. Full-time one-year position. Taught Freshman core writing requirement: academic writing skills, critical reading and response, and technological competence.*

*August 2005-May 2010: Ph.D Candidate, English, Rhetoric and Composition, University of Louisville.*

*Administrative experience: Assistant Director Writing Center, trained peer tutors, developed and presented seminars to faculty and students, organized research projects. Assistant Director Business Composition, developed and presented seminars on research, consulted with faculty and students to improve writing skills.*

*Teaching experience: Multiple sections of Freshman composition (ENGL 101-102), Junior-level Business writing, and Junior-level Writing about Literature. All courses were taught using computer lab classrooms and Blackboard.*

*August 2003-present: Adjunct Online Instructor, Continuing Education, Independent Learning Division, University of Colorado at Boulder. Design fully online lower and upper division core and advanced writing instruction, in compliance with requirements of the Program for Writing and Rhetoric on-campus department. Continuing consultant on grant for interdisciplinary online*

community initiative website.

*May 2002-May 2003:* Lecturer, Program for Writing and Rhetoric, University of Colorado at Boulder. Lower and upper division core writing requirement instruction in academic writing skills, critical reading and response and technological competence. Development of pilot programs for mobile wireless laptop lab. Writing Center development committee member.

*August 2002-May 2003:* Library Liaison, Program for Writing and Rhetoric, University of Colorado at Boulder. Coordinate and instruct research seminars for first-year writing classes, develop assignments to increase information literacy in all first-year writing classes, develop grading criteria, coordinate and grade first-year assignments for all classes, facilitate cooperation of administration and instructors between Library Research staff and the Program for Writing and Rhetoric; plan and project for future collaborative opportunities.

*August 2002-August 2003:* Online Tutor, Smarthinking.com. Part-time tutoring services to high school and college level students across the country. Online live whiteboard brainstorming and grammar sessions, asynchronous questions/answers and essay guidance.

*August 2001-May 2002:* Graduate Part-time Instructor, Program for Writing and Rhetoric, University of Colorado at Boulder. Freshman core writing requirement courses with WebCT course management software. Courses emphasize academic writing skills, critical thought and technological competence.

*Spring 2002:* Public Speaking Workshop Instructor, JILA, Graduate Optical Engineering Students, 6-week course emphasizing oral presentation skills for honors-level graduate students. Emphasize technology use and instruction within presentations, speech structure, posture, diction and presentation style.

*August 2000-August 2001:* Research Assistant for Dr. Michele H. Jackson, Associate Professor, Department of Communication, University of Colorado at Boulder. National Science Foundation grant research on group cooperation within engineering and computer science. Literature review, observation, interview instruments, conduct and transcribe interviews, present results to research team.

## **PUBLICATIONS, CONFERENCES & AWARDS**

*Local Committee Exhibit Chair, Conference on Composition and Communication, March 2010, Louisville.*

*Presentation. CCCC Annual Conference, March 2010, Louisville: "Education for Freedom or Servitude: Remixing Educational Opportunities for African Americans in Post-Civil War Kentucky."*

*Plattus Excellence in Teaching Award, Spring 2007, University of Louisville*

*Presentation. CCCC Annual Conference, March 2007, New York: "Mandates and the Impact of Education."*

*Eighth Annual Teaching in the Community Colleges: Online Conference April 22-24, 2003: "Problems and Solutions: Teaching with a Mobile Wireless Lab."*

*Learning Technology newsletter, IEEE Learning Technology Task Force. April 2003: "Use of Mobile Technologies in Education."*

### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Volunteer staff, underprivileged youth, East West Kung Fu, 2007-present;  
Foster parent, special needs, 1992-2000; Girl Scout Troop Leader, 1994-2000;  
Japanese International Exchange Student, host family, November, 1998-February 1999;  
Spanish Club, Alvaton Elementary School, founder/facilitator, September 1999-May 2000;  
Refugee Center, Sponsor Kosovo Family, 2000; Red Cross Life Guard, 1996-1999