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Extensions and Applications:**Bringing a Silenced Community to Life: Animating the Archival Record. . .86***Naomi Norquay***CFP Biography and Technologies Special Issue.90****Membership Form:****International Society for Educational Biography.91****Subscription Form***Vitae Scholasticae: The Journal of Educational Biography.92***Contributing Authors.93****Editorial Information.inside front cover****Information for Contributors.inside back cover**

Editor's Note

This issue of *Vitae Scholasticae: The Journal of Educational Biography* opens with an overview of the powerful key note address a group of panelists delivered for the Biographical and Documentary Research SIG at the 2017 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Notable foundations scholars Robert Lake, Tricia Kress, Christopher Emdin, Denise Teliaferro-Baszile, and Sonia Nieto summarize their remarks related to the enduring salience of educator Maxine Greene's work in our contemporary political climate. The themes of advocacy and activism that animate their work are visible throughout this journal issue.

In the second essay, Regina Carter extends the historiography of African-American librarians with her focus on Augusta Braxston Baker (1911-1998), an advocate and children's librarian who worked in the New York Public Library for decades. In her extensively-researched study, Carter draws from oral history, archival research, and contemporary theorizing of "community cultural wealth" to analyze the community networks and educational experiences that shaped Braxston Baker's professional life. The power of community networks and advocacy also emerge in Vanessa Garry's research on John Davis Buckner, an African-American educator and community activist in St. Louis, Missouri. Buckner (1922-1977) was educated at Stowe's Teacher's College, an institution that embraced the philosophy of "community engagement" during Ruth M. Harris' tenure as president from 1940 to 1954. Garry traces Buckner's accomplishments to demonstrate his "lifelong dedication to African American rights" through his diverse community engagements. In the final research essay, Eric Platt and Melandie McGee focus on a little-known role in the active life of Northern military officer William Tecumseh Sherman—serving as a superintendent in the *South* before the Civil War.

The book reviews in this issue represent varied genres of life writing. The first review, by Paul Stafford, focuses on Keith Berry's collection of student's poignant autoethnographic narratives about their experiences with bullying. In the second review, KaaVonia Hinton explores the unique work for youth, *Brown Girl Dreaming*, by award-winning children's author

Jacqueline Woodson. Through free-verse and poetry, Woodson describes some of her childhood experiences and her path to becoming a writer. Finally, Patricia Inman focuses on a memoir of an educational leader, Roger Prosser, who grew up in poverty in Chicago. In Inman's words, "this book is the story of amazing resilience in a context of racism, violence and poverty."

In our reflections and applications section, Naomi Norquay details a pedagogical exercise she uses in her teacher education courses to expand students' understanding of life history research, immigration patterns, and schooling history in Ontario. She grounds her activity in historical study of a local pioneer settlement of African-Canadians. Students research the community, study broader social forces shaping settler life, and then each work in groups with an array of archival documents focused on a particular settler family in the area. Norquay describes the benefits and implications of the activity.

Our forthcoming volumes of *VS* include a special issue focused on the complexities and possibilities of "family methodology," the art and science of doing research with and on family members.¹ Also note our call for proposals for a new issue focused on biography and technologies. We seek varied proposals for articles and creative contributions by August 1, 2018. Thank you for your continued support of *Vitae Scholasticae*!

— Lucy E. Bailey

Notes

¹ Lucy E. Bailey, "Epistolary Hauntings," *Education's Histories: Methodological Grist for the History of Education*, Vol 3, October 2016, www.educationhistories.org.

**Imagining an Activist Future for a Blue
Guitar: Maxine Greene and her Legacy at 100:
Reflections on a 2017 AERA Biographical and
Documentary Research SIG Symposium April 29, 2017**

**Robert Lake, Tricia Kress,
Chris Emdin, Denise
Teliaferro-Baszile, Sonia
Nieto**

During this centennial year of Maxine Greene's birth (1917-2017), the Biographical and Documentary Research SIG created an opportunity to highlight the importance of celebrating and reflecting on her intellectual legacy. Our intention with this symposium was to facilitate a fresh release of Greene's notion of social imagination in ways that confront head on prevailing conditions of pedagogy of "authoritarianism,"¹ violence, xenophobia and cultural and ethnic erasure while also imagining more socially just worlds of what "might be". The symposium consisted of the contributors dividing the allotted time and providing oral summaries of their completed papers. Sonia Nieto followed the panelists, serving as a masterful and inspiring discussant, and inviting comments and questions from those in attendance. Here is a summary of the presentations.

***Greene and Freire's Blue Guitar Duet of Radical Hope in Hopeless Times*
Robert Lake, Georgia Southern University,
Tricia M. Kress, University of Massachusetts - Boston**

The Man with a Blue Guitar is a poem about an imaginary conversation Wallace Stevens² has with Picasso's *The Old Guitarist*.³ In the painting, the guitar is rendered in stark contrast to the poor and blind player's physical

condition. Through this juxtaposition, Picasso expresses the power of artistic creation as a means of personal expression and agency in an otherwise desolate context of life. Stevens's interpretation of the artwork as a means to resist "things as they are" and create new spaces of solidarity continually spoke to Maxine Greene in profound ways. For Stevens and Greene, the blue guitar is a metaphor for imagination's power to awaken resistance to the status quo while envisioning new landscapes of thinking, acting and being by seeing the familiar anew. The blue guitar is an anchor point in Greene's work that continually draws her readers back to her call to use the arts to encourage young people to express social imagination in ways that create both personal space and consciousness of others while raising awareness of people's situatedness in the larger social world. Three of Greene's major concepts-- wide-awakeness, aesthetic education and social imagination-- provide windows into the influence Paulo Freire had on her philosophical vision. Like Greene, Freire developed similar, albeit differently applied, concepts in his notions of critical consciousness, reading the word and the world, and radical hope.⁴

The harmonic pairings of Greene's and Freire's concepts resound anew within the present atonal climate of dehumanization and despair. Inspired by the metaphor of playing music on the blue guitar, this presentation used a "call and response" approach to Greene's and Freire's key parallel and complementary ideas. Particular attention was focused on ways Greene and Freire define hope above and beyond passive and wishful thinking that leads to fatalistic despair. Applications to critical aspects of imagination and praxis were made salient by drawing connections between the loss of hope and personal agency derived from "official", overly prescribed definitions of abstract subject matter in the contemporary climate of neoliberal education reform. We concluded by reframing radical hope as a "theory of change" in which imagination can be understood as insurgent praxis for destabilizing the contemporary neoliberal order.⁵

*Re-Signifying Self: On the Mattering of Black and Blue
Lives in the Work of Maxine Greene*

Denise M. Taliaferro Baszile, Miami University

In this presentation, Dr. Taliaferro revisited "Signifying Self: Representations of the Double-consciousness in the Work of Maxine Greene," an essay she wrote nearly 20 years ago for William F. Pinar's (1998) *The Passionate Mind of Maxine Greene*.⁶ In it she tried to capture how the gift of second sight⁷ is indicative of the inter-subjectivity that Greene says is critical to our quest for true freedom.⁸ As Denise reflected afresh on second sight she was compelled to ponder its meaning in this current moment of cascading crises, where Black lives and Blue lives are

in clear and present danger and where grief and fear and flickers of hope intermingle and cling to the air. She closed her presentation with these poignant questions: "What is freedom now? Who can access it and who cannot? How do we share in both the pleasure and the responsibility for it?" Denise pondered these questions, in the heaviness of the current moment, where the mattering of certain lives are in question, and as a way to speak to the continued significance of the wisdom of Maxine Greene.

*On Innervisions and Becoming in Urban Education:
Pentecostal Hip-Hop Pedagogies in the Key of Life*
Christopher Emdin, Teachers College, Columbia University

Dr. Emdin's presentation was a stunning performance piece that was focused on the concept of becoming by bringing Maxine Greene's work into dialogue with Stevie Wonder's *Innervisions* (1973/2000) with a goal of creating a new way forward for urban education for marginalized youth of color.⁹

In the foreword to Emdin's (2010) book, *Urban Science Education for the Hip-hop Generation*, Maxine Greene defines education as "an expansion and deepening of educative experiences ... that mark the processes of becoming, which she defines as a coming into consciousness that requires "making new connections in experience, new meanings."¹⁰ Dr. Emdin built upon the themes embedded in the "making connection and new meanings" and articulated a "look inwards" informed by thinkers beyond the field of education (i.e., musicians/artists) who express these concepts and extend and build upon the work of traditional academics. In bringing singer/songwriter Stevie Wonder into conversation with Greene, he highlights the ways urban youth of color from the hip-hop generation can be imagined differently and taught to their strengths and gifts - which schools and teachers often misread. By confronting emotions that are often unaddressed, Stevie Wonder gives profound insight into urban youth culture. These youth, whose true identities are conspicuous by their absence in the general discourse on education, are often presented via media to the public as anti-intellectual and violent despite their everyday lived experiences that display the opposite. These youth witness the murder of people who look like them at the hands of the police and deal with the violence through organized protest and powerful art.¹¹ They are accused of being violent while physical violence is inflicted on them by the police/criminal (in)justice system and emotional violence is inflicted on them by schools who mischaracterize them. They generally respond to the social conditions that give rise to violence through powerful study of their local landscapes, who express themselves in written and artistic forms that get ignored in favor of the fewer instances where they respond with righteous indignation and violence.

As the media obsesses over and inundates the public with socially constructed and flawed narratives about these youth, they often experience the kind of schooling that hinders their opportunities to make connections to their innately academic selves, to create new meanings for what life can look like and who they can be. Teachers' misperceptions of their culture often relegates them to caricatures of hip-hop (loud, abrasive, violent) that cause educators to not see them as thinkers with the agency to fully engage in school. Hip-hop youth occupy subaltern positions that cast them as inferior to students from other ethnic and racial backgrounds and geographic areas.¹² Maxine Greene argues that creating the conditions that allow them to move beyond these societally fixed narratives requires an approach to teaching that focuses on moving educators and institutions to create contexts that allow for what she calls "becoming." Stevie Wonder argues that these new contexts must first be imagined before they can be. By adding his own voice to Greene's and Wonder's, Emdin makes salient the work of "becoming" is necessary for both teacher and student and requires a deliberate process of looking inwards (innervisions), focusing outwards in the key of life, and releasing tensions/imagining new possibilities.

Some of the highlights of Sonia Nieto's Response to the Symposium
Sonia Nieto-University of Massachusetts-Amherst

In these times of rigidity, authoritarianism, hopelessness, and dehumanization in education and in all human endeavors, it's both refreshing and hopeful to meet Maxine and Paulo once again. I see them still, at a 1992 conference in NYC that was organized to celebrate Paulo's 70th birthday, looking at one another, she in the audience, sitting in the middle of the auditorium and he, on stage – always sitting, never standing, never with a prepared talk. He would glance over at her every once in a while to catch her eye and seek her collaboration. She would look back, intently nodding and collaborating in this way. They were so different in some ways, yet they had a great deal in common: a love of humanity, a stubborn hope that would simply forge ahead in spite of everything, a belief in the power of education to create and civilize our increasingly savage world.

The work of Greene and Freire coincide through philosophies that foreground freedom and agency, she primarily through the arts and he primarily through language, though of course, these are interconnected. This is not the first time that the work of Greene and Freire have been linked, but this session did a valuable service by reminding us that their work was inherently *political* in challenging hegemonic policies, practices, and ideas. I want to thank Maxine and Paulo for insisting on bringing words back to our current educational discourse that have become

almost invisible, words such as *informed action*, *careful noticing*, *the social imagination*, and, of course, *radical hope*.

As a life-long teacher who's devoted over 4 decades to preparing and supporting the next generation of teachers, my impulse always is to connect philosophical and theoretical ideas, as well as educational research, with the life of classrooms.....I think this is one of the most important contributions we can make to education nowadays, that is, to highlight *praxis* for our research, for our classrooms, for our teaching.

Given our current sociopolitical context, these papers are not only relevant but, really, very much needed. I was taken by Greene's reaction to Thoreau's admonition that "the opposite of morality is indifference, a lack of care, an absence of concern."¹³ Greene adds, "Lacking wide-awakeness, I want to argue, individuals are likely to drift, to act on impulses of expediency."¹⁴ What could better describe the current administration in Washington and the policies they are creating, not only in education but in the environment, science, the arts, civic life, health, and so many other arenas? This is a woeful situation for every aspect of our public, and even private, lives.

The spirit of *wide-awakeness*, *critical consciousness*, *the social imagination*, and *reading the word and the world* are also alive when teachers take their learning into their own hands and decide they've had enough of the rampant pessimism and authoritarianism in our schools and, as they've done increasingly in the past several years, form groups to resist these dehumanizing efforts. Attending the conferences of progressive and radical teachers, as I've had the opportunity to do over the years, has been empowering and a good reminder that teachers have a great deal of power than can be unleashed again, in big ways and small.

The panelists left the audience with thought-provoking questions for their readers, which is how I think we should also end all of our sessions here at AERA and other venues, because life is about thinking about answers to our most significant and troubling questions. I want to add my own questions, especially for the young scholars here today, as they begin or continue on their journey as researchers:

- Am I questioning conventional wisdom, even my own?
- What are the content and context of my research?
- Who's included? Excluded?
- Whose identity is affirmed? Whose language and culture are valued?
- Whose story is told?
- Who wrote the book? Who says? And Freire's quintessential questions: For whom and on whose behalf am I doing this work? Who benefits and who loses?

What was so powerful about this session was the attention it drew to the role of democracy, a focus that's sorely missing in today's classrooms and schools, and especially in our society. Here, Maxine Greene and Paulo Freire live on through their words and their ideas to remind us that it is the obligation of human beings to believe, to hope, to wake up, to resist, and to carry on, despite everything.

Note: For more on these presentations see *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, vol. no 39, 2017, Special issue: Maxine Greene and the Pedagogy of Social Imagination: An Intellectual Genealogy, <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/gred20/39/1>

Notes

¹ Henry A. Giroux, *Dangerous thinking in the age of the new authoritarianism* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2015).

² Wallace Stevens, "The man with the blue guitar," in *The collected poems of Wallace Stevens* (New York, NY: Alfred Knopf, 1937/1964).

³ Maxine Greene, *Variations on a blue guitar* (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 2001).

⁴ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (New York, NY: Herder and Herder, 1970); Paulo Freire, *Education for critical consciousness* (New York, NY: Continuum, 1992).

⁵ Eve Tuck & K. Wayne Yang, *Youth resistance research and theories of change* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2013).

⁶ William Pinar, *The passionate mind of Maxine Greene: I am...not yet* (London, GB: Falmer, 1988).

⁷ W.E.B. Dubois, *The souls of black folk: Essays and sketches* (Chicago, IL: A. C. McClurg, 1903).

⁸ Maxine Greene, *The dialectic of freedom* (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1988).

⁹ Stevie Wonder, *Innervisions* [CD] (New York, NY: Motown, 1973/2000).

¹⁰ Chris Emdin, *Urban science education for the hip-hop generation* (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2010); Chris Emdin, *For White folks who teach In the hood ... and the rest of y'all too: Reality pedagogy and urban education* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2016).

¹¹ Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the world and me* (New York, NY: Spiegel and Grau, 2015).

¹² Gayatri Spivak, Can the subaltern speak? in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, (Eds.). *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1988).

¹³ Maxine Greene, *Landscapes of learning* (New York, NY: Teachers College Press), 43; Maxine Greene, *Releasing the imagination: Essays on education, the arts and social change* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1995).

¹⁴ Greene, *Landscapes of learning*, 43; *Releasing the Imagination*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass; *Landscapes of learning*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Black Girl, White World:

A Narrative of Augusta Braxton Baker's

Early Life and Educational Trajectory

Regina Carter

University of Virginia

Introduction

A significant scholarly void exists as it pertains to the documentation and dissemination of critical narratives of Black children's librarians, particularly in the form of biography. This paper seeks to fill that void by providing insight into the early life and educational trajectory of Augusta Braxton Baker—a children's librarian, advocate, storyteller, and administrator. Baker (1911-1998) began her career in 1937 as a children's librarian at the 135th Street Branch (which is now known as the Countee Cullen Branch) of the New York Public Library (NYPL) and retired as NYPL's first Black Coordinator of Children's Services in 1974. Her tenure within the NYPL system spanned over three decades.¹ In this paper, archival and oral history materials are drawn upon to explore Baker's early life and education and her successes are analyzed through Yosso's community cultural wealth (CCW) framework. In doing so, I bring heightened visibility to the significant life circumstances that compelled Blacks to pursue librarianship as a career, which is overwhelmingly absent from the history of librarianship as well as biographical scholarship.

Baker: An Accomplished Librarian-Administrator

During her time at the NYPL, Baker received numerous promotions and accolades. In particular, 1953 proved to be a fruitful year for Baker. In 1953, Baker received the Dutton-Macrae Award for “Advanced Study in the Field of Work with Children and Young People” at the 72nd annual American Library Association Conference in Los Angeles, California.² That same year Baker became the first Black person to serve as NYPL’s Assistant Coordinator of Children’s Services and Storytelling Specialist. Baker remained in this position until 1961.³ She was promoted to Coordinator of Children’s Services in 1961, which was a position she held up until her retirement from the NYPL in 1974.⁴ As was the case when she was appointed to the Assistant Coordinator position, Baker was also the first Black individual appointed to serve as NYPL’s Coordinator of Children’s Services, which was a highly visible and influential position. One of the best summations of Baker’s enduring legacy from her tenure within the NYPL system was duly noted in her citation for the 1971 Constance Lindsay Skinner Award, which read:

Librarian, folklorist, storyteller, administrator, anthologist—an emissary from the world of imagination to children everywhere. She has worked directly with them—black and white, rich and poor—and has touched the lives of many thousands more through the adults she has inspired and guided. Always aware of the role that books play in shaping self-image and lifelong values, Augusta Baker has insisted that nothing but the best in style, format and substance is ever good for children. Convinced that all children can learn to love books and reading if only given the opportunity, she has worked to strengthen library service to children and to get books into the hands, homes, and hearts of all.⁵

The honors Baker received did not cease with the Skinner Award. Baker went on to earn additional high honors. For instance, in 1975, one year after her retirement from the NYPL system, Baker was recognized as an American Library Association (ALA) Honorary Life Member.⁶ Thus, Baker’s retirement did not signal an end to her illustrious career; instead, it marked a notable new beginning and second career in the South. In 1980, Baker became the Storyteller-in-Residence at the University of South Carolina-Columbia.⁷ She served in this capacity until 1994.⁸

Baker as Librarian, Advocate, and Teacher

Aside from the numerous accolades that were bestowed upon her, one of Baker's most notable accomplishments was her work with Harlem's Black youth. Baker introduced Black youth to innumerable possibilities through the gifts of books and storytelling. She taught them that although Harlem was their home, the whole world (which was neither all White, nor all Black) awaited them. She "brought all that [she] could to the boys and girls who came to that children's room in Harlem, and [was] repaid many times by the success which has come to many of these children."⁹ One of the children she took under her wing was James Baldwin, who would grow up to become a renowned Black "novelist and essayist."¹⁰ Baker remembered Baldwin as being a lover of libraries, even if he was somewhat peculiar. She noted in her March 7, 1989 interview with Robert V. Williams, former professor in the College of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina at Columbia:

I remember, [James Baldwin] was one odd duck! His brother was named David. And David was a bright, outgoing boy. James was very much an introvert, [and] was not as physically attractive as David. When I got to know their father, who was -- I guess today you would call him an evangelical minister -- fundamentalist -- and kind of harsh, you know, strict. But James turned out to be smarter than David, but you'd never know it. The library was like a haven for him. And this was true of many of those children.¹¹

To young Baldwin, the library was a liberating force and a fortress. It provided him with access to and safety from the strange and the familiar. In a 1964 video clip entitled "My Childhood," Baldwin recounted:

I went to the 135th Street Library at least three or four times a week, and I read everything there. I read every single book in that library. I read books like they were some weird kind of food. I was looking for in books a bigger world than the world in which I had lived. In some blind and instinctive way, I knew what was happening in those books was also happening all around me. And I was trying to make a connection between the books and the life I saw and the life I lived ...[.] You think your pain and your heartbreak are unprecedented in the history of

the world, but then you read. It was books that taught me that the things that tormented me the most were the very things that connected me with all the people who were alive or who had ever been alive.¹²

Baker realized that Baldwin had a genuine love for and interest in literature. This was why she was not perturbed when he snuck upstairs to view items from the Schomburg Collection, which was off-limits to children.¹³ She shared:

Well, James knew how you could sneak up those back steps, and he'd come out in the work area of the Schomburg you see . . . here were these wonderful, wonderful books on the black experience, which even then this was the thing in which he was interested.¹⁴

Despite Baldwin's intense interest in learning more about Black experiences, due to his age, he was expected to only utilize the children's room. Whenever a staffer found Baldwin using the Schomburg Collection, s/he would simply alert Baker and request that Baker escort the young man back to the children's section of the library. However, keeping tabs on Baldwin was wearying work. Discouraging him from using adult books did nothing to satiate his intellectual hunger and desire to learn more about Black life. Baker was aware of his profound desire for knowledge and became Baldwin's advocate. She resisted library policies that forbade young people (particularly Baldwin) from using the Schomburg Collection. In her interview, Baker recalled, "And I even sassed Schomburg. I said, 'Couldn't we make an exception and let this boy use this collection? He's bright . . . [.]'"¹⁵ She sensed that "maybe for all [Baldwin's] life this is going to be his real interest."¹⁶ Baker believed that allowing children to use the Collection would help cultivate their aspirational capital, which "refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers . . . [.]"¹⁷ By frequenting the Schomburg Collection, Baldwin sought to quench his intellectual thirst while simultaneously employing his aspirational capital in hopes of attaining a better future for himself.

Noted "Black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet" Audre Lorde, also patronized the 135th Street Branch as a child.¹⁸ She visited the branch with her mother and two older sisters.¹⁹ One day while at the Branch, Lorde burst into a tantrum. According to Lorde, Baker approached her and asked, "What's wrong, little girl? . . . Well, would you like me to read you a story?"²⁰ Baker read several stories that day to Lorde, which

included: Dr. Seuss' *Horton Hatches the Egg*, Ludwig Bemelmans' *Madeline*, and *Hubert*.²¹ After that encounter, Lorde began to think, ". . . reading was something I wanted to do. What [Baker] did, I was going to do that too, and was going to have it for my own."²² During that encounter, Baker induced Lorde's aspirational capital so that the young girl was convinced that she too could read and tell stories.²³ By sharing stories with Lorde, Baker engendered a love of reading and stories that remained with the girl for years to come. Lorde praised Baker for her work and credited the librarian with transforming her life:

I learned to read from Mrs. Augusta Baker, the children's librarian If that was the only good deed that lady ever did in her life, may she rest in peace. Because that deed saved my life, if not sooner, then later, when sometimes the only thing I had to hold on to was knowing I could read, and that could get me through.²⁴

After her serendipitous encounter with Baker, Lorde learned how to read, write, and eventually became a librarian.

Data Collection and Significance

This essay seeks to comprehend varying factors that coalesced for Baker to experience success in racially-based contexts as a Black female during the Jim Crow era. I draw from published oral history interviews with Baker, a semi-structured, face-to-face interview with Baker's only child (Mr. Arthur Baker), and archival materials from The Augusta Baker Collection, which is housed at The University of South Carolina-Columbia's South Caroliniana Library to help answer this question.²⁵ Secondary sources drawn from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's (UIUC) print and digital collections such as Maxine Merriman's dissertation, "Exponent of the Art of Storytelling: Using Video as Medium," James F. Flynn's *Negroes of Achievement in Modern America* and E.J. Josey and Marva L. DeLoach's *Handbook of Black Librarianship* were consulted to provide additional perspective.²⁶ The significance of this scholarship is threefold: 1) it fills a scholarly gap in the literature as it pertains to biographies of Black children's librarians, 2) explains why Tara J. Yosso's community cultural wealth (CCW) framework is a useful lens for understanding the early life and education of an accomplished librarian of color, and 3) it illuminates the intricacies Baker encountered while navigating both Black and White public spaces with her own private agenda as a Black woman in America.²⁷

Overview

This biographical narrative is comprised of three sections. The first section offers an overview of Baker's childhood and provides a brief account of her elementary and secondary schooling experiences. Section two explores Baker's tenure at the University of Pittsburgh and the New York State College for Teachers (NYSCT) in Albany. The final section provides insights into how Baker drew upon her community cultural wealth (CCW) throughout her childhood and educational trajectory. This essay emphasizes a single individual (Baker) and serves as a tribute to a woman renowned for her legacy within the field of children's literature and storytelling. Thus, a biographical narrative is a fitting form for a teller who read and told stories herself.

*Druid Hill Avenue and Braxston's Early Schooling Experiences*²⁸

Winfort J. Braxston and Mabel R. Gough were married on July 8, 1908. The Braxstons welcomed their only child, Augusta, into their home and hearts on April 1, 1911—April Fools' Day.²⁹ Yet the Braxstons were no fools.³⁰ They were young, gifted, and Black. Mr. Braxston received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Morgan College in Baltimore, Maryland on June 17, 1923, and wrote (what appears to have been) a thesis entitled "The Functions of the Modern School."³¹ After completing his studies, Mr. Braxston became a teacher.³² He worked within a number of public schools in Maryland such as the Harvey Johnson Junior High School 106, the Frederick Douglass Senior-Junior High School, the Colored Training School at Mount and Saratoga Streets, and the Coppin Normal School No. 401.³³ Mrs. Braxston was also an educator by trade.³⁴ Prior to marrying, she was as an elementary school teacher. However, "in those days, married women, when they married they had to stop. So that meant that as a mother, as an adult, [Mrs. Braxston] was a frustrated teacher" according to her daughter.³⁵ The Braxstons shared a home with Mrs. Braxston's mother (Augusta Fax Gough) and Mrs. Braxston's brother (Walter Gough).³⁶ Mr. Gough worked as a bootblack and owned his own shop.³⁷

The family resided at 2431 Druid Hill Avenue in Baltimore Ward 14, an Independent City in Maryland in the Old West Baltimore District. The Old West Baltimore District was a historically significant cultural center.³⁸ It served as "Baltimore's premier early African-American neighborhood[BR2]"; beginning in the 1890s, Blacks began occupying houses on the main streets of this area, most notably Druid Hill Avenue."³⁹ The district spanned 175 city blocks "northwest of downtown Baltimore" and mainly consisted of row houses and some "grand mansions," "alley

houses," a number of churches, and public buildings, which included primary schools and "commercial structures."⁴⁰ Old West Baltimore was home to notable Blacks such as Carl Murphy (editor of the *Afro-American*, a Black newspaper with a national readership), Harry S. Cummings (Baltimore's first Black city councilman), Thurgood Marshall (Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States), Cab Calloway (jazz singer, actor, and bandleader), and Lillie Carroll Jackson (civil rights activist and former head of the Baltimore NAACP), among others.⁴¹

The Braxstons lived in a "well-furnished" brick row house complete "[with] three floors and a basement underneath."⁴² Although their home could be considered lavish by contemporary standards, at that time, the family home was the norm rather than an exception in the Druid Hill Avenue area. Toward the end of the nineteenth century "Huge beautiful three-story townhouses, with ten to twelve rooms, marble mantle pieces, ornate staircases and chandeliers..." were commonly found on Druid Hill Avenue, McCulloh Street, and Madison Avenue, which was east of Pennsylvania Avenue.⁴³

It was on Druid Hill Avenue that Braxton's positive worldview of Blackness formed. Many Black professionals lived on Druid Hill Avenue during the Jim Crow era.⁴⁴ Braxton lived in an "all-black neighborhood where her neighbors were doctors, teachers, lawyers, and dentists."⁴⁵ To get a clearer sense of the community she was reared in, it should be noted that "Dr. Retter [lived] across the street and his children were [Braxton's] close friends. And also across the street was the White family."⁴⁶

Although there were White families whose educational and economic backgrounds were similar to the Braxton family's background, Braxton was initially unaware of this. For example, when she was asked about her childhood, Braxton indicated: "Curiously enough, I knew no white people in positions which were equal to our own [Black] kind of middle-class way of life. Our doctor was a Negro, all the teachers I knew were Negroes."⁴⁷ She went on to add, "The only white people we saw were the garbage collectors, the hucksters, the mailman, and other workers. If we went to town, we saw white people in the stores who waited on us! I was well along in years before I realized that white people were equal to us!"⁴⁸

Braxton eventually began to realize that, outside of her community, Blacks were considered to be inferior to Whites. She noted, "When I was coming along [in the 1920s], and even as a young person, [Baltimore] was more Southern in its cultures and its mores and certainly in its biases, than the deepest of the Deep South, and it was truly a segregated society, so that you grew up in one area and one ethnic culture and one racial culture as against another."⁴⁹ As Braxton advanced in years, it became painfully clear that racism was alive, well, and not going anywhere anytime soon.

Early Informal Education

As Braxton acquired knowledge about her physical surroundings and the racial climate of the time, Mrs. Braxton strove to ensure that her only daughter was well-educated. The Braxtons valued education; everyone in the household was literate.⁵⁰ Mrs. Braxton made certain that her daughter knew how to read before she began school.⁵¹ Mr. Braxton also influenced his daughter's reading. He was a voracious reader who was dismayed "at the caliber" of children's books that were available to his daughter.⁵² As such, Mr. Braxton made a deliberate decision to introduce his daughter to literary classics.⁵³ Young Braxton credited him with fostering within her a love for "the classics, particularly Robert Louis Stevenson. [She] read everything he wrote."⁵⁴ Braxton loved literature and mostly enjoyed books from her home. She noted, "... certainly most of the professional blacks in Baltimore, then, you just had your personal library, your parents bought books."⁵⁵ For this reason, Braxton "grew up on a kind of diet of adult books."⁵⁶ It was during this time that Braxton "became aware of good writing;" she retained this awareness throughout her life.⁵⁷

Braxton's Baltimore Public School (BPS) Experiences

Braxton attended segregated facilities within the Baltimore Public School (BPS) system from the time she began school until she graduated from Frederick Douglass High School (FDHS).⁵⁸ When Braxton began the first grade, she was already "way ahead" academically, thanks to Mrs. Braxton's insistence that her daughter be literate prior to starting school.⁵⁹ This early, purposeful preparation "nearly drove [Braxton's] teachers crazy."⁶⁰ Teachers had difficulty keeping the precocious child occupied. As such, she "skipped" through the 1st grade . . . [and] through the 1st part of the 2nd grade."⁶¹ According to one oral history interview, Braxton entered the "second part of the second grade" at the age of six or seven.⁶²

Mr. Braxton was not pleased that his daughter received multiple grade promotions in such a short time span. As such, he "put his foot down" and halted the practice, refusing to allow her to receive additional grade advances because, in his opinion, she "was too young for the children with whom [she] was in school."⁶³ Braxton may not have simply skipped grades solely due to her superior intellectual ability. Instead, she may have been promoted multiple times because she unsettled quite a few teachers due to her inquisitive nature and assertiveness. Braxton believed that she was just as knowledgeable and qualified to teach as her

instructors. She noted, "I was a further discipline problem, but I thought it was perfectly all right for me to help the teacher teach."⁶⁴ She went on to acknowledge that she might have been too presumptuous, for "even in those days, teachers didn't really need that kind of student assistance."⁶⁵

The confidence in which she exhibited her intellectual prowess may be attributed to the caliber of cultural capital, known as navigational capital, she accrued from her upbringing.⁶⁶ According to Tara J. Yosso—University of California, Riverside professor who authored the widely cited article "Whose Culture has Capital? A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth"—navigational capital "refers to skills of maneuvering through social institutions."⁶⁷ It "infers the ability to maneuver through institutions not created with Communities of Color in mind" and consists of "social competencies" and "cultural strategies" that equip People of Color with the knowledge and skill sets enabling them to "function" within a variety of settings, such as "schools," places of employment, and "health care and judicial systems."⁶⁸ Braxton possessed substantial navigational capital due to both of her parents being educated and educators.⁶⁹ As such, by virtue of their training, profession, and insider knowledge of the educational structures of the BPS system, Braxton possessed both academic skill and insider knowledge, which may have enabled her to surpass the benchmark performances established for her grade level. She went on to attend FDHS, which was a segregated educational facility where her father taught.⁷⁰ Braxton graduated from FDHS in 1927 at the age of sixteen.⁷¹

Braxton's Collegiate Years

With her secondary schooling complete, Braxton and her parents began the post-secondary school search. Braxton's schooling choices were limited due to segregationist laws and (to some extent) her parents' preferences. At least one of Braxton's parents was against sending her to one of the nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU).⁷² However, as time passed, Mr. and Mrs. Braxton finally agreed on which postsecondary institution Braxton would attend based upon familial capital, which "refers to those cultural knowledges nurtured among *familia* (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition."⁷³ Braxton "had an aunt who had moved and lived in Pittsburgh, and, of course, the University of Pittsburgh was there. [Her parents] decided [she] should go to the University of Pittsburgh."⁷⁴ Having an aunt who lived in the Pittsburgh area was indeed a boon. Familial capital offered Baker crucial "emotional, moral, educational, and occupational" support.⁷⁵ This was especially helpful given that Braxton

had not spent much time away from her nuclear family and would be attending a predominantly white institution.

Although Braxton had housing and an aunt to lean on for social support, she still experienced difficulty at the University of Pittsburgh. This was due to her age *and* her race. Braxton graduated from high school at age sixteen. As such, she was considerably younger than her peers, which placed her somewhat at a disadvantage. Braxton found herself:

really struggling . . . with relationships—two kinds of relationships. One, relating to people who were maybe two or three years older who were all freshmen at the University, and I also had to adjust to this kind of relationship with white students. Because I had come from an all-black situation.”⁷⁶

Braxton persevered and gradually managed to successfully navigate the hurdles of age and race. However, she soon encountered yet another: academic preparation. Braxton had attended an all-Black high school where students had access to “a gymnasium, a library, a cafeteria” along with “many illustrious teachers.”⁷⁷ Nonetheless, FDHS was still not as well-equipped as the White high schools. Braxton soon learned that her high school curriculum had not been rigorous enough, and this initially placed her at a disadvantage. She recalls in an oral history interview:

My freshman year was most difficult. There is no use kidding ourselves about “separate but equal” schools. This is not true. When I went to college, I was an honor student from high school. I soon discovered what I did not know, so I had to make up a great deal of work.”⁷⁸

Despite the hardships she experienced in her academic as well as social life, Baker found solace in co-curricular all-Black social activities. For example, in December 1928, during her second year at the University, Baker was one of eleven young women who made their “first appearance into society” as debutantes at The Half Century Club dance.”⁷⁹ Braxton also found time to pledge Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and engage in other social activities.⁸⁰ One of those social activities was dating (or courtship). While working on her bachelor’s degree, Braxton became acquainted with James Baker.⁸¹ He was working toward attaining a master’s degree in sociology while on an Urban League scholarship.⁸² The two courted and wed during Braxton’s sophomore year of college.⁸³ Sometime later Mr. Baker received an assignment to work for the Albany Interracial Council

(which was an extension of the National Urban League) so he relocated to Albany, New York with his new wife.⁸⁴

While residing in Albany, Baker applied for admittance to the New York State College for Teachers (NYSCT).⁸⁵ When Baker submitted her application for admission, she was initially denied. Baker's application was rejected because she insisted on gaining teaching experience at NYSTC's experimental school, which was the all-White Milne High School.⁸⁶ Officials would only grant Baker admission to NYSTC if she agreed to teach at a "segregated school off-campus."⁸⁷ Baker was adamant about teaching at Milne and refused to teach at a segregated school. As such, Baker continued to press administrators about their decision to deny her admission, which clearly demonstrated her resistant capital, which "refers to those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality."⁸⁸ She consciously set out to challenge discriminatory practices that forbade Blacks from teaching at Milne. Baker recalled:

I was forced to threaten suit against the State of New York for admission to this college with the right to practice teach at Milne High School. I could attend the college, but [only] if I agreed to practice teach in [an] all-black public school. It was unthinkable that I should teach white children in a high school attached to the College as a laboratory school.⁸⁹

According to Baker, only one Black woman had graduated from that college before her.⁹⁰ Baker maintained that the director of the college was "very, very prejudiced," and did not want to see another Black person matriculate through their institution.⁹¹ Yet this blatant act of discrimination only intensified Baker's desire and determination to gain admittance there. As such, she set to work rallying social support for her cause. Baker was so incensed that the NYSTC barred her from admission that she sought help from University of Pittsburgh officials who were "very upset" and "insulted."⁹² She recalled:

When the [NYSCT] fooled around letting me in, I insisted that they send to the University of Pittsburgh to get my record of transfer. I let the University of Pittsburgh know that this little [NYSCT] was questioning my admission.⁹³

By soliciting help from University of Pittsburgh officials, she tapped into the power and prestige of her social capital, which included "networks

of people and community resources."⁹⁴ Baker's husband also drew upon his social networks. Mr. Baker intervened on his wife's behalf by directly enlisting the aid of then Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt's wife, Eleanor Roosevelt.⁹⁵ Mrs. Roosevelt was instrumental in getting [Baker] into the Milne School.⁹⁶ According to Baker, Mrs. Roosevelt "went after" the NYSCT; afterward, Baker "went right in" to the College.⁹⁷ Social capital was instrumental in Baker being admitted to the College. Thus, as a result of the capital she and Mr. Baker had acquired and astutely utilized, Baker was admitted to the school of her choice and purportedly became the first Black person to teach at the prestigious Milne High School.

Having an opportunity to practice teach at Milne was transformational and provided Baker with a stunning revelation: She "did not like teaching, but [she] did like books."⁹⁸ Despite her family's rich teaching legacy and there being limited employment options available to women, Baker realized that she did not desire to become an educator. Instead, she had another calling: librarianship. Dr. Harold Thompson, a folklore historian and storyteller, suggested that Baker connect with Margaret Caroline Pritchard—a White woman who was the Director of the Library School at Albany.⁹⁹ Pritchard recommended that Baker think deeply about pursuing librarianship as a vocation.¹⁰⁰ After receiving her bachelor's degree in Education from NYSCT on June 17, 1933, Baker settled into her new home at the library school.¹⁰¹ She earned a bachelor's degree in Library Science from the College in 1934.¹⁰² This signaled the end of her pursuit of a formal education. Now that Baker had two highly regarded degrees under her belt, she began seeking full-time employment, which provided its own set of unique challenges.

Conclusion

Baker rose through the ranks of the NYPL and received numerous appointments and much praise. Despite this, she was never allowed to forget that, although she was an American, she was first and foremost Black. Yet, simply being Black *and* a librarian was not enough. Baker sought to be continually involved within the profession and to effect positive change.

In this essay, I sought to elucidate how Baker drew upon her social, resistant, navigational, and familial capital to successfully function in racially-based contexts during the early twentieth century. Baker began developing social capital as a child growing up on Druid Hill Avenue and continued to do so during her time in Pennsylvania and New York. She drew upon her resistant and navigational capitals to challenge the NYSCT's decision to deny her admission on the basis of race. Familial

capital helped to sustain Baker through each ordeal she encountered. In sum, Baker's CCW equipped her with incredible maneuverability to survive (and ultimately thrive) as a Black woman during racially volatile times within a world that privileged Whiteness.

Notes

¹ Augusta Baker Curriculum Vitae, n.d., Augusta Baker Papers, Box 1, Folders 1-3, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina at Columbia.

² The E.P. Dutton Award was known formally as the E.P. Dutton Fellowship for Library Work with Children. This award was designed to "train children's librarians or to offer opportunities for advanced study which shall encourage creative work in the special field. This version of the award was administered from 1930-1932 and then terminated due to funding." "E.P. Dutton Fellowship for Library Work with Children," *American Library Association*. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/awardsgrants/ep-dutton-fellowship-library-work-children>. In 1953, Baker received what was called the Dutton-Macrae Award for Advanced Study in the Field of Library Work with Children and Young People. The Dutton-Macrae Award was "designed to give the recipient an opportunity for formal or informal study of some aspect of the field that will be beneficial both to the person and to library service. This award was reestablished in 1952 by Mr. Elliot B. Macrae of E.P. Dutton Company and given to the A.L.A. as part of its centennial celebration." Baker was the first Dutton-Macrae award recipient. "Dutton-Macrae Award for Advanced Study in the Field of Library Work with Children and Young People," *American Library Association*. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/awardsgrants/dutton-macrae-award-advanced-study-field-library-work-children-and-young-people>.

³ Augusta Baker Curriculum Vitae.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ The Constance Lindsay Skinner Award is presented to "outstanding American book-women who have made an exceptional contribution to books and, through books, to society." *Constance Lindsay Skinner: Author and Editor*, "Introduction," http://www.wnba-books.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Constance_Lindsay_Skinner.pdf.

"Bella Abzug Speaker at CLS Dinner," p.1, Baker, Honors and Awards, 1966-1979, Augusta Baker Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina at Columbia.

⁶ Augusta Baker Curriculum Vitae. ALA Honorary Membership is exclusively conferred upon a "living citizen of any country whose contribution to librarianship or a closely related field is so outstanding that it is of lasting importance to the advancement of the whole field of library service." "About ALA Membership: Honorary Membership," *American Library Association*, Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/membership/specialmemberships/honorary>.

⁷ Augusta Baker Curriculum Vitae.

⁸ "Speaking of History: The Words of South Carolina Librarians: Augusta Baker," *South Carolina Library History Project*. Retrieved from <http://www.libsci.sc.edu/histories/oralhistory/bakerpage.htm>.

⁹ Augusta Baker, "My Years as a Children's Librarian," in *The Black Librarian in America*, ed. E.J. Josey (Metuchen: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1970), 120.

¹⁰ "James Baldwin (1924-1987)," *Poetry Foundation*. Retrieved from <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/james-baldwin>.

¹¹ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Robert V. Williams, Columbia, SC, transcript, May 7, 1989, "Speaking of History: The Words of South Carolina Librarians," *South Carolina Library History Project*. Retrieved from <http://www.libsci.sc.edu/histories/oralhistory/bakertran.htm>.

¹² Augusta Baker, "Pioneer in the War on Poverty: NYPL," *School Library Journal* 11, no. 1 (1964): 3375-3376; James Baldwin, "My Childhood-by James Baldwin" Filmed 1964. YouTube Video. 20 minutes. Posted October 5, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjfxk-VIHAs>; Bob Usherwood, *The Public Library as Public Knowledge* (London: Library Association, 1989), 147-148.

¹³ The Division of Negro Literature, History, and Prints, as it was originally designated, was established in 1925 and located in the 135th Branch of the NYPL. The Schomburg Collection was acquired in 1926, which was one year after the Division was created. Arna Bontemps, "The Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature," *The Library Quarterly* 14, no. 1, (1944): 187. Arturo Alfonso Schomburg was an acclaimed "Puerto Rican-born Black scholar and bibliophile" whose personal collection of materials regarding Black life in America and across the globe consisted of "more than 5,000 books; 3,000 manuscripts; 2,000 etchings and paintings; and several thousand pamphlets." Schomburg served as the Division's curator from 1932-1938. "About the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture," *New York Public Library*. Retrieved from <http://www.nypl.org/about/locations/schomburg>.

¹⁴ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Robert V. Williams.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Robert V. Williams.

¹⁷ Tara J. Yosso, "A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth," *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8, no. 1 (March 2005): 77-78.

¹⁸ It is unclear how old Lorde was when she first met Baker at the 135th Street Branch, though she must have been quite young. In her autobiography, Lorde explained, "I learned to read at the same time I learned to talk, which was only about a year or so before I started school." Audre Lorde, *Zami Sister Outsider Undersong* (Berkeley: The Crossing Press and New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1993), 21-22; "Audre Lorde (1934-1992)," *Poetry Foundation*, Retrieved from <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/audre-lorde>.

¹⁹ Nina Winter, "Audre Lorde," in *Conversations with Audre Lorde*, ed. Joan Wylie Hall (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. 2004), 10.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Baker may have read Bill Peet's 1959 text entitled *Hubert's Hair Raising Adventure* (and simply referred to the text as *Hubert*); however, I am unable to substantiate this.

²² Nina Winter, "Audre Lorde," 10.

²³ Tara J. Yosso, "A Critical Race Theory Discussion," 77-78.

²⁴ It is interesting that Lorde credits Baker with "teaching" her how to read, given that Baker professed to dislike teaching, which will be revealed later in this essay. Moreover, it is ironic that Baker taught throughout her career and actually enjoyed the experience. Audre Lorde, *Zami*, 22.

²⁵ Arthur Baker is a pseudonym used in lieu of her son's legal name. Finding interviewees who knew Baker well during her time at the NYPL was difficult. Many of the people who knew and/or worked with Baker during that time are now deceased. As such, my focal interviewee was Baker's only child, Arthur. His

interview afforded me a personal vantage point from which to interpret Baker's life and work. He provided a wealth of information by sharing details about his mother's life from her work at the NYPL, appointment as Storyteller-in-Residence, and final days in Columbia, SC. The South Caroliniana Library's Augusta Baker Collection contains Augusta Baker's personal papers.

²⁶ In addition to interviewing Baker's son, I also consulted published interviews such as Detrice Bankhead's interview of Baker found in Kathleen de la Peña McCook's *Women of Color in Librarianship: An Oral History*, Robert V. Williams' 1989 interview, and Henrietta Smith's interview, which was published in *Horn Book Magazine's* May/June 1995 edition.

²⁷ Tara J. Yosso's community cultural wealth (CCW) framework undergirded this study. Five of the six types of capital that encompasses CCW—aspirational, navigational, social, familial and resistant capital—were employed to comprehend how Baker navigated within predominantly Black and White spaces. CCW provided an impressive toolkit with which to explore the multidimensionality of Baker's upbringing and schooling experiences without negating her Blackness or relative economic privilege. It helped contextualize the significance of Baker's race and the various forms of capital she possessed as a result of her ties to the Black community. Finally, CCW conceptualized the resources Baker possessed due to her identity as a Black, middle class, educated woman as rich ones.

²⁸ Since this section is devoted to Augusta Braxton Baker's childhood, she will be referred to by her maiden name, "Braxton," until she weds James Baker. Thereafter, Braxton will be referred to as "Baker."

²⁹ 1908 marriage certificate for Winfort J. Braxton and Mabel R. Gough in the Gough family Bible. Record from Gough family Bible (King James Version), which dates from the 1880s. "Augusta Baker," in *Notable Black American Women*, ed. Jessie Carney Smith, (Detroit: Gale Research Inc., 1992), 35. Six years after his daughter's birth, Mr. Braxton reportedly served in the First World War from 1917-1918. "Order by First Name, *find my past.com*, Retrieved from <http://search.findmypast.com/search/united-states-records/military-service-and-conflict-institutes-and-organizations?county=baltimore%20city%20no%2014&o=firstname>.

³⁰ The surname "Braxton" has two variations in spelling, "Braxton" and "Braxston." For this study, I used the "Braxston" spelling. According to Arthur Baker, "There were some other Braxstons, and we wanted to separate ourselves from them some years back. I don't know when we added an "S" to our names." Arthur Baker, interviewed by the researcher, transcript, February 17, 2015, Office of Oral History at the South Caroliniana Library, Columbia, SC.

³¹ "The Graduate Program of Morgan College, Baltimore, Maryland, June 17th 1923," *rootsweb*, last modified November 21, 1997.

³² It appears that Mr. Braxton was a master woodworker in addition to being a teacher. In this 1995 interview, Braxton recalled that she had a doll and a completely furnished dollhouse that her father had made. She also credits her father with making a "horse" that she used to "straddle ... hold on to its ears, and push along with [her] feet!" Augusta Baker, interviewed by Henrietta Smith, transcript, March 1, 1995. Retrieved from <http://www.hbook.com/1995/03/choosing-books/horn-book-magazine/an-interview-with-augusta-baker/#>.

³³ "Directory of the Public Schools of Baltimore, Maryland, 1914, 1927-1928," last modified 2011, Retrieved from https://archive.org/stream/directoryofpubli1927balt/directoryofpubli1927balt_djvu.txt; "Faculty," *The First Colored Professional, Clerical and Business Directory of Baltimore City 5th Annual Edition*, 1917-1918, 1920-1921, 1923-1924, 1927, 1928, Archives of Maryland Online.

Retrieved from <http://aomol.msa.maryland.gov/000001/000497/html/am497--49.html>; Harvey Johnson Junior High School 106," <http://aomol.msa.maryland.gov/000001/000505/html/am505--14.html>.

³⁴ Mabel Gough Braxton was a special education teacher. While her husband was alive, Mrs. Braxton took care of the home. However, when Mr. Braxton became ill, she returned to work. "Directory of Public Schools in Baltimore, MD 1940-1941," Archive.org. Retrieved from https://archive.org/stream/directoryofpubli1940balt/directoryofpubli1940balt_djvu.txt; "Directory of Public Schools in Baltimore, MD 1935-1936," Archive.org. Retrieved from https://archive.org/stream/directoryofpubli1935balt/directoryofpubli1935balt_djvu.txt; "Directory of Public Schools in Baltimore, MD 1931-1932," Archive.org. Retrieved from https://archive.org/stream/directoryofpubli1931balt/directoryofpubli1931balt_djvu.txt; "Directory of the Public Schools of Baltimore, MD, 1946-1947," Archive.org. Retrieved from <https://search.findmypast.com/results/world-records?firstname=Mabel&lastname=Braxton&yearofbirth=®ion=World&keywordsplace=>.

³⁵ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Robert V. Williams.

³⁶ "Augusta L. Gough in the 1910 United States Federal Census," HeritageQuestOnline.com. This census indicates that 54-year-old Mrs. Augusta Fax Gough was widowed. In the 1880 US Census, Mrs. Augusta Fax Gough was married to Mr. George Gough, who was 30 years old at the time and the head of household. Mr. Gough was a laborer and Mrs. Gough's occupation was "keeping house." "1880 United States Federal Census for George Gough," Ancestry.com. According to the 1910 US Census, Mrs. Gough had five children, three of whom were living. I was unable to find much information on Mr. Winfort J. Braxton's family. The sparse information I did find, however, was recorded in Chapter 4 of Maxine Merriman's 1983 dissertation entitled "Augusta Baker: Exponent of the Oral Art of Storytelling; Utilizing Video as a Medium." According to Merriman, Mr. Braxton had four brothers and two sisters; his parents were Mary Ann and Hamilton Braxton. When I researched the Braxton family using Ancestry.com's *Heritage Quest*, I was only able to ascertain that Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton Braxton had two children: Jessie and Alice Braxton. Mr. Braxton's name may not have appeared in the *Freedman's Bank Records*, 1865-1871 because he was not born until around 1886. "Hamilton Braxton" in the *Freedman's Bank Records*, 1865-1871, Ancestry.com. *Freedman's Bank Records*, 1865-1871 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2005, Original data: *Registers of Signatures of Depositors in Branches of the Freedman's Savings and Trust Company*, 1865-1874. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, Micropublication M816, 27 rolls.

³⁷ "1910 Census Place: Baltimore Ward 14, Baltimore (Independent City), Maryland; Roll: T624_557; Page: 5B; Enumeration District: 0233; FHL microfilm: 1374570." Ancestry.com. 1910 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2006; Maxine Merriman, "Augusta Baker: Exponent of the Oral Art of Storytelling; Using Video As a Medium" (PhD diss., Texas Women's University, 1983), 60, in ProQuest Digital Dissertations [database on-line]; available from <http://www.proquest.com/> (publication number 8401210); "1910 Census Place: Baltimore Ward 14, Baltimore (Independent City), Maryland; Roll: T624_557; Page: 5B; Enumeration District: 0233; FHL microfilm: 1374570," Ancestry.com; 1910 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2006; Julie Cummins, "Augusta Braxton Baker (1911-1998)," in *Pioneers and Leaders in Library Services to Youth: A Biographical*

Dictionary, ed. Marilyn L. Miller, (Westpoint: Libraries Unlimited, 2003), 8; Detrice Bankhead, "Interview," in *Women of Color in Librarianship: An Oral History*, ed. Kathleen de la Peña McCook, (USA: The American Library Association, 1998), 10-11; Arthur Baker, interview by researcher, February 17, 2015.

³⁸ Roderick N. Ryon, "Old West Baltimore," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 77, no. 1 (1982): 58.

³⁹ "Historical & Architectural Preservation / Historic Districts / Maps of Historic Districts / Old West Baltimore," City of Baltimore. Retrieved from <http://archive.baltimorecity.gov/Government/BoardsandCommissions/HistoricalArchitecturalPreservation/HistoricDistricts/MapsofHistoricDistricts/OldWestBaltimore.aspx>. <https://chap.baltimorecity.gov/old-west-baltimore>.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.; "Murphy, Carl (1889–1967)," Blackpast.org, Retrieved from <http://www.blackpast.org/aah/murphy-carl-1889-1967>; "Harry S. Cummings: 1866-1917," The Road from Frederick to Thurgood: Black Baltimore in Transition 1870-1920, Maryland State Archives. Retrieved from <http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/stagser/s1259/121/6050/html/11427000.html>; "Jazz Profiles from NPR Cab Calloway," npr.org, <http://www.npr.org/programs/jazzprofiles/archive/calloway.html>; "Lillie Carroll Jackson (1889-1975)," Maryland State Archives. Retrieved from <http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/speccol/sc3500/sc3520/013500/013566/html/msa13566.html>; "Justices 1789 to Present," Supreme Court of the United States. Retrieved from https://www.supremecourt.gov/about/members_text.aspx. In 1910, approximately one year prior to Braxton's birth, there were 23,000 Blacks living east of Pennsylvania Avenue along with 7,500 Whites; Pennsylvania Avenue served as "the main street of the community." Druid Hill Avenue was "home" to "an upper strata of the city's entire black population" and was considered by many to be "middle class." Druid Hill Avenue was home to the *Baltimore Afro-American* (a Black newspaper with a national readership), the Druid Hill Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and Bethel AME Church, which began offering services in 1910 and was home to a "congregation of hundreds." The west side of Pennsylvania Avenue was a different story. Only 8,000 Blacks lived on the west side on "a dozen or so alley streets behind all white blocks." Historical & Architectural Preservation Old West Baltimore; Roderick N. Ryon, "Old West Baltimore," 56, 58.

⁴² Arthur Baker, interviewed by the researcher, February 17, 2015.

⁴³ Roderick N. Ryon, "Old West Baltimore," 55. Some evidence suggests that Old West Baltimore may have previously been a predominantly White neighborhood. According to the *Baltimore City Heritage Area Management Action Plan*, "... prior to the Civil War, Baltimore was the home of the nation's largest free black population, which numbered over 25,000." However, after the war, former slaves "from the surrounding rural areas of Maryland and states to the south" settled in the area and "by the end of the century [they] had been compelled to move to the northwestern part of the city, to what were then predominantly German neighborhoods." This area later came to be known as Old West Baltimore. Baltimore City Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation and the Citizens of Baltimore, "Management Action Plan Background: Heritage Resources," in *Baltimore City Heritage Area Management Action Plan* (Bethesda: HRG Consultants, Inc., 2001), 10-13, last modified September 2001, <http://www.nps.gov/balt/learn/management/upload/Section-I-Background.pdf>.

⁴⁴ The Jim Crow era roughly spanned from the 1870s up until 1954. "The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow: Events," http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_

[events.html](#).

⁴⁵ Henrietta M. Smith, "An Interview with Augusta Baker," Horn Book, March 1, 1995, <http://www.hbook.com/1995/03/choosing-books/horn-book-magazine/an-interview-with-augusta-baker/#>; Ryon, "Old West Baltimore," 56. I would argue that not everyone who lived on Druid Hill Avenue held these types of occupational positions.

⁴⁶ The family's surname was "White." However, the family that lived there identified as being Black.

⁴⁷ James Flynn, "Augusta Baker, Librarian," in *Negroes of Achievement in Modern America* (New York, Dodd, Mead, 1970), 97-98.

⁴⁸ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Henrietta Smith.

⁴⁹ Miriam Braveman, "Enoch Pratt Free Library," in *Youth, Society, and the Public Library* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1979), 225; Brendan Phibbs, "Herrlisheim: Diary of a Battle," in *The Other Side of Time: A Combat Surgeon in World War II* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1987), 117-63.

⁵⁰ HeritageQuest Online. 1910; Census Place: Baltimore Ward 14, Baltimore (Independent City), Maryland; Roll: T624_557; Page: 5B; Enumeration District: 0233; FHL microfilm: 1374570. According to the 1910 United States Federal Census for Augusta L. Gough who resided in Baltimore Ward 14, District 0223, Mr. and Mrs. Braxton, Walter Gough, and Augusta Fox Gough could all read and write.

⁵¹ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Henrietta Smith.

⁵² Dianne Young, "Voices of the South," *Southerners*, March 1991, 91, Box 1, Folder, 3, Augusta Baker Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina; Jack Janowski, "The Story's in the Telling," *Trends Today in the Albuquerque Journal*, October 25, 1977, Box 1, Folder 3, Augusta Baker Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

⁵³ Dianne Young, *Voices of the South*; Jack Janowski, "The Story's in the Telling," *Trends Today in the Albuquerque Journal*, October 25, 1977, Box 1, Folder 3, Augusta Baker Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Curriculum and Instruction professor emerita, Violet J. Harris, places "classic" books into two categories: traditional and contemporary. Harris goes on to say that "criteria for both [traditional and contemporary classics] include literary and/or artistic merit as determined by experts, selection by readers over several generations, and books in the vanguard of creativity that reach a small audience but challenge, advance, or reinterpret prevailing themes, characterizations, language, and so forth." Jonda McNair, "Classic African American Children's Literature," *The Reading Teacher* 64, no. 2 (2010): 96.

⁵⁴ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Henrietta Smith; Robert Louis Stevenson was a poet, playwright, anthropologist, and historian. Some of his more famous works include *Treasure Island* and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. "Welcome to the RLS [Robert Louis Stevenson] Website," Retrieved from <http://robert-louis-stevenson.org/>.

⁵⁵ Miriam Braveman, "Enoch Pratt Free Library," 227.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Dianne Young, *Voices of the South*.

⁵⁸ According to James Flynn, Braxton may have attended the segregated Henry Highland Garnet School (also known as Public School 103 or PS 103) in Baltimore, Maryland. PS 103 was a "model elementary school" and the school of choice for families who resided in East and South Baltimore. Although it is probable that Braxton did attend PS 103, I have been unable to substantiate this claim.

Thurgood Marshall did attend this school. James Flynn, Augusta Baker, Librarian, 97-99; "*The Legacy Continues Preserving Thurgood Marshall's Elementary School*," Baltimore National Heritage Area, <http://explorebaltimore.org/the-baltimore-experience/legacy/public-school-103/>; Ryon, "Old West Baltimore," 57.

⁵⁹ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Robert V. Williams.

⁶⁰ Detrice Bankhead, "Interview," 12.

⁶¹ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Robert V. Williams.

⁶² Detrice Bankhead, "Interview," 12.

⁶³ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Robert V. Williams.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Tara J. Yosso, A Critical Race Theory Discussion, 78-80.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 80.

⁶⁸ Navigational capital is useful in understanding how Braxton transitioned from her all-Black neighborhood and school in the South to predominantly White post-secondary schools in the North. Tara J. Yosso, A Critical Race Theory Discussion, 80.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ James Flynn, "Augusta Baker, Librarian," 97; Augusta Baker, interviewed by Detrice Bankhead, 10.

⁷¹ According to Arthur Baker, FDHS reportedly only offered classes up to the eleventh grade around the time his mother graduated. Arthur Baker, phone conversation with researcher, October 28, 2015; "Baker, Augusta Braxton," in *Black Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia: A-L*, ed. Darlene Clark Hine (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing Inc., 1993), 68. Augusta Baker, interviewed by Robert V. Williams. In Williams' interview, Baker shared "I finished high school at 15...they [the high school] did something called post-graduate high school, so I'd be 16 when I'd get that diploma." This excerpt suggests that Braxton actually finished high school at 15 years of age (not 16) and continued onward to what was known as "post-graduate school" for an additional year, which is why some records indicate that she graduated at age 16. I was unable to uncover additional information about what "post-graduate" high school at FDHS entailed.

⁷² There has been some dispute about whether Mr. or Mrs. Braxton was against sending Braxton to an HBCU. In Braxton's oral history interview featured in *Women of Color in Librarianship: An Oral History* project, she asserts, "It was my mother who wanted to me to go to a mixed college with no discrimination." In *Negroes of Achievement in Modern America*, however, James Flynn asserts that Braxton's father (not her mother) insisted that their daughter attend a predominantly white institution (PWI) so she could understand "there were all sorts of white people." Either Mr. or Mrs. Braxton (or perhaps both parents) recognized that their daughter had a limited understanding of White America and needed further and more sustained exposure. As such, they sought to provide her with this through her post-secondary schooling experiences. Detrice Bankhead, "Interview," 10; James Flynn, "Augusta Baker, Librarian," 98.

⁷³ Familial capital is "... nurtured by our 'extended family', which may include immediate family (living or long passed on) as well as aunts, uncles, grandparents and friends who we might consider part of our kinship network. From these kinship ties, we learn the importance of maintaining a healthy connection to our community and its resources . . ." Yosso, A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth, 79.

⁷⁴ Detrice Bankhead, "Interview," 10

⁷⁵ Ibid.; Tara J. Yosso, A Critical Race Theory Discussion, 79.

⁷⁶ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Robert V. Williams.

⁷⁷ In 1925, "the first class entered the new [Frederick Douglass High School building] and for the first time, the school enjoyed such facilities as a gymnasium, a library, a cafeteria, and [became] an accredited high school." "A Cherished Tradition Since 1855," Frederick Douglass High School. Retrieved from <http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/Page/27375>.

⁷⁸ James Flynn, "Augusta Baker, Librarian," 99.

⁷⁹ "The Half Century Club: Debutantes," Box 2, Folder 66, Augusta Baker Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina at Columbia; "Pat to Pansy: Miss Duff in Hostess to Girligags—Eleven to Be Presented at Half Century Club's Formal Dance on December 26th—Housekeepers Art Club's Reception on New Year's Day," Augusta Baker Papers, Box 2, Folder 66, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina at Columbia; Spencer Shaw, "Augusta Baker," July 14, 1990, Augusta Baker Papers, Box 1, Folder 4, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina at Columbia. It is my understanding that the Half-Century Club was an elite organization of affluent and influential Blacks from the Baltimore, Maryland area. I found one book referenced the "Half-Century Club Ball" yet this text did not provide details into the club's origins or history. Gilbert Sandler, *Small Town Baltimore: An Album of Memories* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 29-32.

⁸⁰ Spencer Shaw, "Augusta Baker," July 14, 1990. Augusta Baker Papers, Box 1, Folder 3, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina at Columbia. The Mu Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, was established on November 21, 1921, at the University of Pittsburgh. Mu Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Incorporated, "Mu Chapter Herstory," Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. Retrieved from <http://muchapterdst.com/mu-chapter-herstory/>.

⁸¹ I will refer to James Baker as "Mr. Baker" from this point onward.

⁸² James Flynn, "Augusta Baker, Librarian" 99; Augusta Baker, interviewed by Henrietta Smith.

⁸³ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Robert V. Williams.

⁸⁴ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Henrietta Smith; "Augusta Baker," in *Notable Black American Women*, 36. I will refer to Braxton simply as Baker from this point forward.

⁸⁵ The New York State College for Teachers is now known as the University at Albany or the State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany. Kendall Birr, "BACK TO THE FUTURE: An Illustrated History of The University at Albany," February 1996. Retrieved from <http://www.albany.edu/uahistory/>; "Origins of UAlbany," December 1, 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.albany.edu/spirit/history.shtml>; "Augusta Baker," in *Notable Black American Women*, 36.

⁸⁶ "Augusta Baker," in *Notable Black American Women*, 36.

⁸⁷ Julie Cummins, "Augusta Braxton Baker (1911-1998)," 8.

⁸⁸ Resistant capital takes on many forms and may be both verbal and non-verbal. Yosso asserts "maintaining and passing on the multiple dimensions of community cultural wealth is also part of the knowledge base of resistant capital." Tara J. Yosso, A Critical Race Theory Discussion, 80-81.

⁸⁹ Augusta Baker, *My Years as a Children's Librarian*, 120.

⁹⁰ Detrice Bankhead, "Interview." Three Black women had been admitted to the NYSCT before Baker arrived. Records indicate that only two of those women graduated. From 1858-1859, Charlotte V. Usher was the first African-American

woman to attend NYSCT, which was then simply known as the "Normal School." There are no records that indicate Usher graduated. Evelena Williams was the "first identifiable African American" to graduate from the State Normal School on January 25, 1884. On June 11, 1911, Georgine Sheldon Lewis, who was African-American, received her B.S. degree. She was the first African American to receive a graduate degree from the NYSCT; she earned her master's degree in 1931. Geoff Williams, "African-Americans at the University at Albany and its Predecessor Institutions - 1858-present," University at Albany. Retrieved from <http://www.albany.edu/news/uablackhistory.php>.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Social capital is also comprised of "other social contacts" that offer "instrumental and emotional support" that benefit People of Color as they maneuver "through society's institutions." Social capital is useful in comprehending how Baker navigated seemingly impenetrable places and spaces that were historically hostile toward Blacks as a young, educated Black woman prior to the Civil Rights era. Tara J. Yosso, A Critical Race Theory Discussion, 79.

⁹⁵ Detrice Bankhead, "Interview," 13.

⁹⁶ Augusta Baker, interviewed by Henrietta Smith.

⁹⁷ Detrice Bankhead, "Interview," 13.

⁹⁸ James Flynn, "Augusta Baker, Librarian," 101. It is unclear what subject(s) Baker taught while at Milne.

⁹⁹ James Flynn, Augusta Baker, Librarian, 101; Finding Aid for the School of Information Science and Policy Records, 1926-1986, last modified June 30, 1997, M. E. Grenander Department of Special Collections & Archives University Libraries, University at Albany, State University of New York, Retrieved from <http://library.albany.edu/speccoll/findaids/ua671.htm>.

¹⁰⁰ James Flynn, "Augusta Baker, Librarian," 101

¹⁰¹ Many secondary sources state that Baker received her BA in education. The NYSCT graduation program indicates that Baker received a "bachelor of arts" degree; yet, it does not specify which discipline she received her degree in. In contrast, Baker's college report cards indicate that she was in the "Department of Education" and the "Department of Library Science." Her curriculum vitae supports this claim and indicates that she received an A.B. with a major in education from the "State University of New York, Albany" in 1933 and a B.S. in library science from the same institution in 1934. New York State College for Teachers Graduation Program, Education, New York State College for Teachers, 1930-1934, Box 2, Folder 69, Augusta Baker Papers, The South Caroliniana Library, The University of South Carolina at Columbia; Spencer Shaw, "Augusta Baker," Augusta Baker Papers, Box 1, Folder 3, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina; "Augusta Baker," in *Notable Black American Women*, 36.

¹⁰² Spencer Shaw, "Augusta Baker," Augusta Baker Papers, Box 1, Folder 3, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina.

St. Louis Citizen John D. Buckner: Community Activist from Jim Crow to Post Civil Rights

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Figure 1.
John D. Buckner, n.d., S1114
Buckner Papers, box 6, folder 264.

John Davis Buckner grew up in St. Louis during the Jim Crow era when southern White democrats used segregation and terrorism to dehumanize and evoke fear in African Americans. Jim Crow laws were a perfect example of these expressions of white supremacy. In the early and mid-twentieth century, Jim Crow laws and policies segregated institutions such as schools, entertainment venues, social organizations, and housing throughout St. Louis. Case in point, unfair housing policies during the early 1900s through the 1960s forced African Americans to live in overcrowded ghettos such as Mill Creek Valley or Pruitt Igoe.¹ Buckner, an African American educator raised in a middle-class neighborhood, became a prominent community activist and fought against such inequalities. Buckner embraced a Protestant work ethic as he served on the boards of segregated institutions like the Young Men's

Christian Association (YMCA) and Boy Scouts of America to improve the lives of African Americans.

This narrative presents the life story of educator and community activist John Buckner, born on August 31, 1922 and died on July 17, 1977. He spent his life advocating for the advancement of African Americans through his service work on various community organizations' boards in St. Louis, Missouri. Buckner's life serves as a reminder for educators to engage the community in support of marginalized populations. This is as great an issue today as it was during the Jim Crow era because of persisting inequalities in social and economic policies. Buckner's and his mother's personal papers, one of his former colleague's recollections about him, and historical information about St. Louis were used to reconstruct his life. This approach reflects a narrative biographical vignette to enhance Buckner's life account.²

Buckner's community involvement is apparent in the concept of an African American activist teacher. According to Fultz, the African American educator's work, not bound by the classroom, encompassed all the social issues that impacted the children he or she served.³ Accordingly, the constituents held schools responsible for the mental, moral, religious, and physical status of the people the school served; therefore, in addition to teaching, the activist focused on improving the conditions under which people lived.⁴ According to Siddle Walker, teachers identified with student needs and aspirations to help them navigate the community beyond their neighborhood."⁵ Buckner's work as an activist in St. Louis adds to the body of work that illuminates the many African American educator activists who worked to improve the lives of their students. Case in point, Lash and Ratcliff present a narrative about Miss Miller who taught school in Virginia about the same time Buckner commenced teaching in St. Louis. Although Miss Miller did not serve on the boards of community organizations, as did Buckner, she spoke about her mother as mentor, her graduation from an exemplary high school and her return to teach at the same high school. She also alluded to the value of racial uplift when recounting stories about caring for others in her neighborhood.⁶

Buckner's involvement in segregated social organizations is also apparent in Darlene Clark Hine's research on parallel organizations. Parallel organizations are created by African American medical and legal fields professionals protesting segregation.⁷ According to Hine, such organizations as the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses and the National Bar Association developed by African American medical and legal professionals created the foundation for the 1950s and 1960s civil rights movement.⁸ A comparison between African American parallel and segregated social organizations revealed similarities. For example, both created safe spaces for dialogue about the advancement of African

Americans. Additionally, both continued the debate about whether these types of organizations thwarted integration.

Three forces seemed to influence Buckner's civic engagement: his mother's activism, his college's volunteer program, and the marginalization of African Americans in St. Louis during the Jim Crow era. John was born in 1922 to educator and historian, Julia Davis, and Arthur Buckner. Davis raised him.⁹ Even as a single mother, Davis helped lift up her race throughout her life. A former colleague said this about Davis, "While she is known to many as an Afro-American historian, special mention should be given to her as one who has contributed time, energy and money to city-wide cultural activities through the years."¹⁰ Rooted in the 1850s, the racial uplift philosophy described how mothers of African American girls taught them at an early age to support their race through community service.¹¹ Davis' modeling of the philosophy very likely galvanized her son to do similar work.

Another influence on Buckner was his experience volunteering with a community organization during his sophomore year in college. As a sophomore at Stowe Teachers College, (STC) Buckner was required to complete fifty hours of field work with one of its community partners. This program introduced preservice teachers to communities where they would work. The last influence was the impact of segregation on the lives of African Americans he witnessed growing up in St. Louis. Although he grew up in a middle-class neighborhood, the blighted African American neighborhoods in the St. Louis area were pervasive. Moreover, with the limited number of African American schools during the Jim Crow era, Buckner attended school with students from these high poverty communities.

Adhering to the Victorian ideal of uplifting one's race, Buckner served on a dozen boards in the St. Louis community. These boards' missions ranged from supporting the development of men and boys through the YMCA or Boy Scouts of America, and supporting orphans in the Annie Malone Children and Family Service Center, to fighting for fair housing with the Greater St. Louis Freedom of Residence Committee (FoR). As a young boy, Buckner was familiar with the Annie Malone Children and Family Service Center because it resided in The Ville neighborhood where he and his mother lived. His mother, in fact, taught at the neighborhood elementary school. The Ville, North of St. Louis, was originally part of the rural settlement of Elleardsville belonging to the Charles Elleard's estate.

Initially, African Americans' moved to Elleardsville to work as servants; however, as the African American population grew in St. Louis, middle-class African Americans found their way to the community. The neighborhood attracted African American professionals because the land was on the outskirts of St. Louis and was not subject to the restrictive

covenants which prevented African Americans from purchasing homes in many St. Louis neighborhoods. As the community developed into an African American enclave, community activists strategically protested the school board's practices and advocated for them to build a high school in the neighborhood and the city to develop a hospital. Buckner's experience growing up during a time of such inequalities where people did not have the freedom to live where and how they wanted likely influenced Buckner's later activism in fair housing.

A lifetime resident of The Ville and Davis's only child, Buckner lived in his childhood residence throughout his adult life. His house was located only a few blocks south of the high school. In 1940, the year Buckner was a college freshman, the African Americans' teachers' college, STC, moved out of the neighborhood's elementary school and into its new building located adjacent to the high school.

The fact that Buckner attended elementary school through college without ever leaving his neighborhood revealed the harsh realities of how discriminatory housing policies and artificial barriers controlled the movement of African Americans. Despite that, these marginalized people countered through protest. For example, STC existed because the African American community group, Educational Council, protested St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS) to hire African American teachers.¹² Additionally, parents petitioned the district to move Sumner High School from its initial location in an unsavory area near downtown to The Ville.¹³ The district accommodated the community group and parents by building the two facilities in The Ville with the completion of Sumner in 1908 and STC in 1940. These successful protests for equality and education access likely fueled Buckner's passion for activism.

Due to its self-containment, The Ville neighborhood stood in stark contrast to the usual African American neighborhoods in St. Louis. Home to the African American elite, it was comprised of houses, churches, the African American hospital, a community center, stores, and other service centers. In the 1940s, the newly built and innovative Homer G. Phillips Hospital offered training to African Americans across the nation, resulting in an influx of nurses and doctors in The Ville. Also, with three schools located in The Ville, over two hundred teachers lived in the neighborhood.¹⁴ Living side-by-side, lawyers, teachers, doctors, nurses, ministers, and business owners provided the neighborhood children with many role models to emulate. One of Buckner's former colleagues who grew up in the surrounding area stated, "The self-containment of the neighborhood shielded us from racism in St. Louis ..." ¹⁵ He said they only saw it when they ventured to downtown or South St. Louis.¹⁶

By the late 1930s Buckner was a student at Sumner High School, the first African American high school west of the Mississippi River.

Sumner was also where the SLPS board initially housed STC when it first opened as a teacher training school.¹⁷ Today, Sumner, like many minority urban schools, has lost its stature due to the decaying neighborhood that surrounds it. In its prime it was a very distinguished school with many notable African American graduates, including Arthur Ashe, the renowned tennis player and Wendell O. Pruitt, the famed Tuskegee airman. In 1904, SLPS Board Member Calvin Woodward said, "We point with pride to the fact that Sumner is probably the best housed, the best equipped, and best administered colored high school in the land."¹⁸ Emmett J. Scott, an advisor to Booker T. Washington, offered a similar assessment of Sumner when he visited the school after World War I.¹⁹ Due to its immense popularity, families living outside of the school's boundaries used St. Louis addresses to enroll their children.²⁰ Sumner, an exemplary school for African Americans, conceivably provided him with many positive examples to cite as he advocated for equal education for African Americans.

In 1939, Buckner graduated from Sumner with honors. His peers summed up Buckner with the following words, "Some say great scholars are dull. But in his life, there's never a lull."²¹ The quote aptly described Buckner, who excelled in mathematics; yet, he was popular enough to garner enough votes to become a member of the Queen and Spirit of Sumner's court for the annual spring May Festival.²² As a professional, Buckner's connection with his peers was evident when he chaired Sumner's one-hundred year celebration. He reached out to many people, inviting them to help in some capacity. The letters in his personal papers revealed all, with the exception of one person, were happy to assist. The one person who was unable to participate was stationed in Japan.²³ Furthermore, he wrote letters to distinguished leaders in St. Louis such as William H. Danforth, Chancellor of Washington University and Daniel Schlafly, SLPS board member, inviting them to participate. They agreed. Buckner's ability to connect with people presumably eased his movement in and out of the diverse groups with whom he worked in the many organizations he served.

After high school, following in his mother's footsteps, Buckner enrolled in STC's two-year program, a further example of her influence on him. In 1930, the SLPS board approved Harris Teachers College (HTC), the White teachers' college, and STC's request to admit men along with women who wanted to further their education but not teach. At the end of the sophomore year, only women interested in the teacher-training program could apply to the four-year college division.

During the sophomore year, STC's students enrolled in sociology, a required course with a community volunteer component. Buckner, like other STC sophomores, had to complete fifty hours of field work with

a STC partner organization.²⁴ Years later, during his professional career, Buckner would serve on the board of directors of many of STC's partners such as the YMCA, Boy Scouts of America, and the Urban League. One he had a particularly long relationship with, over thirty-years, was Annie Malone Children and Family Service Center.

STC's community engagement program was a pivotal program for the college. Community engagement was one of seven principles Harris, the first African American female president of STC, used to guide the development of the college during her tenure from 1940 to 1954. Like many progressive educators she met at the University of Chicago and Columbia University while receiving her bachelor of arts, master's and doctor of philosophy degrees, Harris believed the community was a classroom. According to Harris, including the community volunteer program as part of the sociology course helped students "... learn from the community as well as orient the future citizen and teacher to the obligations to one's community."²⁵ Therefore, she sought agencies that served children in order for STC preservice teachers to gain teacher training experience. She also did this to help teachers in training get to know their students, learn about the community's services and resources, and use the information to support children and their families. This was likely another influence in developing Buckner's ties to his community.

In 1941, towards the end of Buckner's two-year program at STC, the college's all-women four-year college program became co-ed and he was able to apply to the teacher four-year program. On November 28, 1940, the HTC president wrote a letter to SLPS' superintendent, Dr. Homer W. Anderson, seeking permission to admit young men.²⁶ In 1940, with the recommendations of both HTC's and STC's presidents, the superintendent granted permission to accept men to the college division program the following spring.²⁷ This was a watershed moment for STC because it paved the way for the many African American servicemen who enrolled in the college at the end of World War II. After the war, as the African American population increased, more African American men enrolled in college and servicemen in particular received tuition support through The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 or the GI Bill. Thereafter, STC was no longer a college merely for single African American women.

Buckner, one of the twenty men interviewed for the teacher training program, was one of only eight admitted to the program. Harris wrote in her book, *Stowe Teachers College and Her Predecessors*, "There were eight brave applicants from Stowe Junior College Division who were willing to invade the women's domain."²⁸ In 1941, Buckner was its first male graduate. Once again, remaining in the neighborhood, he accepted a mathematics teaching position at his former high school.

During the same period, Buckner enrolled in graduate school in

Evanston, Illinois. Unable to enroll in the segregated universities in Missouri, Buckner completed his graduate work at Northwestern University. He received a master's degree in 1946.²⁹ His acceptance to the university was probably no easy feat since the university during the Jim Crow years only accepted a small number of African American students each year. They also discriminated against the students by requiring only African Americans to find housing in either private homes or the YMCA. It is unknown where Buckner stayed when he attended the university, but the housing experience at Northwestern University could be one reason he volunteered with the YMCA for so many years. He continued his education at Columbia University in New York and Iowa State University, the university that awarded his mother her master's degree, more proof of her influence.

Like his mother, who spent her entire professional career with SLPS, Buckner worked for the district from the year he graduated from STC until his death in 1977. He taught mathematics at Sumner from 1943 to 1960 and again, from 1964 to 1968 where he also served as the department chairperson and student advisor. The amount of time he invested in teaching mathematics suggests he enjoyed it. In an article Buckner wrote about what he believed to be the fraternity's next wave of innovation he also spoke about his teaching experience. He wrote,

I am privileged to teach. It has been my privilege to share the lives of many young people who are headed for the stars. For example, a few in California include the Director of Ground Systems Control for North America Aviation Corporation; another is a design engineer, Rocket Thrust Chambers, at Aerojet General Corporation; another is aeronautical engineer, who at Hughes Tool Company, directed the design and construction of a rail launched, computer guided, jet propelled missile system. Now let me remind you that these are all Negroes, graduated from high school before 1954.³⁰

Besides teaching, Buckner assisted with numerous other activities in support of Sumner throughout his teaching career. For example, an alumnus, who was a student when Buckner taught at Sumner, said he was surprised when Buckner jettisoned his usual double-breasted suit to don attire to referee football games. He said Buckner was very overweight but it did not prevent him from refereeing the games. Although Buckner was single and had no children, the band program for the spring of 1949 listed him as a patron for the band's parent association.³¹ He also spent many evenings and weekends supporting students' activities, such as theatrical

performances and sporting events.

Much of Buckner's activity was a result of an interest in student advisement. While at Northwestern he wrote a paper about the joint Simmons Elementary School and Sumner High School advisement program for his Guidance Techniques & Measurements class. The framework for the program situated the teacher in the role of counselor for the child. The purpose of the program was for the teacher to help the child uncover his vocational interest through the exploration of occupations. At the end of the child's eighth-grade year, the Simmons' teachers escorted all eighth-grade students from the elementary school to Sumner for orientation. The continuation of the program at the high school included children going on field trips, viewing films about occupations, and talking with professionals about careers. The program aligned with Harris' community engagement program that focused on understanding children's needs.

Additionally, Buckner served on Sumner's sports banquet committee and was responsible for introducing the local guest speakers like Bob Burns, a sports editor for the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* in 1954 and Alfred Fleishman, the president of Fleishman-Hillard in 1955.³² These efforts are further proof of Buckner's commitment to the community because these types of events showcased the students' accomplishments and introduced them to men with stature in the community. Additionally, many of the students, who probably lived in poverty-stricken neighborhoods, had the opportunity to study and learn from Buckner's interactions with guests who were sometimes of a different race. This thinking aligns with Buckner's assessment of students he espoused a decade later when he wrote, "today's youth ... emulate ethical and unethical people ... they do not analyze or list attributes they wish to develop ... they identify with people who seem to them to possess these attributes."³³ The guest speakers like Alfred Fleishman, who showed an interest in supporting underserved citizens gained insight into the talents and promise of Sumner's students and teachers.

In 1960, Buckner advanced to a district-level position where he served as the supervisor of secondary education from 1960 to 1964. Buckner's position as supervisor accounts for the numerous social studies, mathematics, and science resources found with his personal papers. He was also very active in many local and regional professional organizations, especially ones involving math and science. One such group was the Central Association of Science and Mathematics Teachers Incorporated (CASMT). The tone and language CAMST officers used in many letters to Buckner revealed their positive perceptions of him .

Case in point, Joe Kennedy, who in the 1960s was first, CASMT's secretary then, president, corresponded with Buckner several times. On December 1, 1963, Kennedy sent a congratulatory message to Buckner,

"My personal congratulation on your election to the Board. You deserve this honor and are perfectly capable of carrying out the responsibility which it implies. I look forward to working with you on Association problems ..."³⁴

The professional tone of the letter acknowledged Buckner's achievement and revealed Kennedy's confidence in Buckner's leadership. Assuming if Buckner was White the letter would not include language about his capabilities, the letter was a reminder of Jim Crowism. In another letter to Buckner dated October 8, 1967, Kennedy mentioned a recommendation of Buckner and his colleagues from someone outside of the school district. His letter read, "Sister Valeria told me you are the ones in St. Louis to count on."³⁵ Sister H. Valeria O'Connor, C.S.S. of St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Missouri, served on the Board of Directors. The fact that a colleague, outside of SLPS, knew enough about his work record to recommend him to the president of CASMT, suggested his work ethic was gaining positive attention in the local community and region.

With the CASMT example and others, it seems reasonable to suggest Buckner's strengths included organizing and collaborating with diverse groups of people to achieve organization goals. Both are excellent skills for community activism. Accordingly, Buckner was the CASMT's chairman for the convention's local arrangements committee. He used his wit and intellect to attract a diverse team of people from SLPS, suburban, and parochial school districts to serve on the committee. For example, he wrote a letter to such people stating, "Greetings, You are invited and urged (LBJ arm twist) to plan to attend a planning session for the Central Association convention to be held on Saturday, February 24, 1968..."³⁶ His use of LBJ arm twist jokingly forewarned his colleagues that like President Lyndon B. Johnson, he was going to wheedle, cajole, or entice them to get their support. It also showcases Buckner's forwardness. One of his former colleagues described Buckner as, "... jovial behavior but could be dead serious and outspoken when he wanted to be." Furthermore, he said, "Buckner had quite a wit and the ability to cut you to pieces with his tongue when he deemed it was necessary."³⁷

In 1968, the superintendent appointed Buckner Principal, yet, he only served two years in the position. Buckner was the first St. Louis native and Sumner alumnus to serve as principal at his alma mater, and one of three principals who first served on the faculty as a teacher and then principal. With the exception of a school newspaper, schedules, and a few miscellaneous papers, there was very little documentation about his principalship included with his personal papers. Buckner noted in the Sumner one-hundred year souvenir book, under his leadership the board expanded Sumner's building to accommodate four-hundred additional students. Also, with the continuation of a strong academic program, there

was an increase in scholarships awarded to seventy graduating seniors in excess of a half million dollars. In an interview with the Sumner news reporter, Buckner stated, "I had no idea of being the principal and didn't even fill out an application... and he stated he was happy with his old position as the mathematics teacher."³⁸ Buckner told the reporter there would be few changes to the school except for some modernization of systems. In 1971, Acting Superintendent Ernest Jones assigned Buckner to Supervisor of Curriculum which was his last position with SLPS.³⁹

Buckner's community service flourished as much as his career with SLPS. Letters, minutes from meetings, and other materials in his personal papers revealed he was deeply involved in many of the organizations he served. Some of these organizations like the YMCA, National Association for Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and Boys Scouts of America were national in scope. Other organizations Buckner supported like the Annie Malone Children and Family Service Center or the Ferrier Harris Home for the Aged were local organizations created to fill voids or challenge injustices in the community.

Of all the boards Buckner served, his service to the YMCA, a community partner to STC, was the most extensive with service on local, regional, national, and world boards of directors. For example, in the list of community service work included in Buckner's funeral program, the YMCA comprised over twenty lines. A few examples of his YMCA service encompassed the board of directors of the West Central Area Council from 1945 to 1972, National Board of YMCA from 1969 to 1975, and the World Alliance as delegate in 1947, 1955, 1969, 1973, and 1977. From the dates on the YMCA correspondence, Buckner's volunteer work with the YMCA seems to have started in the 1940s, the same time he started teaching at Sumner. This was also around the same time the YMCA's National Council passed its 1946 resolution to end segregation; however, segregation in local YMCAs lingered well into the late 1950s.⁴⁰ It was not until the YMCA's establishment of committees such as the Committee for Interracial Advancement did change occur. In 1967, an adopted resolution required all YMCAs to annually certify their policies so they did not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or natural origin.⁴¹

Accordingly, educated middle-class African American men like Buckner supported the segregated YMCAs because they believed in the importance of making its services available to underserved African Americans.⁴² Most African American YMCA branches offered activities to its members as well as the community at large. Services included rooms for organizations to host meetings, training to enhance job skills, and housing.⁴³ However, like segregated schools, the facilities of most African American YMCA branches were often inferior to White YMCA branches and lacked resources.

The inordinate amount of time Buckner spent supporting the YMCA attested to his belief in the benefits of the organization. Moreover, the positive feedback he received from YMCA officers and members affirmed patrons benefitted from his contributions. For example, Leo B. Marsh wrote to Buckner congratulating him on his ascension to President of the West Central Area Council. Marsh, elected Secretary for Interracial Services of the National Council of the YMCA in 1954, was the first African American President of the Association of YMCA Secretaries.⁴⁴ His letter to Buckner on March 31, 1966, read,

Congratulations upon having been elected as President of the West Central Area Council. Through the years you have been an active worker and leader in local, Area, and national YMCA activities and programs. This is, indeed, an appropriate and deserving recognition by your associates of your leadership. I am confident that you will do an excellent job.⁴⁵

Another example of positive feedback Buckner received was a thank you note from a young YMCA member. Reading that note now, I assume the author is a young member because of the penmanship. He wrote,

Dear Mr. Buckner, Thank you for your donation because your donation have help me get a scholarship. With your help I got a chang to do a little traveling and helping the Y,M,C,A, Thank you for your domation. Johnny.⁴⁶

Johnny's thank you note not only highlighted Buckner's financial contribution, it also illustrated the importance of accommodating segregated organizations. Since social and economic policies during Jim Crow restricted where African Americans lived, many children living in high poverty neighborhoods did not venture outside of their neighborhoods. Johnny's experience with the YMCA not only exposed him to life outside of his neighborhood, it also gave him purpose.

As a delegate for the YMCA's World Alliance, Buckner traveled to conferences in Edinburg, England in 1947, Paris, France in 1955, Nottingham, England in 1969, Kampala, Uganda in 1973, and Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1977.⁴⁷ In the early 1900s, the YMCA's African American leadership used the World's Conferences to speak out against Jim Crow. When the Council held the conference in the United States, the discrimination against some of its members resulted in the 1931 resolution. Although it was not a binding agreement, it forced American YMCAs to confront the issue of separate organizations.⁴⁸ Buckner's first conference in

1947 occurred just one year after the YMCA's 1946 resolution that slowly ended segregation in the YMCA. He passed away shortly after his return from the conference in Buenos Aires.

In 1981, the YMCA Lamplighter Society honored Buckner posthumously at their 10th annual dinner held on May 29, 1981. His mother attended the dinner where Buckner was one of the honorees. Dick Stoll, Vice President of Development of the YMCA of Greater St. Louis wrote,

Because this year is a little special, we want to recall those important past members who reside in our memory in a special way. We can best honor John by having you be with us for this evening together. I urge you to come.⁴⁹

Annie Malone Children and Family Service Center may have been one of Buckner's favorite organizations because of his extensive involvement with them. Overall, he devoted thirty-one years of service to the organization. He served on the board from 1947 to 1959, and was President for the last five of those years. In 1888, Sarah Newton established the organization to support orphaned African American children, although currently, its broadened mission includes support for families, elderly, and community through numerous services. His signature organizational skills are visible throughout the organization's minutes in Buckner's statements helping the organization improve its processes and systems. Perhaps Buckner's continued support for the organization was due to its proximity and support for children. This dedication was also seen in his willingness to take on diverse responsibilities. Whether acting as president or participating in the yearly parade, the organization's perennial fundraiser, Buckner saw no job as too lowly. In memory of Buckner, the Board wrote the following,

Mr. John D. Buckner expired July 17, 1977. His ready wit, his creative ability for foresightedness embodied him with vision for the future. Mr. Buckner's great knowledge and his genius were obvious to all who knew him. His love, concern and interest in Annie Malone enabled him to give generously of his time to assist in every endeavor and daily operation of the Home. The Home was remembered in his will.⁵⁰

In support of fair housing, Buckner worked with two organizations, his social fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha and The Greater St. Louis Freedom of Residence Committee. It's likely Buckner's involvement in fair housing

was due to the slow progress after the landmark Supreme Court case, *Shelley v. Kraemer* in which the Court determined restrictive covenants on real estate were unenforceable. Yet, another reason was his fraternity's entry into the housing market. In the mid-1960s the Alpha Phi Alpha Building Foundation became a non-profit redeveloper in federally assisted housing projects. This initiative provided local chapters and regions across the nation with capital to support request for federal funds for sponsorship of urban housing. Buckner's chapter sponsored three housing developments. The first was Alpha Gardens Apartments comprised of one hundred forty-five apartments located in the West End of the city. With the slow development of low-income income housing in St. Louis, the fraternity's housing units brought relief to families in need of affordable housing.

From the assortment of FoR papers found in Buckner's personal papers, it was difficult to determine his role with the organization. In 1961, the FoR was comprised of citizens interested in helping African Americans secure housing in neighborhoods of choice. This organization is best known for its support of the Jones family, the interracial couple in the landmark Supreme Court case *Jones v. Alfred H. Mayer Company*, who was unable to purchase a home in a St. Louis subdivision. The Court decided in favor of the Jones and barred discrimination against African Americans in the sale and rental of all property. There were several letters found in Buckner's personal papers from African Americans who complained about discrimination. Case in point, one citizen stated an apartment was available when she inquired about it over the telephone; however, when she arrived on the premises, it was no longer available. In these cases, FoR helped many citizens by contacting the companies and informing them of the law which caused many to retract their statements and rent the facilities to African Americans.

In addition to Buckner's service on boards and committees, he collaborated with others who invited him to participate in their events supporting social justice in St. Louis. This was certainly the case on August 28, 1962, when the St. Louis Argus' newspaper's President Nannie Mitchell-Turner, Publisher Frank W. Mitchell, Sr., and Executive Editor Howard B. Woods reached out to him to assist with their second annual conference. They asked him to serve as chairman of the newspaper's fall conference section on political affairs.⁵¹ In the early 1900s, two brothers, Joseph Everett Mitchell and William Mitchell, first created the paper as an insurance newspaper; however, it morphed into one of the nation's leading African American newspapers. Its purpose was to promote activism in the African American community. After sponsoring its second annual Summit Conference of Negro Leadership in September, 1962, the St. Louis Argus' president, publisher, and executive editor wrote to Buckner the following

month to thank him for his contributions.

As you know the second annual Summit Conference of Negro Leadership was a tremendous success. This could not have been so without the generous contribution of many individuals like yourself who work hard to try and resolve some of the complex problems of this era. From all of us here at the St. Louis Argus we extend our sincere gratitude and thanks for everything. In the very near future we hope to make available a complete transcript of the entire proceedings.⁵²

Buckner, a stalwart in the community, deserves recognition for his numerous contributions to the St. Louis community in support of an integrated and fair society. Like his mother, he devoted much of his energy, time, and money to the advancement of African Americans. In his will he bequeathed money to organizations like Annie Malone, the YMCA, and perhaps others not made public from his personal papers. As an alumnus of STC, Buckner was a living example of one of its goals, life-long community volunteerism. Working with many of the college's partner organizations over the span of his career, Buckner created new spaces for African Americans to participate and use their voices during and after the Jim Crow era in St. Louis. His ongoing YMCA volunteerism from serving as a member of the Board of Managers of the Page Park Branch to that of a delegate to the YMCA's highest decision-making body of the World Alliance, World Council, showed his commitment to the community.

Buckner's fellow SHS alumni described him in the yearbook as a clever scholar and the correspondence from many of the officers of the organizations he supported affirmed it. Overall, Buckner's willingness to engage the community on behalf of marginalized African Americans during his professional career speaks volumes. His inclination to fight against the marginalization of African Americans was evident in his participation in organizations like FoR which protested unfair housing. He showed the same fortitude as he supported the operations of Annie Malone Children and Family Service Center to assist children. Today, his work lives on in others as they continue advocating for social justice with not only former STC partners, but new ones as well. His legacy is proof of his lifelong dedication to African American rights in all aspects of his life.

Notes

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³ Michael Fultz, "African American Teachers in the South, 1890-1940: Powerlessness and the Ironies of Expectation and Protest," *History of Education Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (1995): 406.

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⁵ Vanessa Siddle Walker, "Valued Segregated Schools for African American Children in the South, 1935-1969: A Review of Common Themes and Characteristics," *Review of Educational Research* 70, no. 3 (2000): 265.

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¹⁰ Letter from Kenneth Brown Billups to Sumner Hall of Fame Committee (May 21, 1981), S1114 Buckner Papers, box 6, folder 262.

¹¹ Vanessa Garry, "What Preservice Teachers Can Learn from One Jim Crow Community Engagement Program," *American Educational History Journal* 44, no. 2 (2016): 21; Linda M. Perkins, "The Impact of the 'Cult of True Womanhood' on the Education of Black Women," *Journal of Social Issues* 39, no. 3 (1983): 18-19; Stephanie J Shaw, *What a Woman Ought to Be and to Do: Black Professional Women Workers During the Jim Crow Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 90-91.

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¹³ Letter from the Colored Citizens of St. Louis to the Board of Education (June 11, 1907), S1114 Buckner Papers, box 4, folder 151.

¹⁴ Mark A. Miller, *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Historic and Architectural Resources of The Ville, St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri*, (Missouri Department of Natural Resources, 2011), 20.

¹⁵ Anonymous (former colleague) written statement for Vanessa B. Garry (September 27, 2017), statements 1 and 2, transcripts.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Ruth M. Harris, *Stowe Teachers College and Her Predecessors* (Boston, The Christopher Publishing House, 1967), 13.

¹⁸ Biographical Sketch of Oscar Minor Waring (n.d.), S1114 Buckner Papers, box 4, folder 149.

¹⁹ Centennial Edition (1975), S1114 Buckner Papers, box 3, folder 148.

²⁰ Pricilla Dowden-White, *Groping Toward Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011), 40.

²¹ Sumner High School Yearbook Picture (1939), S1114 Buckner Papers, box 2, folder 68.

²² Sumner High School May Festival news article (May 20, 1938), S1114 Buckner Papers, box 3, folder 107.

²³ Letter from Roscoe Robinson, Jr., Brigadier General, S1114 Buckner Papers, box 1, folder 17.

²⁴ Harris, *Stowe Teachers College and Her Predecessors*, 123.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 121.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 69.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

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³⁰ John D. Buckner, "Alpha Faces Renewal," *The Sphinx Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.* 53, no. 3 (Oct, 1967), 31.

³¹ Band Program (1949), S1114 Buckner Papers, box 3, folder 99.

³² Awards Programs (1954 and 1955), S1114 Buckner Papers, box 3, folders 109, and 110.

³³ Buckner, 31.

³⁴ Letter from Joe Kennedy to John D. Buckner (December 1, 1963), S0468 Buckner, John Davis (1922-1977) Papers, box 1, folder 17, The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis, University of Missouri-St. Louis Libraries, St. Louis, Missouri.

³⁵ Letter from Joe Kennedy to John D. Buckner (October 8, 1968), S1114 Buckner Papers, box 1, folder 21.

³⁶ Letter from John D. Buckner to President Gale, Vice President Yager, Business Manager Winslow, Chairmen, Local Committees, (n.d.), S1114 Buckner Papers, box 1, folder 21.

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⁴⁰ Nina Mjagkij, *Light in the Darkness: African Americans and the YMCA, 1852-1946* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 127.

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⁴³ Nina Mjagkij, "A Peculiar Alliance: Julius Rosenwald, the YMCA, and African Americans, 1910-1933," *The American Jewish Archives Journal* 44, no. 2 (1992), 595.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Letter from Leo B. Marsh to John D. Buckner (March 31, 1966), S0468 Buckner Papers, box 3, folder 94.

⁴⁶ Letter from Johnny to John D. Buckner (March 31, 1966), S0468 Buckner Papers, box 1, folder 16.

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⁴⁸ Nina Mjagkij, *Light in the Darkness*, 122.

⁴⁹ Dick Stoll to Julia Davis (n.d.), S1114 Buckner Papers, box 6, folder 262.

⁵⁰ Bulletin (n.d.), S0468 Buckner Papers, box 4, folder 97.

⁵¹ Letter from Mrs. Nannie M. Turner, Frank W. Mitchell, and Howard B. Woods to John D. Buckner (August 28, 1962), S1114 Buckner Papers.

⁵² Letter from Mrs. Nannie M. Turner, Frank W. Mitchell, and Howard B. Woods to John D. Buckner (October 10, 1962), S1114 Buckner Papers.

Fig. 1. John D. Buckner, n.d., S1114 Buckner Papers, box 6, folder 264

The Educational Administration of William Tecumseh Sherman: A Northern Military Officer's Tenure at a Southern University Prior to the American Civil War

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William Tecumseh Sherman, a Union General known for his “March to the Sea,” led the life of a soldier, businessman, *and* educational administrator. Largely remembered and recognized for his Civil War conquests, Sherman employed stern military tactics during the war years (1861-1865) and coined the phrase “War is Hell.”¹ He is less known, however, for his role as the first president or superintendent of the Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy, now named the Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College (LSU). Modern biographies of Sherman, such as James Lee McDonough’s text, *William Tecumseh Sherman: In Service of My Country*, and Robert L. O’Connell’s, *Fierce Patriot: The Tangled Lives of William Tecumseh Sherman*, focus on the famed military officer’s lived experiences in the army undoubtedly due to his influential role in the Union victory over the Confederate cause. These same authors provide ample details regarding Sherman’s family life, his government work after the war, and his mental difficulties associated with combat leadership. Despite this copious life exploration, Sherman’s short-lived tenure as a college administrator is treated in passing, with only a few pages dedicated to events associated with higher education in Louisiana.² Even in his memoirs, Sherman briefly

recounts his employment at the seminary. What does exist therein largely centers on the political climate of Louisiana prior to its secession in 1861 and not so much the experiences of Sherman or his students during that first eventful year of the institution's existence.³

As a significant historical figure, Sherman was one of the only Union officers to direct a southern military college immediately prior to the onset of the Civil War. Likewise, he is the only college president to vacate his leadership post to rejoin the Union armies and fight against the secessionist South. In the absence of biographical literature dedicated to Sherman's higher education administrative experience, this article details his life while at the Louisiana seminary prior to his appointment as a Union military general. It showcases how Sherman's personal military background, combined with curricular considerations of peer military institutions and interactions with southern citizens intertwined to influence the burgeoning academy. Indeed, this study links the narratives of both Sherman the educational administrator and the early seminary. These narratives illustrate crucial events that occurred before the institution opened; the implementation of military curricula modeled after other popular military colleges; and how Sherman played a part in the history of Louisiana higher education. Moreover, this study depicts southern social perceptions of a northern military officer presiding over Louisiana's newest, state-supported college in the pro-slavery, pro-secession South and details Sherman's thoughts on regional politics and slavery. In addition, the experiences of LSU's early faculty and students are described in relation to Sherman's leadership and disciplinary actions. Finally, long-lasting aspects of Sherman's influence on the seminary are provided to better illuminate how this northern officer helped shape the seminary's trajectory to become a well-known university in the American South.

Before working as an academic administrator, Major Sherman (he was promoted to the rank of colonel in 1861, brigadier general later that year, major general in 1862, lieutenant general in 1866, and, finally, commanding general of the U.S. Army in 1869⁴) engaged in military assignments and business negotiations. Afterwards, as the head of an institution of higher education, he demonstrated his leadership abilities by opening and effectively managing the fledgling academy accompanied by an able set of professors and a dedicated governing board. Local citizens acknowledged him for developing a rigorous military curriculum and ensuring that the sons of Louisianans received a practical, highly-disciplined education. Louisiana legislators wanted the seminary to be a place of learning where all white male citizens (inclusive of the state's diverse ethnic, religious, economic, and social-class factions⁵) could receive an education that

would enhance job prospects for potential graduates. Even so, unruly students, southern politics, and offers of higher salaried employment caused Sherman, at times, to consider resignation. Ultimately, Louisiana's secession from the Union forced him to end his administration.⁶ Sherman's role in the Civil War marked him as a distinguished Union General, but his foundational actions as the first president of Louisiana State University laid the cornerstone for more than 150 years of formal higher education instruction in Louisiana—a state which, until the end of the 1850s, played host to an unsuccessful set of colleges that did more to showcase the region's antebellum social class quarrels than they did to provide quality instruction.

Early Life, Career, and the Transition to Educational Administration

Born in Lancaster, Ohio, on February 8, 1820, Sherman was one of eleven children of Charles R. and Mary Hoyt Sherman. As a result of his father's admiration for the Shawnee chief Tecumseh, Charles named his son William *Tecumseh* Sherman. Charles' death in 1829 left the family financially unstable. Although the older sons and daughters had entered professional practices or married, the younger children were dispersed and sent to live with friends and family. William became the ward of his uncle, Thomas Ewing, who financed young Sherman's education. After completing a general education in Lancaster and mathematic studies on his own, Sherman was admitted to West Point in the spring of 1836. After four years of military training, Sherman graduated with fellow cadets such as Paul Octave Hébert (later fourteenth governor of Louisiana and Confederate Brigadier General) and George Henry Thomas (later Union Major General Thomas).⁷ Sherman later noted that, "At the academy I was not considered a good soldier, for at no time was I selected for any office, but remained a private throughout the whole four years."⁸ Even so, Sherman's course grades put him at the top of his class. However, his disregard for the demerit system (Sherman earned approximately 150 demerits while enrolled) lowered his graduation rank to sixth.⁹

After graduating from West Point, Sherman became a second lieutenant in the Third U.S. Artillery. Soon after, he relocated to Governor's Island, New York, to command a company of recruits destined to serve in Florida. During his Florida assignment, Sherman saw his first real action in the Second Seminole War and was advanced to first lieutenant and re-stationed in Moultrie, South Carolina (1846). At the onset of the Mexican American War (1846-1848), Sherman was responsible for recruiting soldiers. He and his recruits were eventually sent to California. However, Sherman's administrative duties meant that he did not participate in

battle. In 1848, he escorted the military governor of California, Colonel Richard B. Mason, to investigate regional gold claims. The affirmation of gold spurred a large-scale gold rush and resulted in Sherman receiving a promotion to captain.

Two years later Captain Sherman married Thomas Ewing's daughter, Eleanor (referred to by family members as "Ellen"). Following the ceremony, the couple moved to St. Louis and later New Orleans. Tiring of military life, Sherman resigned from the army and tried his hand at the banking industry, only to meet with disaster. Partnering himself with a bank named "Lucas, Turner & Co.," he moved again to California. Seven years later, the bank suffered financial collapse and Sherman began his hunt for another occupation. The following year, Sherman worked as a partner in a law firm, but found his meager wages insufficient to support his wife and family. In the latter half of the 1850s Sherman attempted to earn a living as a farmer, but that too failed and he returned to the military. He contacted the War Department in hopes of filling a vacant paymaster position. To his dismay, no such position was available. However, Sherman learned that the state of Louisiana was organizing a new military college. After conversing with the Secretary of War, John Buchanan Floyd, Sherman applied for the position of superintendent in a letter addressed to Louisiana governor, Robert C. Wickliffe, and the founding institution's Board of Supervisors.¹⁰

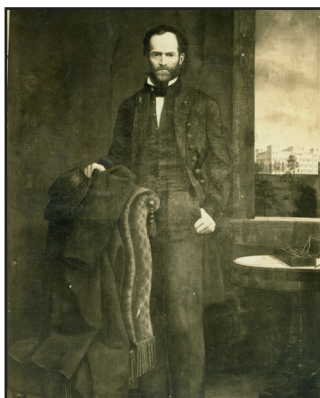


Figure 1.

Portrait of William Tecumseh Sherman, first superintendent of LSU, 1860. Image courtesy of LSU Photograph Collection, Louisiana State University Archives, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge L.A.

Sherman's application stood out among the approximately 100 verbose submissions that listed applicants' family ties and supporting cohorts. His letter was decidedly brief, but included the names of three notable military

figures, all of whom would become generals in the Confederate Army.¹¹

Governor Wickliffe, president, Board of Supervisors
Sir: Having been informed that you wish a superintendent and professor of engineering in the Military Academy of Louisiana, soon to be opened, I beg leave to offer myself for the position. I send no testimonials . . . I will only say that I am a graduate of West Point and ex-army officer; and if you care to know further about me, I refer you to the officers of the army from General Scott down, and in your own state to Col. Braxton Bragg, Major G. T. Beauregard, and Richard Taylor, Esq.
Yours respectfully,

W. T. Sherman¹²

Upon reading Sherman's letter, Sam Hardin, a member of the board announced, "By God, he's my man. He's a man of sense. I'm ready for the vote!" The other members chided Hardin for disregarding the remaining applications. Hardin responded to the selection committee, "When you get through [reading], call me and I'll come back and vote for Sherman." Not long after Hardin's remarks Sherman was unanimously elected to the position of superintendent. While at home visiting with family and friends in 1859, Sherman received news that he had been selected to administer the new Louisiana academy and that he would need to move South as soon as possible. The military officer's original justification for applying to an administrative post was to provide a stable income for his wife, Ellen, and their five children: Maria (b. 1851), Mary (b. 1852), William (b. 1854), Thomas (b. 1856), and Eleanor Mary (b. 1859). Sherman and his wife had three more children during the 1860s: Rachel, Charles, & Philemon.¹³ Although Sherman had no first-hand experience as a teacher or educational administrator, the governing board felt that his military and office supervision background, in addition to his West Point education, made him an ideal candidate. As a peer instructor recalled, Sherman "was not a scholar in the professional sense; not a man of varied and extensive literary and scientific acquirements, not a general reader. He was eminently practical; and whatever subject it was necessary or desirable for him to be informed about, his strong, quick mind soon went to the bottom of it."¹⁴ Nonetheless, Sherman had a great appreciation for academics in general. After the seminary opened, this pedagogical admiration became apparent to the faculty and their respect for the superintendent increased.¹⁵

Members of the governing board were all too eager for Sherman to arrive. The governor and Louisiana legislators charged the board with creating a stable educational institution that would instill both knowledge

and discipline in its wards. Before the academy's founding, Louisiana played host to a series of failed educational attempts. In 1811, the Collège d'Orléans opened in New Orleans. Plagued by social class conflicts, poor attendance, and inadequate funds, the college closed in 1825.¹⁶ Shortly thereafter, rival institutions, the College of Louisiana and Jefferson College, were opened to appease Creole and Anglo-American demands for separate institutions divided by linguistics and ethnic heritage.¹⁷ Other short-lived, state-funded antebellum institutions were founded, such as the College of Rapides and Franklin College. Neither, however, proved to be financially viable nor to have a sound curriculum per the state legislature's purview.¹⁸ Tired of supporting a fractured and failing set of colleges, the Louisiana legislature withdrew financial support in 1845 to refocus state educational efforts and fund a single, state-supported institution with a mission to enhance the region through practically educated, respectable graduates.¹⁹ Concerned with Louisiana's undisciplined youth, the legislature sought to erect an institution that would quash the indolent and oppositional spirit of wealthy, entitled students. To impart a rigorous education ordered by staunch rules and regulations, military curricula were selected as the best fit for the new academy.²⁰

The Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy was one of 12 state-supported military colleges founded before the Civil War. These publicly funded institutions (in addition to the 70 southern private cadet colleges founded in the latter half of the antebellum period) were part of a growing trend to provide young men with practical education. Moreover, these institutions focused on improving social mobility for middle-class students and engendering civility and patriotism in students heralding from aristocratic families.²¹ As several historians have explained, these institutions were not founded to train militia for secessionist causes and subsequent battles.²² With Sherman directing Louisiana's only military college, the governing board prompted the institution's new leader to study and collect information on exemplary southern military institutions.

After his administrative appointment, Sherman received a package from the board of supervisors that contained "The Rules and Regulations of the Virginia Military Academy," and other documents detailing the Virginia institution's curricular structure. From this, Sherman surmised the proposed nature of the newly established Louisiana seminary. To gather information on the general governance of military academies, Sherman traveled to the Kentucky Military Institute and examined their curriculum. Sherman also contacted educational administrators at West Point and studied the military training tactics at European colleges. He made various inquiries concerning European military academies to Captain George B.

McClellan of the Illinois Central Railroad, who had extensive personal experiences with such institutions.²³ Sherman combined his knowledge of military instruction, the information gathered from these academies, and a wealth of information derived from books such as Captain Randolph B. Marcy's *The Prairie Traveler*; J. Dumaine's *Instruction pour l'enseignement de la Gymnastique dans les corps de troupes et les etablissements militaire*; Dionysius Lardner's *The Steam Engine*; Simeon Borden's *Formulae for the Location and Construction of Railroads*; Hemran Haupt's analytical text *Bridge Construction*; and Henry Moseley's *Mechanical Engineering* to focus the Louisiana college's curriculum on useful job-centric subject matter.²⁴

Indeed, Sherman's educational philosophy revolved around pragmatic instruction, which, as he saw it, had the potential to bolster the continued progress of Louisiana via engineering, mechanics, and militarism. If anything, his pedagogical ideals closely resembled those of Brigadier General Sylvanus Thayer, one of the first superintendents of West Point. Named the "Father of West Point," Thayer was appointed by President James Monroe to administer the New York institution in 1817. Thayer established at West Point the first college of engineering in the United States. He also instituted a strict regimen of mental and physical exercise, a rigid disciplinary system of demerits and punishments (which, at times, included expulsion), and an honor code based on honesty and respectability.²⁵ Although Sherman enrolled at West Point three years after Thayer had resigned, the stern culture of science and rigorous training remained. As has been noted, Sherman based much of the Louisiana seminary's early curricula on West Point, military colleges in Virginia and Kentucky, and his own educational experienced gleaned while a West Point cadet. Therefore, it is possible that Thayer's pedagogical ideals influenced Sherman and were echoed at early LSU.

Despite his understanding that the Louisiana institution was to be an academy of practical learning with strict military training, Sherman was wary to form such an institution in the secession-minded South. While in transit to Louisiana, Sherman wrote to his wife regarding his apprehension.

I have heard men of good sense say that the union of the states any longer was impossible, and that the South was preparing for a change. If such a change be contemplated and overt acts be attempted of course I will not go with the South . . . I merely allude to these things as I have heard a good deal lately about such things, and generally that the Southern States by military colleges and organizations were looking to a dissolution of the

Union. If they design to protect themselves . . . I will help;
if they propose to leave the Union . . . then I stand by Ohio
and the northwest.²⁶

Sherman consoled himself by justifying the need for a southern military college due to the region's want to bridle undisciplined boys and young men.²⁷ Indeed, leading Louisianans encouraged Sherman to craft a rigorous institution. Even Braxton Bragg, future commander of the Confederate Army of Tennessee, wrote to Sherman congratulating him for accepting the administrative post and wished him well as he opened the seminary.²⁸

Founding and Staffing

After Sherman arrived in Louisiana and traveled to the large, architecturally embellished single-building seminary crowned with towers and rows of cornice, he remarked, "The building is a gorgeous palace, altogether too good for its purpose."²⁹ Located in Pineville, Louisiana, the college was near the banks of the Red River. The site for the institution was chosen in 1852 and in 1853 the Louisiana legislature purchased the land.³⁰ However, construction did not begin until 1856. In 1858, the institution was scheduled to open, but faulty brickwork delayed the college's progress. A year later the building was repaired.³¹ With the arrival of the seminary's leader, administrative work began. From his correspondence, Sherman indicated that the building sat atop a hill surrounded by a recently cleared area of pine and oak. The surrounding countryside had plenty of timber and several springs that provided potable water. Sherman observed that the soil was poor, but that was acceptable, as he did not intend to allow the student cadets to farm. In fact, the board of supervisors had made no provision for the college to host agricultural classes. The institution was to be dedicated to science, engineering, and military training alone.³²

Once his assessment of the grounds was complete, Sherman turned his attention to the single imposing building and its inscribed motto above the main entrance: "By the liberality of the general government the union esto perpetua [let it be perpetual]." Complete with intricately scrawled woodwork and spacious rooms, the building was devoid of furnishings. The legislature had spent in excess of \$18,000 on the land and building but had failed to purchase chairs, tables, desks, and educational materials. Sherman was made aware that he would need to select textbooks and that he, along with members of the newly hired faculty, would select all instructional materials. After consulting with local carpenters, Sherman set them to work crafting tables and chalkboards out of wood discarded

from the seminary's construction.³³

Thereafter, Sherman closed his lodgings at a local inn and boarded in the seminary building to oversee its physical and curricular progress. Since there were no furniture stores or printers in the local town of Pineville or nearby Alexandria, Sherman traveled to New Orleans to purchase cots, books, and cabinets.³⁴ Sherman's busy schedule may have been a welcome distraction as the faculty had yet to arrive and he was alone at the seminary. His nights were particularly solitary as the carpenters left before dark. In letters to his wife, Sherman described his outlook on the situation. "I am lonely enough out here alone in this big house, but will have plenty to divert me the next two weeks, and afterwards, the session will be so near at hand with new duties and new things. I suppose my patience will be tested to its utmost by a parcel of wayward boys."³⁵

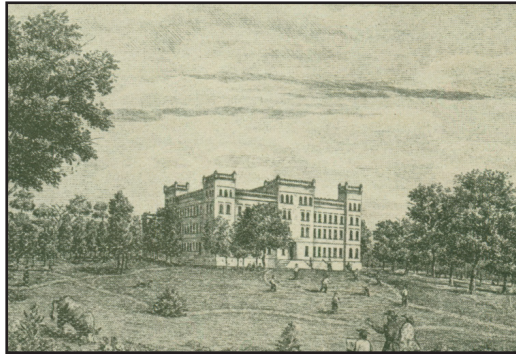


Figure 2.

Drawing of the Seminary, 1860. Image courtesy of LSU Photograph Collections, Louisiana State University Archives. LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge L.A.

Despite his lack of companionship, Sherman pressed forward, cognizant that the seminary had to be prepared to receive students in a matter of months. Soon, the faculty began to arrive. Professors Francis W. Smith, Anthony Vallas, and Berti St. Ange arrived in November. Smith had been selected to serve as professor of chemistry, St. Ange as professor of French and modern languages, and Vallas as professor of mathematics. English professor David F. Boyd did not arrive until after Christmas, 1859.³⁶ In a letter to Boyd, Sherman displayed his frustration with the English professor. In the superintendent's opinion, Boyd should have arrived with the other faculty to confer on such issues as writing rules and establishing daily operations. Sherman stated in his letter to Boyd: "I think much of our future success [depends] on the appearance of our start, and therefore any want of preparation at the onset would be embarrassing."³⁷

Despite a rough beginning, Sherman and Boyd eventually became close colleagues.³⁸

Preceding the opening of the seminary, Sherman and the board of supervisors determined institutional regulations and requirements for admission. Newspaper advertisements clearly specified that all who wished to enroll in the seminary had to be Louisiana residents, of good moral character, able to read and write, and in possession of a fair understanding of arithmetic.³⁹ Also, each applicant had to be between fifteen and twenty-one years of age. No other requirement was as strictly enforced as was the state citizenship stipulation. The Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy was to be first and foremost a college for the sons of Louisiana.⁴⁰

Slavery, Politics, and Familial Ties

In the midst of furnishing the seminary, corresponding with faculty, and dining with Louisiana's elite, Sherman was careful to remain guarded on the topics of politics, state secession, and abolition. During his candidacy for Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, John Sherman (William Sherman's younger brother) signed an abolitionist document known as a "helper's book." With his signature, John was confirmed as an abolitionist. William Sherman, ever aware of his family ties, understood that his relationship with his brother might invoke questions regarding his stance on slavery.⁴¹ At a dinner-party, hosted by the newly elected Louisiana Governor Thomas Overton Moore, Sherman listened as the governor and other Louisiana politicians discussed the issue of slavery. Moore eventually drew Sherman into the conversation by asking the superintendent to inform all present as to his stance on John Sherman's "abolitionist" act and comment on the existence of slavery in Louisiana. Sherman opposed the notion that his brother was "in title" an abolitionist by explaining that, although John preferred to remain in the "free states," he would never consider taking from Southerners what they considered their property—slaves. Sherman further explained his brother's actions and concluded with his views on slavery:

The [current] people of Louisiana were hardly responsible for slavery, as they had inherited it; that I found two distinct conditions of slavery, domestic and field hands. The domestic slaves, employed by the families, were probably better treated than any slaves on earth; but the conditions of the field hands was different depending more on the temper and disposition of their masters and

overseers than were those employed about the house . . . were I a citizen of Louisiana and a member of the Legislature, I would deem it wise to bring the legal conditions of the slaves more near the status of human beings under all Christian and civilized government. . . . I would forbid the separation of [slave] families . . . I would advise the repeal of the statute which enacted a severe penalty for even the owner to teach his slave to read or write . . .⁴²

Sherman detailed how educating slaves would not only better the master but, in time, could financially benefit the slaves themselves. To this point, Sherman recounted the story of a slave who served as a bank teller and earned \$100 a month. After learning to read and write, the slave's abilities were so strong he was given a raise to \$250 a month which resulted in the slave being able to buy his and his family's freedom.⁴³ A few quiet moments passed, then one of the dinner guests sitting next to Moore struck the table shaking glasses and silverware. "By God he's right!" the guest proclaimed and prodded a debate on the issue. The fact that Moore and his guests accepted Sherman's comments indicated that the superintendent had earned a degree of respect from his Louisiana peers.⁴⁴

Even though he had won votes of confidence from powerful Louisianans, Sherman's correspondence with his wife demonstrated a sense of uneasiness concerning how people in Louisiana perceived him. He wrote that the actions of his brother John might, in time, endanger his position as superintendent and negatively influence the seminary. He also expressed his fear of failure, ". . . hitherto I have had such bad luck . . . [in business] . . . that I fear I shall be overtaken by a similar catastrophe . . . Still if the simple fact be that my native relationship with Republicans should prejudice the institution, I would feel disposed to sacrifice myself to the fact, though the results would be very hard, for I know not what else to do."⁴⁵ Sherman, cognizant of his precarious position in Louisiana, was also aware of political turmoil regarding disunion and knew that should secession occur he would prefer to leave Louisiana and search for employment elsewhere than remain and facilitate a college in a seceded state.

Regardless, Sherman pressed on with the seminary's completion under the assumption that the institution would be prepared to admit students before Christmas. As such, several Louisianans traveled to see the castle-like academy being readied for incoming pupils.⁴⁶ As Sherman escorted visitors around the grounds, conversation often turned to secession or

slavery. Weary from keeping his composure under such pressing inquiries and debates, Sherman wrote to his uncle about the seminary guests' topics of choice: "I wish it [slavery] never had existed, for it does make mischief . . . I, of course, do not debate the question [of slavery] and, moderate as my views are, I feel that I am suspected, and if I do not actually join in the praises of Slavery I may be denounced as an abolitionist."⁴⁷ With the onset of the winter holiday season, visits became more infrequent and Sherman wrote to a member of the seminary's board of supervisors concerning a Christmas visit. In the letter, Sherman mentions his loneliness and hopes of spending the holiday in a friendly home instead of the isolated seminary building.⁴⁸ Whether or not Sherman spent the holiday in cordial company is unknown. The superintendent, however, was burdened by the issue of slavery, concerned about being denounced as an abolitionist, and ultimately, losing his position as head of the seminary. Sherman, absent his wife and family, continued to battle bouts of melancholy throughout his stay in Louisiana. If anything, his employment doubts and feelings of isolation hampered his social existence in the South. Soon, however, Sherman's isolated condition transformed as rambunctious students and hectic course schedules became the norm.

The Seminary Opens: Enrollment, Student Behavior, and Sherman's Shifting Disposition

The Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy commenced on January 2, 1860, with sixteen students. As the semester progressed, enrollment increased to 70. The institution's approved curriculum entailed four years of study that included courses on mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, mineralogy, geology, infantry tactics, and engineering, as well as English, Spanish, and French. If a student wanted to continue his studies in linguistics, he could study Latin and Greek. Sherman did not teach any courses during this first year. Rather, he was scheduled to teach civil and military engineering during students' fourth year of study. This left Sherman free to concentrate on ensuring the institution's success.⁴⁹

Under Sherman's direction, the seminary strengthened and as enrollment grew the Louisiana legislature took note. Along with forgiving the seminary's building loans, the legislature sought to increase the number of students educated gratis. Along with such generosity, an additional \$15,000 was given to add a laboratory, library, and houses for faculty.⁵⁰ Both the seminary instructors and superintendent were pleased to learn of the aforementioned. As the faculty saw it, the state government's perception of the seminary was one of efficiency and

progress. The first semester began with few troubles. However, crafting cadets out of Louisiana's youth proved difficult. Students had no training in marching or bearing military arms. Sherman chose Professor Francis W. Smith, now Major Smith, as all professors were given military rank, to drill the cadets until they resembled an orderly corps. Not long after drilling began, the first shipment of cadet uniforms arrived. The students now had standard fatigues complete with a dark blue coat emblazoned with gilt buttons and light blue pants with a black welt running down the outer seam. The uniforms impressed the cadets and drill improved as pride swelled. Sherman, wishing to reward the students' hard work, allowed the cadets to host a military ball in which pupils, clad in their uniforms, enjoyed dancing with young women while under the watchful eyes of the seminary faculty and local parents who served as chaperones. The community and cadets appeared to approve of the growing sense of decorum at the seminary.⁵¹

Likewise, Sherman's spirits seemed to lift. The once lonesome superintendent now referred to Louisiana as the land of "clover and molasses," a warm, green region he preferred to the cold winters of Ohio and the North.⁵² Sherman's appreciation of Louisiana increased as he busied himself with the seminary's daily operations. As superintendent of the Louisiana Seminary of Learning and Military Academy, Sherman often traveled to attend legislative meetings where he worked to increase the beneficiary system that provided gratis tuition grants to applicants recommended by the seminary's board of supervisors. As a result, Sherman's reputation further increased and he regularly dined with legislators and prominent community members. During this period, Sherman remarked that he was so well liked that no person had made a single cross remark about him. Even so, his loyalty to Louisiana and the seminary was tested. At the beginning of 1860, Sherman received an offer for a position at a London bank. The wages were high enough to lure him away from the seminary. When word reached the governor's office that a representative from London was traveling to meet with Sherman, state officials moved to thwart such efforts in hopes of keeping the superintendent in Louisiana. Governor Moore, along with several legislatures, regarded Sherman as the "irreplaceable superintendent," a man of experienced knowledge, and a practiced administrator.⁵³ Even students found Sherman inspirational. Despite his firm stance as a disciplinarian and the stern lectures he gave on the history and state of the Union, students followed him across campus to ask questions, listen to his military stories, and seek advice.⁵⁴ To persuade Sherman to stay, Moore increased his salary to \$5,000, which the governor supplemented from his personal accounts. Sherman, flattered by the additional pay and positive

remarks, decided to remain at the institution.⁵⁵

Now that students had settled in, mischief began. Returning to the seminary from a legislative trip in February, Sherman dealt with a series of disciplinary problems. Like other antebellum colleges such as the University of Virginia, the University of Alabama, and the University of North Carolina, unruly student behavior at the Louisiana seminary was a regular occurrence.⁵⁶ On one occasion, seminary staff found two cadets in possession of tobacco, a direct violation of the seminary's rules. The cadets complained after the tobacco was confiscated and Sherman expelled both of them for insubordination. In addition to possessing tobacco, cadets performed poorly in their studies and were considered hecklers and class clowns by the faculty. The cadets' parents complained of the administration's harsh decisions, but Sherman presented accounts of every act of mischief caused by troublemakers. Subsequently, parental complaints came to a halt.⁵⁷ On other occasions, some students considered Sherman an esteemed mentor and father figure. According to the seminary's English professor, Boyd:

One soon saw in him two men—the stern, strict, exacting man of business or duty, and the kind sympathetic friend and advisor. He made every professor and cadet at the seminary keep his place and his duty. At the same time he was the intimate social companion and confidential friend of the professors and a kind loving father to the cadets. In the “off hours” from duty he encouraged the cadets to look him up and have a talk. And often have I seen him in his private rooms nearly full of boys, listening to his story of army or western life which he loved so well to tell them. Nor could he appear on the grounds in recreation hours without the cadets one by one gathering around him for a talk.⁵⁸

In light of student behavior, positive and negative, the seminary's first term, which ended in July of 1860, was considered a success. Students went home for the summer months and Sherman left to visit his family and to make preparations for the second academic year, slated to begin in November. Leading up to his summer respite, Sherman had kept abreast of national politics and was well aware that Abraham Lincoln had grown in popularity as a presidential candidate. Sherman noted that the mention of Lincoln's name in Louisiana caused unhappy conversations regarding disunion. In a letter to his brother John, Sherman wrote, “if [Lincoln] be . . . a moderate man, things may move on, and the South become gradually

reconciled. But you may rest assured that the tone of feeling is such that Civil War and anarchy are very possible."⁵⁹ Sherman understood his place as a loyal Union military officer. He also understood that Lincoln's election would cause upheaval in the South. Judging the situation to be tenuous, Sherman assessed his position and linked the seminary's success to his own prowess as an educator, administrator, and military officer. As the leader and representative of Louisiana's newest institution of higher education, Sherman believed that if parents or legislators negatively perceived him or his actions, the seminary might suffer as a result.

Secession and War

After a lengthy sojourn in Ohio, Sherman returned to Louisiana. During the fall term of 1860, the seminary enrolled 130 students. Cadets entered the academy and adhered to a daily schedule of classes, recreational periods, and military drill. However, an air of distrust pervaded the institution. Students and locals alike were aware of the fact that the superintendent was from the North and understood that Sherman's brother, John, who was running for speakership of the U.S. House of Representatives, opposed slavery. Sherman, fearing that his familial association might jeopardize the seminary's reputation, "purposely kept aloof from politics." Still, he could not deny that, with Lincoln's presidential election, secession might soon follow and his tenure at the seminary would draw to a close.⁶⁰

As secessionist unrest increased, Sherman witnessed the changing attitudes of his students. In an attempt to promote Union solidarity, Sherman had the older cadets select excerpts from political speeches for oration. To his disappointment, cadets read selections from the secessionist orator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina and Alabama senator William Lowndes Yancey who defended slavery as the highest patriotic duty of any Southerner. Sherman also noticed that the board of supervisors declaimed Northern politicians as pests and did so openly in front of the superintendent. At this point, members of the board still considered Sherman a trusted ally; however, he kept silent when the board complained of his fellow Northerners.⁶¹ On two occasions, Sherman shielded the students from visitors who engaged in conversations about impending secession. One such visitor was an emissary sent by Mississippi governor John J. Pettus to speak with Governor Moore about joining the secessionist cause. The Mississippi representative visited the seminary and spoke with Sherman about disunion as an unavoidable fact. Later, a high-ranking member of the Knights of the Golden Circle (an organization created to support slavery throughout the American South, Mexico, and the Caribbean Islands⁶²) visited the seminary to examine its operational

functions and class activities. Even though these visitors spoke freely about disunion, Sherman remained quiet and wrote in his memoirs that no one ever approached him offensively or questioned him directly. He also mentioned that no one attempted to persuade him to support the "Southern cause." Still, as Sherman saw it, "secession was treason, was war."⁶³

As threat of disunion intensified, Sherman found maintaining discipline at the seminary difficult. On December 20, 1860, South Carolina seceded and Mississippi quickly followed. Additional emissaries from seceded states traveled to Louisiana and met with Moore to encourage Louisiana's secession. Similarly, Sherman received letters from his brother urging him to give up his educational administrative duties and return North before Louisiana legislatures decided to secede.⁶⁴ Sherman's former quietude towards secession now broke. Distressed, Sherman was remembered by fellow professor Boyd as stating, "You, you people of the South, believe there can be peaceable secession. You don't know what you are doing. I know there can be no such thing as peaceable secession. If you will have it, the North must fight for its [the Union's] own preservation This country will be drenched in blood Oh, it [secession] is all folly, madness, a crime against civilization!"⁶⁵ The superintendent urged Governor Moore and other Louisiana officials to reconsider their position regarding secession. Sherman, although ultimately unsuccessful, tried to convince his southern colleagues that secession would lead to ruin for the South.⁶⁶

Although Sherman remained in control of the seminary, he found it difficult to manage the cadets, now excited by the thought of impending battle. Sherman again wrote to his wife about his concerns. He expressed that secessionist sentiment appeared everywhere in Louisiana and disunion was close at hand. Adhering to his job, Sherman filled his hours by creating newspaper advertisements regarding the seminary, appealing to parents about the benefits of higher education, and balancing the institution's budget.⁶⁷ As it concerned cadets' behavior, Sherman wrote, "It takes me all I can do to suppress disorder and irregularity. I had a Cadet threaten me yesterday with a loaded pistol because I detected a whisky jug in his room and threatened him with dismissal. He did not await trial but went off. Although a large majority of the cadets are good boys we have some hard cases."⁶⁸ Validating Sherman's concerns were cadets who voiced their support of the Southern cause. Even so, the superintendent intended to remain in his administrative post, so long as Louisiana remained a part of the Union. On Christmas Day, 1860, Sherman penned the following to Mason Graham, then-member of the institution's board of supervisors, regarding his employment should secession occur:

"As long as Louisiana is in the Union, and I occupy this post, I will serve her faithfully against internal or external enemies. But if Louisiana secede [sic] from the General Government that instant I stop . . . I feel that my duty here is drawing to a close. Still, I will not act till I conceive I must and should."⁶⁹

With the removal of Louisiana from the Union on January 26, 1861, Governor Moore seized all U.S. forts at the mouth of the Mississippi River and along Lake Pontchartrain. He also ordered seizure of the state arsenal in Baton Rouge. Soldiers then transported munitions to the seminary in Pineville for storage. When the arsenal items reached the campus, Sherman received a letter from Moore ordering the superintendent to accept the weapons and gunpowder. With Moore's order, Sherman understood that he could no longer remain head of an institution in a seceded state and wrote several letters to friends and family concerning the governor's actions.⁷⁰ In January of 1861, Sherman penned his resignation. In Sherman's words:

Recent events foreshadow a great change, and it becomes all men to choose. If Louisiana withdraw [sic] from the Federal Union, I prefer to maintain my allegiance to the constitution as long as a fragment survives and my longer stay here would be wrong in every sense of the word . . . I beg you to take immediate steps to relieve me as superintendent, the moment the state determines to secede, for on no earthly account will I do any act or think any thought hostile to or in defiance of the old government of the United States.⁷¹

Although Sherman used his resignation as an opportunity to warn Louisiana officials of the looming war, he made a point to reassure the academy's governing board that he intended to finish the spring term, keep the cadets as orderly as possible, and make certain that all accounts and inventories were completed before his departure.⁷² In his closing remarks to Moore, he stated, "I entertain the kindest feelings toward all and would leave the state with much regret; only in great events we must choose, one way or another."⁷³

Sherman's Exit and the Seminary's Fate

After leaving the seminary, Sherman wrote to a Southern colleague, "The storm is upon us and we must each to our own ship. I hope . . . that you and yours may long survive to look back with satisfaction to the time when

we started the Seminary in a vain belief that we were serving the cause of our common country."⁷⁴ Sherman's letters to his Louisiana comrades were tender. He assured them he would take precautions to protect the seminary from any social damages that might occur following his resignation.⁷⁵ The cadets, in honor of Sherman, reported to the governing board that the superintendent was a regular visitor to all classes and made it his duty to know the academic status of every student. Sherman was considered a fair judge when it came to discipline and encouraged students with kind remarks regarding their studies and military training.⁷⁶ Similarly, Governor Moore regarded Sherman's college administration as beneficial to both the students and institution. He regretted the loss of Sherman and, in a letter to the former superintendent, Moore conveyed, "You cannot regret more than I do the necessity which deprives us of your services, and you will bear with you the respect, confidence, and admiration of all who have been associated with you."⁷⁷

Sherman, having left Louisiana, turned his gaze to the Union Army. After rejoining the military ranks, he was promoted to General, waged war, and aided in the Confederacy's defeat. Although viewed as a fierce and tyrannical figure, he was not without his sentiments regarding Louisiana and the seminary. In the midst of war, when the seminary building was closed and raided for supplies, Sherman requested the physical structure be left unharmed and his request was honored.⁷⁸ Even so, Sherman was aware that the seminary had ceased operations due to the lack of instructors (Governor Moore had decreed on September 28, 1861, that all men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five were subject to militia service⁷⁹) and a decline in student enrollments resulting from the encroachment of Union troops under the command of General Nathaniel Prentice Banks. Many cadets did not wait for the seminary to close before enlisting in the Southern armies (except for one Cadet who was too young to enlist in the Confederate Army, so he enlisted in the Union Navy). The instructors had also vacated the academy and many enlisted as Southern officers. Without students, faculty, or caretakers, federal troops overtook and plundered the campus, converting the seminary building into a military hospital.⁸⁰ Despite Sherman's loyalty to the Union, he remained devoted to and concerned about those he once worked with before the war. Union troops captured Boyd, the seminary's former professor of English and Ancient Languages, while he was serving as a Confederate colonel. When alerted to Boyd's circumstances, Sherman arranged for his release and transfer.⁸¹

Another instance of Sherman's benevolence to former seminary affiliates occurred following the Battle of Shiloh. After discovering that one of the Louisiana seminary cadets was taken prisoner by Union troops, Sherman visited the cadet, had his former pupil dressed in new clothes,

and learned, to his dismay, that several seminary students had been killed in the earlier fray. Not only did Sherman show kindness to seminary cadets who fought for the Confederacy, he also showed sympathy to Governor Moore after the war ended in 1865. Sherman petitioned to have Moore's plantation, which had been damaged as a result of Union raids and was later confiscated by the federal government, returned to him and was successful.⁸² Though some seminary cadets and Louisiana government leaders survived the war, others were killed in battle.⁸³ Reflecting on Louisiana's losses, a despondent Sherman wrote "Why cannot they look back to the day and the hour when I, a stranger in Louisiana, begged and implored them to pause in their career, that secession was death, was everything fatal?"⁸⁴

After the Civil War, Boyd returned to the seminary and became the new superintendent.⁸⁵ During Boyd's administration, fire destroyed the institution on the morning of October 15, 1869. The exact origins of the conflagration remain unknown, but with limited means to douse the fire the building could not be rescued. After learning of the seminary's destruction, Sherman expressed interest in the whereabouts and health of the students and faculty.⁸⁶ He also made a series of recommendations to rebuild the seminary at its original site and suggested that temporary wooden structures be erected as soon as possible.⁸⁷ Despite Sherman's suggestions, the faculty had the seminary moved into a wing of the Louisiana School for the Deaf and Dumb in Baton Rouge. Upon arrival in the state capitol, the college's administration commented favorably on the city's welcoming nature and agreeable moral and religious influences, which, it was felt, might further shape the cadets.⁸⁸

As student enrollment increased, the seminary soon outgrew the allocated wing. The institution's board of supervisors made recommendations to the Louisiana legislature that the entire Louisiana School for the Deaf and Dumb be placed at the seminary's disposal, but the proposition was denied.⁸⁹ Contending with limited physical space, Boyd and the faculty attempted to revitalize the seminary by changing its name from the Louisiana Seminary of Learning and Military Academy to the "Louisiana State University." After receiving word of the institution's cramped quarters and title revision, Sherman did what he could to support the newly dubbed university.⁹⁰ Sherman kept abreast of the institution's changes via letters from Boyd and procured a large number of books and educational materials to restock the institution.⁹¹ Sherman also supported the topographical research of then-LSU professor Colonel Samuel H. Lock. Lock was involved in a large-scale geographical study of Louisiana. Sherman ensured that Lock had full access to any government materials needed to complete his survey.⁹² Although many southerners had vilified Sherman for his "total war" tactics,⁹³ LSU faculty and administrators

appreciated the former superintendent and the support he rendered to Louisiana higher education. In 1868, prior to the destruction of the Pineville seminary building, the board of supervisors passed a resolution thanking Sherman for his service to the academy, its staff, and students.⁹⁴

Perhaps Sherman's largest contribution to the institution was his aid in acquiring a new campus for the old seminary. Sherman negotiated with both Louisiana and Federal Legislatures to acquire the Pentagon Barracks in Baton Rouge. Constructed between 1819 and 1829 to house U.S. military officers, the two-story brick and columned barracks served as residence for both Confederate and Union troops during the Civil War, but were now unoccupied. On April 5, 1879, Sherman wrote to Boyd that he had "received and endorsed favorably your application for the Arsenal property [pentagon barracks]."⁹⁵ The legislature agreed and the institution was transferred to the new site. Administrators expanded the campus beyond the barracks until the university was relocated once more to a former cotton plantation less than four miles away (the current location of LSU).⁹⁶ Even so, Sherman's negative reputation as the man who "raged from Tennessee through Georgia" on his infamous March to the Sea, burned Atlanta, and presented the captured city of Savannah to President Lincoln as an 1864 Christmas present remained ignominious in the minds of many Southerners.⁹⁷ Regardless, Sherman maintained positive relationships with several early LSU faculty and provided Boyd with administrative advice via correspondence. The Union general's willingness to support the seminary in light of his damaged reputation in the South was evident in an 1885 letter to Boyd in which he wrote, "Never fail to call on me when I can do you service – I prefer acts to words. Teach your boys that the vandal Sherman is not the Devil incarnate."⁹⁸



Figure 3.

Pentagon Barracks and Cannons, 1897. Image courtesy of LSU Photograph Collections, Louisiana State University Archives. LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge L.A.

Conclusion

After the Civil War, southern colleges and universities, once prosperous and held in high regard by local communities, lay prostrate and struggled to recover. Louisiana State University, formerly the Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy, was no exception.⁹⁹ Nevertheless, through Sherman's intercession, LSU was revived. Today, William Sherman is barely associated with the university's history. No grand monuments exist bearing his visage and no buildings are inscribed with his name. There are, however, a few small testaments that describe Sherman as part of the university's history. In front of LSU's military science building are two bronze cannons that sit facing the football stadium. Each has a plaque that reads: "These cannons fired at Fort Sumter and presented to University by General W. T. Sherman after the Civil War." Historians, however, refute this claim. University records indicate that a "friend of LSU" gifted the cannons. As Boyd frequently referred to Sherman as a "friend of LSU," the belief was perpetuated that the former superintendent was the donor. It is now believed that the cannons were likely purchased either during Boyd's administration or were acquired during the later administration of James W. Nicholson.¹⁰⁰ Also, on the university campus is a recessed stone block (excavated from the original seminary foundations in Pineville) inscribed with the names of the institution's first faculty including "William Sherman." Directly beside the stone is a plaque that briefly outlines the university's history. This plaque labels Sherman as the institution's first superintendent, but nothing more.¹⁰¹

These easily-missed items are all that remain to connect Sherman with modern LSU, other than a few etchings located in the university archives. John R. Thelin, in his book *Higher Education and Its Useful Past*, explains that monuments, photographs, and a variety of other physical pieces of memorabilia help us understand the nuanced history of America's colleges and universities and the significant roles they played in shaping the United States.¹⁰² Other than the few campus items bearing Sherman's name, his place in Louisiana higher education history is poorly recounted. When Louisiana State University celebrated its sesquicentennial in 2010, Sherman only received brief recognition as a "co-founder" of the university.¹⁰³ His administration may have been short, but his efforts helped establish a long-standing educational institution with a lineage of military activity. Sherman should be remembered not only for his contributions to the university's success, but also for his admiration of the South. After leaving the seminary, Sherman wrote to Boyd and stated, "I will settle down . . . [and] with my [children] I can live over again my life

... in the piney woods of Louisiana and I will teach them that there are kind good people everywhere.”¹⁰⁴ His devotion to the former seminary, now university, is obvious in his memoirs and personal accounts. Though recognized as a seminal figure in military history, literature, such as this narrative, affords an understanding of Sherman beyond his armed exploits and details William Tecumseh Sherman as a significant figure in Louisiana’s educational history.

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Book Review: **Woodson, *Brown Girl Dreaming***

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Jacqueline Woodson is an award-winning children's literature author, who, early in her career, was touted by renowned children's literature scholar Rudine Sims Bishop as one of the most promising children's literature authors of her generation. Lauded for her ability to write honestly about social issues, marginalized youth, and popular culture, Woodson, to date, has written over twenty-five texts for youth, spanning several genres— from novels and picture books to books-in-verse and short stories. She is, as predicted, a major voice in children's literature. In *Brown Girl Dreaming*, a book written for youth, Woodson explores how she learned to develop the sensibilities (e.g., listening and observing) needed to become a writer. The memoir emphasizes how Woodson, who educates via her books for children and the writing classes she offers, developed a desire to become a writer while having difficulties in school.

In addition to relying on her own memories while writing *Brown Girl Dreaming*, Woodson had conversations with family members (e.g., Her dad "chimed in when he could"¹ and friends (e.g., Her best friend from childhood, Maria, filled in "gaps" and "helped the journey [writing process] along with pictures and stories").² Woodson's childhood memories were also prompted by travelling to South Carolina and Ohio, where she visited

gravesites and talked extensively to her aunt, a genealogist and family historian. As a result, Woodson has created in this text a deeply moving and revealing glimpse of her childhood during the sixties. The book begins with basic family trees, both paternal and maternal, and concludes with several pages of Woodson's own photos rendered in black-and-white. The first full-page spread of pictures show Woodson as a baby until about age ten while the following three pages show both sets of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and her siblings. These additional family artifacts complement Woodson's descriptions of her family as loving and supportive. There is also a unique bond with her siblings, especially her older sister who exposed her to reading and writing.

Each of the five parts of Woodson's memoir is filled with haikus and free verse and covers Woodson's birth in Ohio in 1963 through the end of elementary school in New York, taking readers on a journey with Woodson in and out of the South where she learns (and witnesses resistance to) racist laws and unwritten social rules for blacks. In the first part of the book, she reflects on her paternal grandparents—one of the “few black families in town”—life in Ohio and emphasizes her paternal grandmother's link to South Carolina.³ This link connects Grandma Grace to Woodson's homesick mother: “both know that southern way of talking without words.”⁴ Yet, Woodson's father says, “no colored Buckeye in his right mind would ever want to go there [south].”⁵ Nevertheless, Woodson's mother longs for the region and eventually moves with the children to South Carolina to live with her parents. Ironically, as she leads her children to the back of a bus, she tells them “This isn't Ohio.”⁶

Woodson explores her growing interest in oral storytelling, in learning to read and write, and in book making in the third part of the book as she develops and expands her consciousness of the world around her. Her love of words is conveyed in ways children can relate to. A student who often struggles academically, especially when compared with her sister, Woodson realizes her gift for storytelling in her uncle's and siblings' responses to the stories she creates. Though her uncle and siblings encourage her to entertain them with tales, her mother admonishes her for it and sees it as “telling lies.” A wiser Woodson weighs both responses: “Maybe the truth is somewhere in between.”⁷

As someone who has often written about Woodson, I learned about another aspect of her family and its influence on her writing. From Aunt Kay's mysterious, untimely death to her family members' participation in civil rights activism, Woodson openly shares her family history against the backdrop of American history. For instance, the second part of the book is mostly set in South Carolina, where Woodson's grandparents are practicing Jehovah Witnesses who work as a teacher and dayworker

(her grandmother) and as a foreman at a printing press (her grandfather). Although they live in a segregated area of town, Grandma points out, "times are changing," and refuses to shop in stores where workers do not treat blacks with dignity.⁸

The author says one of her aims in the book is to "mak[e] sense out of myself as a writer in a way I had never done before."⁹ According to Trudier Harris, an African American writer's identity is forged by its connection to the South: "Tunneling through the mountains of the South enables them to arrive at the other side with a heightened sense of who they are as writers."¹⁰ Children's writers are no different, whether it is through fiction or memoir such as Woodson's, the South is often a salient motif. Particularly, Woodson explores her girlhood in the context of southern/northern landscapes, sixties civil rights activism, and burgeoning creativity. Born in Columbus, Ohio, in a pivotal year in US history, 1963, and raised in both a segregated South Carolina and one of the sites of the Great Migration, New York, there are underlining questions here around how and why Woodson became a writer. What does place, particularly the South and migrating North mean in relation to black identity in general and Woodson's identity specifically? When the cultural work embedded in Woodson's books (e.g., *From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun*, *The Other Side*, *Our Gracie Aunt*, and *Visiting Day*)¹¹ for children is considered, how do her memories capture history, social activism, and power/freedom in accessible ways for children?

This isn't the first time Woodson has captured her family's life in a book for children. *Show Way*¹², a picture book which begins in the Antebellum South, traces her maternal heritage and explores how her grandmother sewed quilts that lead enslaved people to freedom. It also focuses on how Woodson, leaning on her foremother's (e.g., Her mother wrote poetry.) love of literacy, became a writer. Beyond this obvious connection to her books for children, there are other moments in the memoir that illustrate how Woodson's actual experiences link to her characters'. For example, Woodson's mother eventually leaves the children in South Carolina while she pursues work in the North which is reminiscent of the plot of *Coming on Home Soon*.¹³ Similarly, near the end of the book, Woodson credits her fifth grade teacher as one of the first to acknowledge her talent for writing, paralleling a scene in *Locomotion*.¹⁴

As a recent verse-themed issue of *Biography* attests, there is a growing interest in telling life stories in verse. Woodson's use of poetry to share her childhood and how her teachers, both formal (in school) and informal (her sister and uncle), taught her to write is instructive to biographers in general and to educational biographers in particular. In the introduction to the verse-themed issue of *Biography*, Jackson reminds biographers

that: 1) biography is written in different genres; 2) certain forms “have their own ‘affordances;’” 3) “the art of biography is already sounding indistinguishable from poetry;” and 4) the biographer is devoted to “the representation of self.”¹⁵ Thus, *Brown Girl Dreaming*, which was awarded several citations, including the Coretta Scott King prize, the Newbery Honor award, and the National Book Award, offers a well-written example of how to take advantage of diverse forms to present a compelling life.

Life stories written primarily for a youthful audience typically offer young readers subjects with qualities they can emulate, learn from, be inspired by, and identify with.¹⁶

Woodson has accomplished that here in this award-winning memoir by rendering a perspective of childhood that is at once grounded in historical context and easily accessible to today’s reader of all ages. This book would be a useful edition to classes in education and childhood studies programs, especially those that welcome a focus on critical multicultural analysis which questions the meanings/social constructions of race, class, and gender depicted in texts for youth.

Notes

¹ Jacqueline Woodson, *Brown Girl Dreaming* (New York: Nancy Paulson Books, 2014), 324.

² *Ibid.*, 325.

³ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 176.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 325.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹¹ Jacqueline Woodson, *From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun* (New York: Scholastic, 1995); Jacqueline Woodson, *The Other Side*, illus. E.B. Lewis (New York: Putnam, 2001); Jacqueline Woodson, *Our Gracie Aunt*, illus. Jon J. Muth (New York: Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 2002); Jacqueline Woodson, *Visiting Day*, illus. James E. Ransome (New York: Scholastic, 2002).

¹² Jacqueline Woodson, *Show Way*, illus. Hudson Talbott (New York: Putnam, 2005).

¹³ Jacqueline Woodson, *Coming On Home Soon*, illus. E. B. Lewis (New York: Putnam, 2004).

¹⁴ Jacqueline Woodson, *Locomotion* (New York: Putnam, 2003).

¹⁵ Anna Jackson, “The Verse Biography: Introduction.” *Biography* 39.1 (2016): III.

¹⁶ Ernest Bond, *Literature and the Young Adult Reader* (Boston: Pearson, 2011); Katherine T. Bucher and KaaVonia M. Hinton, *Young Adult Literature: Exploration, Evaluation, and Appreciation*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2013).

Book Review:

Berry, *Bullied: Tales of Torment, Identity, and Youth*

Paul Stafford

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In Keith Berry's powerful book, *Bullied: Tales of Torment, Identity, and Youth*, one of the many pained biographical subjects recalls her experience of dealing with "Cruella," her childhood bully: "She notices I'm ignoring her, which is why she wanted to make her presence impossible to disregard. In the most abhorrent fashion possible, she leers over me until I can feel her hot, predatory breath frizz the hair on the top of my head."¹

This burden of youth is revisited throughout five autoethnographic stories of bullying written by students in one of Berry's undergraduate interpersonal communication classes over the course of a single semester. Berry's training and research as an (auto)ethnographer intersect with his pedagogical aim of teaching lived experiences to produce a narrative that is "at once a report on research and collaborative class journey."² The individual stories (including Berry's) reveal experiences of terror and shame, and, ultimately, the overcoming of bullied adolescence. The book is not intended to root out the causes of bullying, including the biological factors or societal structures that perpetuate such oppression, but rather, it is meant to reflect the lives "affected, and sometimes ended by bullying."³ Through "narrative- and communicative-based approaches,"⁴ each of the five chapters dedicated to victims' accounts of bullying follows a pattern of storytelling, story analysis, reflexive interlude and exploration

of methodological dilemmas the author confronts during the process of writing and researching the book.

Chapter One, "A Narrative Opening to a Relational Problem" begins on the first day of a new semester with Berry introducing himself to his interpersonal communication class and discussing their shared goal of exploring and writing about the "epidemic"⁵ of bullying from their own lived experiences. "This is a dialogue-based course,"⁶ he tells the class, and the interactions from these ongoing class discussions serve as a narrative device for introducing the topic of bullying and autoethnographic methodologies to both his students and the reader.

Berry then draws from a vast collection of academic scholarship and statistical research to review the historical underpinnings and societal impacts of bullying. He also introduces his "Bullying Imperatives"⁷ as starting points for talking about bullying. These include the "relational being" where communication, identity, and bullying intersect; statistical information about bullying; bullying as a "cultural and everyday interaction;"⁸ and the concept of "mindful" as being open and aware of the destructive nature of bullying. Berry dedicates the final pages of Chapter One to discussing autoethnography as methodology and notes that while stories of bullying have been used in academic articles and mainstream publications, a "full-length book that uses autoethnography and personal narratives of victims to examine bullying and identity negotiation has yet to be published."⁹ He closes the chapter in the classroom, telling his students "we'll work on telling your stories together."¹⁰

The next five chapters capture different experiences of bullying highlighted through the victims' own words while Berry weaves in subtle narration to provide background and context of events. While all five stories are from female voices, there is no sense of a missing male perspective as bullying does not discriminate based on race or gendered identities. Anyone who has experienced such severe harassment as a victim, instigator, or spectator will identify with Iman (Chapter Two) when she writes about her bully, "Destroyer,": "I can recall everyday walking into the locker room hoping she didn't approach me or say anything to me; I constantly had to look over my shoulder to make sure I was aware of my surroundings. I needed to be aware and ready for her."¹¹ Her story is that of a young African-American girl growing up in a white community, struggling with depression and prolonged periods of bullying, not only from whites, but from members of her own family. "From my voice, to the clothes I wore, to the majority of white friends I had. I was constantly being picked on for just being who I was."¹² These attacks on body and individuality permeate every victim's story throughout the book.

Through Berry's analysis, we see Iman experience the "embodied nature of bullying"¹³ where "bullied bodies are the site of scrutiny,

dismissal, and violence.”¹⁴ In the eyes of her harassers, Iman created an “identity breach”¹⁵ between “not being black enough” and “talking too white.”¹⁶ Berry identifies these contradictions as a way of “maintaining fixed racial categories”¹⁷ through bullying. To cope with the pain inflicted by her aggressors, Iman turned to cutting herself with an envelope opener but “by creating physical pain to alleviate emotional pain, she deepened her immersion in contradictions.”¹⁸ Berry takes these stories and turns them into teachable moments on the page to reveal bullying as a deeply personal experience that often works to unravel a victim’s identity just as it beings to blossom in youth. Other storytellers write about bullying related to body image (Chapter Three), embracing “being different”¹⁹ in the face of aggression (Chapter Four), transitioning between schools and changing friendships (Chapter Five), and bullying as sexual assault (Chapter Six).

Following Berry’s analysis of each victim’s story in Chapters Two through Six, he provides a “reflexive interlude” to explore his own bullied adolescence. Raised by loving parents in a “white middle-class, Roman Catholic family,”²⁰ he was a child of the 1970s and 1980s nicknamed “the little professor”²¹ due to his love for school at young age. He described himself as “not tough”²² with a “chubby body”²³ when he first experienced bullying in the fourth grade. With each passing chapter, Berry’s own story reveals a young boy discovering his identity and experiencing sexual awakening while maneuvering through a minefield of bullies’ taunts and outbursts. We feel the ridicule when he is teased for walking like a girl because of the way he holds his books, “not like most boys,”²⁴ and for failing a strength test in gym class, an act that brings mocking laughter from his schoolmates. Like many bullying victims, his friends are at the “school’s social margins”²⁵ where he identifies with the unpopular “dorks” and “geeks”²⁶ that make him “feel protected and safe.”²⁷ His allegiance to this marginalized cohort amplifies his own individuality that gains momentum as his story unfolds in high school. Berry admits feeling “unsettled”²⁸ in particular reflective moments, but also “safe”²⁹ within storytelling to produce a contrast of emotions afforded through autoethnography.

The final section of each chapter poses a “methodological dilemma” where Berry articulates some of the moral and ethical issues related to the reflexive writing process. In one instance, he considers the idea of classroom control when coaching students through the process of autoethnographic writing that asks them to “revisit painful lived experiences.”³⁰ Later, he wonders how to address issues of “openness”³¹ with his students and the possible outcomes of who and what they choose to write about, even questioning how his own reflexive interludes may “‘work’ for or against”³² him as “exposing my past experiences and selves has been as scary and sad as it has been exciting and important.”³³ These dilemmas are brief but

valuable contributions as concluding thoughts to each chapter.

Chapter Seven provides an end-of-semester wrap-up, revisiting conversations with his class about their experiences as autoethnographers. Here, Berry takes a closer look at the (re)making of identities related to bullying and the different selves born out of the bullying experience. For example, "invaded selves"³⁴ are shaped by the "intrusion" and "oppressive"³⁵ nature of bullying while "preserving selves"³⁶ are "resilient beings"³⁷ prevailing against the often-unyielding bombardment of harassment. He also readdresses the methodological dilemmas discussed in previous chapters as a way to resolve or to at least work through these issues.

For teachers of autoethnographic methodologies, this book will serve not only as a valuable exemplar of the power of storytelling but also as a how-to guide for introducing students to the journey of reflexive writing. The read itself is a journey beginning with the first day of class when Berry introduces the project to his students, through the methodological dilemmas of uncorking the past and writing about painful lived experiences, to making sense through personal reflection and scholarly analysis, to the payoff of finished stories and etching a deeper understanding of self. Berry goes even further in the Appendix where he shares "the teaching and research processes that inform this book."³⁸ Here, he briefly outlines the course syllabus. It includes readings and films about bullying; examples of autoethnography; and specific writing assignments "to get them practicing and thinking about their personal relationship to bullying."³⁹ "Bullying Narratives: The Essentials"⁴⁰ provides "aspects"⁴¹ for students to think about when writing their stories and "Bullying Narratives: Feedback,"⁴² reveals the "encouraging"⁴³ and empathic tone of his comments when reviewing rough drafts. He also discusses the research components of his project, including the IRB process and how he examined his students' stories by immersing himself in their accounts of bullying, revisiting and narrowing them down, making editing choices while working "painstakingly to preserve their voice in telling their stories."⁴⁴ The appendix will be a valuable reference guide for students in any graduate course using autoethnographic methodologies.

With his book, Keith Berry provides a story within a story. The collected accounts of bullying reveal the emotional pain of a particular type of personal terror that shapes adolescence and often clings to our identity through adulthood. He has also produced a story about writing and learning using autoethnography as a methodology that is an experience unto itself. One of Berry's students admits she did not lose anything by writing her story, but instead, storytelling "has actually put power back in my hands"⁴⁵ With his book, Keith Berry has shown us where the power over bullying really lies.

Notes

¹ Keith Berry, *Bullied: Tales of Torment, Identity, and Youth* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 76.

² Ibid., x.

³ Ibid., xi.

⁴ Ibid., x.

⁵ Ibid., 2.

⁶ Ibid., 4.

⁷ Ibid., 6.

⁸ Ibid., 10.

⁹ Ibid., 22.

¹⁰ Ibid., 24.

¹¹ Ibid., 30.

¹² Ibid., 29.

¹³ Ibid., 35.

¹⁴ Ibid..

¹⁵ Ibid., 37.

¹⁶ Ibid., 28.

¹⁷ Ibid., 37.

¹⁸ Ibid., 40.

¹⁹ Ibid., 82.

²⁰ Ibid., 44.

²¹ Ibid., 45.

²² Ibid., 43.

²³ Ibid., 46.

²⁴ Ibid., 92.

²⁵ Ibid., 93.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 145.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., 73.

³¹ Ibid., 100.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid., 123.

³⁴ Ibid., 150.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 151.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., 165.

³⁹ Ibid., 166.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 167.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 168.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 170.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 162.

Book Review:
***Prosise, Housing Projects, Mansions and
Schools: An Educator's Odyssey***

Patricia Inman

Northern Illinois University

This book is a memoir of an educational leader who started life in one of the worst public housing projects in the country, Cabrini-Green in Chicago, and rose to become the superintendent of a school system of one of the wealthiest communities in the country, Bannockburn, Illinois. The author discusses the issues he faced, how he addressed those issues and how those challenges factored into his success as an educational administrator. Roger Prosise was one of ten children of mixed descent. “Hapa” as the author defines his ancestry—half-white, half-Asian. Their family was one of the few in the community that did not have African-American heritage. His mother cleaned houses to support the family. His father, an alcoholic, rarely left home except to drink in local bars. These factors alone provide barriers any individual would find daunting to overcome. Yet he and most of his family members went on to attend college and lead productive lives. This book is the story of amazing resilience in a context of racism, violence and poverty.

The book is divided into three sections. The first addresses the family’s time in the projects. The second tells of their move to the safer neighborhood of Lakeview in Chicago. The final section speaks to his career as an educator. The text throughout is conversational with the final

section more reflective.

This book was of particular interest to me. Having grown up in the Chicago region, I know of this neighborhood's reputation. I also taught in the same school district with the author's wife as well as in the school district next to the Bannockburn district of which the author worked in first superintendency.

This made the story all the more remarkable. The reader continually is faced with a story whose ending often reaches a darker conclusion. The question is "How?" How did this family do what so many others have not in the face of such adversity?

The author suggests three possibilities: the importance of friendship, an understanding of power and the critical role of community leadership. The author weaves all three concepts into the conversation of the earlier chapters, and offers implications for educational programs in the final section. While the first two sections of this book are unique and motivational, the insights provided by this gifted educator in the final section should have comprised a larger portion of this book. There is much to be learned from this author and a longer reflection would have been appreciated. Possibly a follow-up to this book with a one-chapter synopsis of the author's early years could provide the introduction for a series of essays reflecting this educator's insights gleaned from his complex life.

While a minor distraction, the lack of chapter titles in the table of contents and the simple font of the text throughout the book made this book appear harshly academic. This contradicted the promise of an artistic rendering of the author's neighborhood on the book cover. Chapter titles would have made it easier for the reader to comprehend the scope of the book.

This review will not serve as a spoiler. Prosis's book did not end as anticipated, either by the author or this reader. As throughout the memoir, it reflects the author's gratitude for a life fully lived.

Extensions and Applications: Bringing a Silenced Community to Life: Animating the Archival Record

Naomi Norquay

York University

In my teacher education classes, I often work with curriculum that lies at the margins of what is taught in Ontario elementary schools. For example, in my Social Foundations class in our pre-service program, I developed an in-class activity based on my research about a Black pioneer settlement in Artemesia Township, Grey County. This activity further develops the course's main question: Who's here? All semester, we explore this question in relation to the history of schooling in Ontario, our own social identities, our family immigration stories and the children in the classes where my students undertake their practicum teaching assignments.

The narrative of the pioneer looms large in primary and junior grade social studies curriculum, but the imagined pioneer is almost always of European origin. I use data from my archival research on this disappeared Black pioneer settlement as a resource for this activity. This settlement has been at worst denied, and at best marginalized in the historic record of Artemesia Township. The settlers' presence in historic documentation is limited mostly to government records: the census, birth, marriage and death registries and the land records. There are no letters, diaries or other personal documents housed in the local archives for researchers like myself

to access. How, then, do we imagine this community beyond the statistical information available? How do we address the question, “Who’s here?” in relation to this history? I draw on the work of my colleague, Kathleen Gould Lundy, a drama specialist. Her book, *Teaching Fairly in an Unfair World*, includes some very useful drama exercises that are intended to help students learn from “stories of people who have been treated unjustly.”¹

My aim is to help the students imagine these settlers’ lives beyond what the historic record has given us. I wish to animate this community in such a way that my students gain insight into “pioneer life” as it might actually have been lived. The prevalent and pervasive curriculum about historic African Canadians tends to focus on the Underground Railroad, presenting them as refugees on the run. I want my students to gain an understanding of historic African Canadians as *settlers*.

Throughout the semester, leading up to this in-class activity, we spend time learning about the history of this community through films, articles² and discussions. By the time we get to the in-class activity, the students have good background knowledge of the history of public schooling in Ontario and the presence of Black settlers in many parts of southern Ontario, as well as some insight into the kinds of racialized tensions that led to the eventual silencing and denial of this particular community. For this activity, which usually happens in the second-to-last class, I organize my 45 students into groups of five or six and give each group a package of information about one settler family in the community. Each package contains specific information about the family itself: the names and ages of the adults and children, a map of where they lived, and digitized images of the family’s census and land registry records. The package also contains photos taken in the area of remnants of that particular community—things common to pioneer life: apple trees, building foundations, crockery shards, cedar rail fences.³ Lastly, each group is given a selection of written material: a specific excerpt about Artemesia Township from a biography of a Black settler,⁴ general information about pioneer life⁵, and selections from Margaret Atwood’s poetic interpretation of Susanna Moodie’s life in the bush⁶ in order to illustrate how history can be animated through fictional accounts.

After the students have read and discussed the provided material, I ask each group to consider three questions:

- From the resources available to you, what do you know about this family?
- What don’t you know?
- What would you like to know?⁷

After discussing these three questions, each group must choose one family member for someone in their group to role play. The group then takes turns asking this character questions. A story about the family emerges as the character's answers are further probed. From this exercise emanates a series of dramatized narratives that animate the small amount of historic data provided. While the narratives are fictional, they depict nuanced aspects of the settlers' lives: there is laughter and argument, anxiousness and bravado, hope and worry, love and jealousy, work and play. The apple trees are in bloom, in fruit, and even chopped down. The stone foundations become cabins that house scenes of domesticity and family and community tensions. A piece of clay pipe (depicted in one of the photos) inspires the imagining of a community griot. The narratives embody truths and provide enormous insight into what it might have been like to live in that community at that time.

At the end of the activity, which takes anywhere from 60 to 90 minutes (of a three-hour class), we debrief. We discuss the narratives, their tensions and insights, the power of integrating drama into our Social Foundations course, and the possibilities this activity offers these future teachers in their own classrooms.

Three things stand out to me about the importance and impact of the students' narratives. First of all, they address the racialized tensions that contributed to the marginalizing of this community from local historic accounts. Secondly, by putting these Black settlers back into history, they challenge the myth of the centrality of the White pioneer to Canada's settlement. And lastly, in so doing, the students have an opportunity to explore how historical experiences might have been *felt*.

Diana Taylor's work is important here. She maintains that performance, as a "repertoire of embodied practices . . . on a very practical level, expands the traditional archive."⁸ Furthermore, "embodied performance"⁹ addresses the emotional content of history that is not normally "recognized in texts and documents."¹⁰ The drama exercise I implement enhances the possibilities for exploring marginalized histories. It can be used to summon and challenge teacher education students to think beyond the dominant narratives of "the Canadian pioneer." In a small but significant way, the students' dramatic narratives become acts of resistance and reclamation. The historic settlers they breathe life into get rewoven into the fabric of history and memory and become real people, with real lives, beyond the scant and stark archival documents.

I have worked with my colleague, Kathleen Gould Lundy, in other situations where this drama exercise has been used to shine the light on and animate other marginalized groups. My impression each time is that it is a powerful teaching and learning tool with potential to be implemented

in a wide variety of teaching contexts. It has proved a welcome addition to my own teaching repertoire.

Notes

¹ Kathleen Gould Lundy, *Teaching Fairly in an Unfair World* (Ontario: Pembroke Publishers, 2008), 53.

² Films: Jennifer Holness and David Sutherland, *Speakers for the Dead* (Toronto: National Film Board of Canada, 2000); City of Owen Sound, *The Last Stop: Black History in Owen Sound* (Owen Sound: Northern Spy Productions, 2004); Sylvia Hamilton, *The Little Black Schoolhouse* (Halifax: Maroon Films, 2007); Diana Braithwaite, *Conestogo Bound: The Black Pioneers of Wellington County* (Toronto: Black Pioneer Films, 2012); Articles: Naomi Norquay, "'Dig Where You Stand': Challenging the Myth of the White Pioneer", *Northern Terminus: The African Canadian History Journal* 1 (2002), 1-6; Naomi Norquay, "Land's Memory: Looking for Traces of the Old Durham Road Black Pioneer Settlement," *Northern Terminus: The African Canadian History Journal*, 7 (2010), 14-21; Naomi Norquay, "Finding Ned Patterson," *Northern Terminus: The African Canadian History Journal*, 8 (2011): 13-24.

³ For more information about how I think about these historic remains, see my article, "An accidental archive of the Old Durham Road: Reclaiming a Black Pioneer Settlement," *Archivaria* 81 (2016), 1-22.

⁴ Peter Meyler, *Broken Shackles: Old Man Henson from Slavery to Freedom* ed. (Toronto: Natural Heritage, 2001).

⁵ Dorothy Duncan, *Hoping for the Best, Preparing for the Worst: Everyday Life in Upper Canada, 1812-1814* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2012); John Howison, *Sketches of Upper Canada* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1821); Susannah Moodie, *Roughing it in the Bush* (Toronto: New Canadian Library, 1962); Catherine Parr Trail (McClelland & Stewart: Toronto, 1969).

⁶ Margaret Atwood and Charles Pachter, *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* (Toronto: Bloomsbury, 1997).

⁷ Kathleen Gould Lundy, *Teaching Fairly in an Unfair World*, 98.

⁸ Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 26.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 49.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, xviii.

Vitae Scholasticae: The Journal of Educational Biography

Call For Papers • Special Issue on Biography and Technologies

The work of biography has historically relied on the important resources of the physical archive and the craft of interviewing. However, through technological developments, contemporary trends in life writing allow researchers to access digitized documents and records, reach biographical subjects far and wide through email, social networking sites and web pages, write collaboratively through technological tools, and collect data using video, virtual communities, and social media. Once elusive paper records are now available at the touch of one's fingertips to a keyboard.

With such ease and possibility has also come ethical, conceptual, and practical questions. What transformations occur in the work of biography when researchers extract data from context? How do technologies transform data, researchers, the biographical relationship, and the research process? How are educators using technological tools to narrate their own lives and encourage students to do biographical work? How do elaborate capitalist mechanisms related to historical research, such as ancestry.com (etc), shape the practice of biography? And how does technology shape the notion of "lives as educative and educator's lives?"

This special issue takes up the complexities and possibilities of the intersections between technology and life history, broadly conceived. We welcome the following formats and contributions:

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- 3) short creative pieces (500-2000 words) that explore and represent such intersections between technologies and life writing in narrative, poetic or artistic formats.

Send inquiries or proposals / abstracts (no more than 500 words) and a brief bio (no more than 75 words) to: Dr. Lora Helvie-Mason (helviemason@tarleton.edu) and Dr. Lucy E. Bailey (lucy.bailey@okstate.edu) **by August 1, 2018**. Final submissions accepted for the special issue are due **December 15, 2018**.

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