PERSISTENCE AND RESISTANCE: AFRICAN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS AND STUDENTS DURING THE LONG CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA, 1926–1974

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Alexander D. Hyres, MIT, BA

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the role of African American high school teachers and students in the struggle for equitable education from 1926-1974 in Charlottesville, Virginia. I argue that teachers and students sought culturally relevant and equitable education through their activism within and beyond the classroom. To be clear, not all African American teachers and students engaged in activism and protest. However, rather than dismiss a whole swath of people due to the inaction of some individuals, this project aims to recover the voices and experiences of these teachers and students. Part of examining the action and inaction of African American teachers and students during this time period requires placing their actions within a larger context. Accordingly, while the project centers its focus on teachers and students, it also provides salient political, social, and economic commentary on the issues of the era.

Until recently, the roles played by teachers and students in the Civil Rights Movement have remained largely unexplored. With the exceptions of R. Scott Baker and Tondra Loder-Jackson, historians have tended to place teachers on the sidelines of the long Civil Rights Movement. Consequently, their voices have not been heard. This has led to a deafening silence on the role that teachers played during the Civil Rights Movement. Within the past two decades, historians such as Gael Graham, Charles Payne, Jon Hale, Thomas Bynum, and others have examined the activism of high school students. However, scholars have yet to explore the contours of high school students' participation in the movement. This study spotlights both groups and their activism in Charlottesville, Virginia.

This study poses several questions:

1. How, and in what ways, were African American high school teachers and students

involved in the long Civil Rights Movement?

2. What did African American high school teachers aim to teach their African American students?
3. How, and in what ways, did African American students influence their teachers in segregated and desegregated high schools?
4. What challenges did African American teachers and students encounter in their fight for educational equity?

The answers to these questions cut across three institutions where African American high schooling occurred: Jefferson High School, from 1926 to 1951; Jackson P. Burley High School, from 1951 to 1966; and Lane High School, from 1959 to 1974. This study is not a comprehensive account of high school education in Charlottesville. Although the study does not offer a comprehensive examination, it does offer an account with salient snapshots. In sum, the snapshots meet in the middle—offering a bottom-up as well as a top-down account of high school education during the long Civil Rights Movement.

This project makes three contributions to the existing historiography. First, it centers on how African American high school teachers and students were involved in the long Civil Rights Movement. Second, it reassesses how high school education changed over time from the African American perspective, deploying a longer chronological scope and focusing less on school desegregation. Third, it recasts the narrative of African American education in Virginia by explicating how African Americans have persisted in working toward educational equity in the context of constant resistance from the state's white population. Overall, it reveals that rather than viewing educational equity as a final

destination, advocates and policymakers must navigate and anticipate how whites within Charlottesville, Virginia, and the United States will respond to their progress.

Alexander Hyres
Department of Leadership, Foundations, and Policy
Curry School of Education
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia

APPROVAL OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation, "Persistence and Resistance: African American High School Teachers and Students During the Long Civil Rights Movement in Charlottesville, Virginia, 1926–1974" has been approved by the Curry School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Education.

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Dr. Derrick P. Alridge, Advisor

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Dr. Nancy Deutsch

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Dr. Diane Hoffman

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Dr. Rachel Wahl

_____

Dr. Jon Hale (College of Charleston)

Date:

This work is dedicated to:

All the African American administrators, teachers, and students who persisted in Charlottesville's high schools during the 20th century: Jefferson High School, Jackson P. Burley High School, Lane High School, and Charlottesville High School.

My partner Kristy Hyres and our daughter Elodie Hyres

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Thanks to all the teachers and coaches from kindergarten through the end of high school who influenced my personal and academic development. I would not be here without the many teachers who cultivated my capacity as a student and citizen: Ms. Jones, Mrs. Bogue, Mrs. Jones, Mr. Cook, Mrs. Core, Mrs. Archer, Mr. Smith, and Mrs. Coombs, Mrs. Clemons, Mr. Miller, Mr. Coyle, Mr. Meyers, Mr. Britt, Mr. Brown, Mrs. Block, Mrs. Buono, and Mrs. Grosdidier. My baseball and football coaches, for better or worse, helped shape my mental resolve. I did not enjoy every moment with coach Ross and coach Johnson. But I know they cultivated a mental toughness within me, which helped me push this project across the finish line. I'm also thankful to coaches Adcox, McDaniel, and Nelson who taught me many lessons on the baseball and football field that have helped me thrive long after I left Sumner High School.

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In the San Francisco Bay Area, I was fortunate to teach at Oakland Charter High School and Bayside STEM Academy, and to coach at Menlo Atherton High School. Thanks to my former students, players, colleagues, and administrators who challenged me to be a better teacher and coach. In particular, Ms. Evelia Villa, Mr. George Lopez and Dr. Jeanne Elliott were important people on my path from public school teacher to scholar. Ms. Villa and Mr. Lopez demanded much from me as a first-year teacher. They also challenged me to think deeply about a range of philosophical issues, including the aims and purpose of public schooling in a democratic society. Dr. Elliott supported me in a range of endeavors at Bayside and, eventually, in my return to graduate school. During my time at Bayside, I was fortunate to attend a Gilder Lehrman Summer Teachers Institute. Long after the institute concluded, Dr. Jonathan Holloway continued to offer reading suggestions, encouragement in my scholarly pursuits, and advice about navigating the graduate admissions process.

Several individuals have bolstered my development as a scholar and teacher. Early in graduate school, courses with Dr. Elizabeth Varon, Dr. Grace Hale, and Dr.

Sidney Milkis immersed me in social, cultural, and political history. Near the end of graduate school, observing and teaching with Dr. Claudrena Harold and Dr. Kwame Otu continued my education long after my coursework ended. I owe a debt of gratitude to several scholars beyond "grounds" who have influenced this project. In particular, Dr. Ansley Erickson, Dr. R. Scott Baker, Dr. Jack Dougherty, Dr. Dionne Danns, Dr. Michelle Purdy, Dr. Pamela Grundy, Dr. Benjamin Justice, Dr. Johann Neem, Dr. Christopher Loss, Dr. Jackie Blount, Dr. Isaac Gottesman, Dr. Joy Williamson-Lott, Dr. Phil Nichols, Dr. Jarvis Givens, Dr. John Bell, Rebecca Wellington, Deirdre Dougherty, Esther Cyna, Kristen Chimielewski, and Lauren Lefty have offered a strong blend of critique and encouragement.

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My friends and family have been crucial pillars of support during the past four years. I'm lucky to have a group of personal friends who have cheered me on from near and far. Nick Garcia left this world far too soon, but I know that his influence and spirit have been with me throughout this process. Nick Gomez, Ryan Priest, Joey Brister, Jason Frankel, and others have offered a listening ear and reminded me of the big wide world that exists beyond graduate school and this project. Nate Hyres, Samantha Hyres, Dr. Rick Pointer, Barb Pointer, Katie Pointer, Julie Adams, and Ryan Adams have all been encouraging and helpful in a number of ways including but not limited to food, wireless headphones, games, good times, childcare, and relaxing spaces.

Many thanks to the archivists and staff at Alderman Library, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, and the Charlottesville High School Library and Media Center for assisting me in gathering the necessary source material for this project. I am deeply indebted to Liz Sargent, Jacky Taylor, and the many others who conducted interviews of prominent individuals associated with African American education in Charlottesville.

My committee members have been integral to my development as a scholar. Dr. Diane Hoffman has provided me with a more robust understanding of teaching and learning. Dr. Rachel Wahl has sharpened my analytical capabilities through her incisive and probing questions. She has also offered a model of scholarly work ethic and professionalism, which I hope to emulate in the next phase of my career. Dr. Walt Heinecke has pushed me to think about the project's significance and a great source of insight about the anti-democratic nature of Virginia's political landscape. Dr. Jon Hale has always been gracious with his time and feedback. He has also offered an excellent model of critical and engaged scholarship. Dr. Nancy Deutsch saved the day. She has also provided a model for developing a research vision that transcends the world of academia and makes the world a better place for youth.

Three people deserve a special mention for their role in this project. First, Dr. Derrick Alridge has changed my life. From our first conversation on the phone, I knew he was the scholar who would best support and challenge me. No matter how far away I am from him, his influence will permeate my consciousness. Second, Elodie has been such an encouragement to me. Whether its creating pictures for me to hang in the office, asking me how the project is going, or just giving me a hug, she has helped inspire me to keep going. Someday, I hope that she will read and learn what this "project" is all about. Finally, Kristy has been everything to me during this process. She has sacrificed more than I could ever say during this process. She has supported me from the beginning and throughout the many highs and lows of the past four-plus years. Kris, I love you to pieces.

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INTRODUCTION

Today, at Venable Elementary and the Albemarle County Office Building (formerly Lane High School), there are two identical plaques commemorating school desegregation in Charlottesville, Virginia. The plaque lists the names of the nine African American students who desegregated Venable, and the three African American students who desegregated Lane. Charles E. Alexander, Raymond Dixon, Regina Dixon, Maurice Henry, Marvin Townsend, William Townsend, Sandra Wicks, Roland T. Woodfolk, and Ronald E. Woodfolk desegregated Venable. French Jackson, Donald Martin, and John Martin desegregated Lane. Then, the plaque offers a brief historical account. It reads as follows:

> "On September 8, 1959, three African American children bravely entered Lane High School by order of U.S. District Court Judge John Paul. With the assistance of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People—the children's parents sued the Charlottesville City School Board for equal access. Their fight began in 1955, following the Supreme Court decision of the 1954 case, Brown v. Board of Education. Parents took action to fulfill their civil rights by petitioning the Charlottesville School Board to transfer their children from the segregated Jefferson Elementary School and Jackson P. Burley High School. The School Board chose to take no-action on the petition request in 1956. Judge Paul ruled that Charlottesville must integrate Lane High School and Venable Elementary. The School Board filed several appeals contesting the decision to comply with integration. Using the strategy of 'massive resistance," Governor James Lindsey Almond, Jr. Ordered the closure of Lane and Venable on September 19, 1958 to prevent the integration of the Charlottesville City Schools. When schools reopened in February 1959, the School Board provided space in the Board office for students to take classes while they determined how to proceed with a plan for integration. On September 5, 1959, Judge Paul ordered the immediate transfer of twelve students who became known as "The Charlottesville Twelve."[1]

[1] Author's picture, May 27, 2018.

To some extent, this historical marker implies that the story ended there. But, as this dissertation reveals, school desegregation was just another chapter in African American students' persistent struggle for equitable education. Despite their exclusion from the plaque, African American teachers were part of that struggle, too. African Americans' persistent struggle for educational equity originated well before the *Brown* decision and, in many ways, the contestation continues today.

This dissertation examines the role of African American high school teachers and students in the struggle for equitable education in Charlottesville, Virginia.[2] I argue that teachers and students sought culturally relevant and equitable education through their activism within and beyond the classroom.[3] To be clear, not all African American teachers and students engaged in activism and protest. However, rather than dismiss a whole swath of people due to the inaction of some individuals, this project aims to recover the voices and experiences of these teachers and students. Part of examining the action and inaction of African American teachers and students during this time period requires placing their actions within a larger context. Accordingly, while the project centers its focus on teachers and students, it also provides salient political, social, and economic commentary on the issues of the era.

This study also spotlights the challenges faced by African American teachers and students. First, they were denied a high school education within the city altogether. Second, they were offered fewer years of schooling. Third, they were offered inequitable

[2] Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," in *Journal of American History* 91 (4), 2005: 1233–1263; See also, Jack Dougherty, *More Than One Struggle: The Evolution of Black School Reform in Milwaukee* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

[3] On "intellectual activism", see Tondra Loder-Jackson, *Schoolhouse Activists: African American Educators and the Long Birmingham Civil Rights Movement* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015), 8.

funding, facilities, and resources. Fourth, schools were closed for an entire year to delay desegregation. Fifth, African American teachers were disproportionately displaced, demoted, and fired African American relative to their white counterparts. Sixth, their community communities were disrupted, displaced, and destroyed through urban renewal projects. Finally, they faced surveillance technologies to monitor them within and beyond the school.

Until recently, the roles played by teachers and student in the Civil Rights Movement have remained largely unexplored. With the exceptions of R. Scott Baker and Tondra Loder-Jackson, historians have tended to place teachers on the sidelines of the long Civil Rights Movement. Consequently, their voices have not been heard. This has led to a deafening silence on the role that teachers played during the Civil Rights Movement. Within the past two decades, historians such as Gael Graham, Charles Payne, Jon Hale, Thomas Bynum, and others have examined the activism of high school students. However, scholars have yet to explore the full contours of high school students' participation in the movement. This study spotlights both groups and their activism in Charlottesville, Virginia.

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Historiography

African American Teachers and Students During the Long Civil Rights Movement

This dissertation engages particular elements within three historiographies: African American teachers and students during the long Civil Rights Movement; race and the American high school; and African American education in Virginia. Within the historiography of the Civil Rights Movement and education, this project spotlights and connects the role played by African American teachers and students in the long Civil Rights Movement. Historians such as R. Scott Baker, Martha Biondi, Marybeth Gasman, Ibram X. Kendi, Sarah Theusen, Joy Williamson-Lott, and Russell Rickford have illuminated the relationship between higher education and the Black freedom struggle.[4]

[4] Joy Williamson-Lott, *Black Power on Campus: The University of Illinois, 1965–1975* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003); R. Scott Baker, *Paradoxes of Desegregation: African American Struggles for Educational Equity in Charleston, South Carolina, 1926–1972* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006); Joy Williamson-Lott, *Radicalizing the Ebony Tower: Black Colleges and the Black Freedom Struggle in Mississippi* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2008); Martha Biondi, *The*

Collectively, these scholars have revealed how higher education institutions in locales throughout the United States both underpinned and undermined various stages of the Black freedom struggle during the 20th century. While the historiography of higher education has examined college students' activism, much less is known about the activism of high school students. Recently, in *A More Beautiful and Terrible History*, Jeanne Theoharis makes the case for research that illuminates the diversity of people involved with the Civil Rights Movement, including high school students. As Theoharis contends, "The activism of young people sixty years ago—like the activism of young people today—inspired many but also provoked much consternation from parents, teachers, and older activists, who saw them as too reckless or confrontational. But they pressed forth anyway, and the country is better for it."[5] Theoharis spotlights the protest movement of Barbara Johns at Robert Rousa High School in Prince Edward County, Virginia, before moving on to civil rights protests organized by high school students in Birmingham, Alabama, and Los Angeles, California.[6]

Black Revolution on Campus (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), Marybeth Gasman and Roger L. Geiger, *Higher Education for African Americans Before the Civil Rights Era, 1900–1964* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2012); Ibram X. Kendi, *The Black Campus Movement: Black Studies and the Racial Reconstitution of Higher Education, 1965–1972* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) Sarah Caroline Thuesen, *Greater Than Equal: African American Struggles for Schools and Citizenship in North Carolina, 1919–1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Russell Rickford, *We Are an African People: Independent Education, Black Power, and the Radical Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016); Joy Williamson-Lott, *Jim Crow Campus: Higher Education and the Struggle for a New Southern Social Order* (New York: Teachers College Press, Forthcoming).

[5] Jeanne Theoharis, *A More Beautiful and Terrible History: The Uses and Misuses of Civil Rights History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2018), 142.

[6] Theoharis, *A More Beautiful and Terrible History*, 144–153. Based on her lack of footnotes, one could be led to believe that Theoharis is the first to uncover the protest by Barbara Johns and Claudette Colvin. However, Jill Titus and Christopher Bonastia have chronicled the protest movement by Johns and her classmates in Prince Edward County. Relatedly, Danielle L. McGuire recounts Colvin's story in her account of Black

Despite Theoharis's contention about the dearth of scholarship on high school activists in the Civil Rights Movement, some scholars have begun to fill this gap. In particular, Gael Graham, Charles Payne, Jon Hale, Thomas Bynum, and others have examined the activism of high school students.[7] Graham's *Young Activists* focuses broadly on high school activism in the 1960s. Drawing upon school periodicals, journals, and other ephedra, her account reveals how students protested gender inequalities, the Vietnam War, and racism. Although Graham spotlights high school students, she centers her focus predominantly upon white and middle-class activists.[8] Charles Payne's *I've Got the Light of Freedom* shows how African American high school students helped organize and protest political disenfranchisement and oppression in Mississippi during the classical Civil Rights Movement. Jon Hale's research has revealed how students in South Carolina's public schools and Mississippi's freedom schools were involved in activism beyond the classroom. Based on his examination of the NAACP youth councils, Thomas

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women's role in the Civil Rights Movement. For more on Barbara Johns, see Jill Titus, *Brown's Battleground: Students, Segregationists, and the Struggle for Justice in Prince Edward County, Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 5–8, 209, and Christopher Bonastia, *Southern Stalemate: Five Years Without Public Education in Prince Edward County, Virginia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 31–33, 34–35, 37–38, 40–41, 175, 191, 252. On Colvin, see Danielle L. McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Race, and Resistance—A New History of the Civil Rights Movement From Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), 83, 84–87, 88–92, 93, 132.

[7] Payne, *I've Got The Light of Freedom*; Jon N. Hale, "'The Student As a Force for Social Change': The Mississippi Freedom Schools and Student Engagement" in *The Journal of African American History* 96 (3): 325–347; Jon N. Hale, "'The Fight Was Instilled in Us': High School Activism and the Civil Rights Movement in Charleston," in *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 114 (1), 2013: 4–28; Jon N. Hale, *The Freedom Schools: The Freedom Schools: Student Activists in the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016); Jon N. Hale, "Future Foot Soldiers or Budding Criminals?: The Dynamics of High School Student Activism in the Southern Black Freedom Struggle," in *The Journal of Southern History* (Forthcoming).

[8] Gael Graham, *Young Activists: American High School Students in the Age of Protest* (DeKalb: Northern University Press, 2006)

Bynum argues that African American youth were "political actors who played a major role in the fight for racial equality in the United States."[9] Based on recent unpublished research, this historiographical thread should continue within the upcoming decade.[10]

The focus on high school students' activism has often implied that students operate in a vacuum. Of course, these students possess agency but also often had several adults educating them in formal and informal settings. African American parents, pastors, community leaders, and teachers helped cultivate African American young peoples' consciousness and provided them with educational capital. Scholars such as Hilton Kelly, Vanessa Siddle Walker, Tondra Loder-Jackson and, to a lesser extent, Adam Fairclough have illuminated how African American teachers cultivated African American students' consciousness and provided educational capital during the era of de jure segregated schooling. The research by Kelly, Walker, Loder-Jackson, and Fairclough has provided a more nuanced and robust account of segregated schooling. These scholars acknowledge the racist policymaking and financing of segregated schools and, at the same time, reveal how African American teachers navigated these contexts to help their students reach "their highest potential." While scholars have coalesced around a more complex understanding of segregated schooling, there is less agreement about the role and involvement of African American teachers in the long Civil Rights Movement.[11]

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[9] Bynum, *NAACP Youth and the Fight for Black Freedom,* xiii.

[10] A recent forum organized by Dara Walker on the *Black Perspectives* blog showcased new directions for understanding high school student activism. See https://www.aaihs.org/tag/studentactivismforum/.

[11] Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Adam Fairclough, *Teaching Equality: Black Schools in the Age of Jim Crow* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001); Adam Fairclough, *A Class of Their Own: Black Teachers in the Segregated South* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007); Vanessa Siddle Walker, "African American Teaching in the

For several decades, scholars have downplayed the role played by African American teachers. Indeed, an ongoing historiographical debate exists about African American teachers' roles and involvement in civil rights activism. On one side of the debate, Adam Fairclough, Charles Payne, John Dittmer, and more recently Crystal Sanders, have collectively portrayed African American public school teachers as inherently passive and conservative during the Movement. In particular, Fairclough and Payne contend that teachers were not involved in activism because they feared for their lives, families, and jobs. To account for why so many young people were involved in protest and activism, Payne claims that parental influence most shaped the activism young people in Greenwood, Mississippi. He also cites activists such as Bob Moses as a contributing influence on young peoples' consciousness. In fact, Payne seemingly credits every adult except teachers. While Payne never enters the classroom with his study, Fairclough illuminates how African American teachers taught within segregated schools through the Civil Rights Movement. Since he employs a rather narrow conception of

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South, 1940–1960," in *American Educational Research Journal* 38 (4), 2001: 751–779; Vanessa Siddle Walker, "Organized Resistance and Black Educators' Quest for School Equality, 1878–1938," in *Teachers College Record* 107 (3), 2005: 355–388; Tondra Loder-Jackson, "Hope and Despair: Southern Black Women Educators Across Pre- and Post-Civil Rights Cohorts Theorize About Their Activism," in *Educational Studies* 48 (3), 2012: 266–295; Tondra Loder-Jackson, *Schoolhouse Activists: African American Educators and the Long Birmingham Civil Rights Movement* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015); Hilton Kelly, *Race, Remembering, and Jim Crow's Teachers* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Hilton Kelly, "What Jim Crow's Teachers Could Do: Educational Capital and Teachers' Work in Under-Resourced Schools," in *Urban Review* 42 (4), 2010: 329-350. See also, Vanessa Siddle Walker, *The Lost Education of Horace Tate: Uncovering the Hidden Heroes Who Fought for Justice in Schools* (New York: The New Press, Forthcoming).

activism, Fairclough downplays the relationship between what students learn in school and the activism that occurs beyond it.[12]

On the other side of the debate, Scott Baker and Tondra Loder-Jackson have challenged Fairclough and Payne's interpretation.[13] In doing so, Baker and Loder-Jackson have offered a more capacious conception of teacher activism. In Baker's synthesis of the secondary literature and a case study of the Burke Industrial School in Charleston, South Carolina, he asserts, "Drawing on the democratic ideals embedded in Dewey's progressive educational philosophy, a generation of college-educated teachers at Burke and other Black schools created academic and extracurricular programs that encouraged student protest."[14] Similar to Baker, Loder-Jackson explicates how the "intellectual activism" practiced by African American teachers in Birmingham, Alabama cultivated the consciousness of African American students who became the foot soldiers of the Civil Rights Movement.[15] Neither Baker nor Loder-Jackson would contend that all teachers were involved in protest and activism. However, their accounts reveal how and why some teachers both participated in and abetted the activism of their students.

This dissertation is not just concerned with African American teachers and student activism, though. It also takes seriously the pedagogical and curricular materials

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[12] John Dittmer, *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Fairclough, *A Class of Their Own: Black Teachers in the Segregated South* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007); Charles Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Crystal Sanders, *A Chance for Change: Head Start and Mississippi's Black Freedom Struggle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

[13] R. Scott Baker, "Pedagogies of Protest: African American Teachers and the History of the Civil Rights Movement, 1940–1963," in *Teachers College Record* 113 (12): 2777–2803; Loder-Jackson, *Schoolhouse Activists*.

[14] Baker, "Pedagogies of Protest," 2780.

[15] Loder-Jackson, *Schoolhouse Activists*, 7.

underpinning activism. Few scholars have examined the history of pedagogy in the United States. Larry Cuban's *How Teachers Taught* represents one of the exceptions to that trend within the historiography.[16] Cuban offers the most comprehensive monograph on teacher pedagogy in the United States. According to Cuban, high school pedagogy was consistently teacher-centered throughout the 20th century. Recently, Zoe Burkholder and LeeAnn Reynolds have spotlighted the role teachers played in teaching students about race in the North and South before the *Brown* decision.[17] While Cuban, Burkholder, and Reynolds focus on formal pedagogy in elementary and high school, George Chilcoat, Jerry Ligon, Jon Hale, and Crystal Sanders have examined the curriculum and pedagogy employed within the Mississippi Freedom Schools.[18] Bringing together these threads within the historiography, this project will focus on the relationship amongst pedagogy, curriculum, and protest within high schools.

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[16] Larry Cuban, *How Teachers Taught: Constancy and Change in American Classrooms, 1880–1990, 2nd Edition* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993).

[17] Zoe Burkholder, *Color in the Classroom: How American Schools Taught Race, 1900–1954* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Leeann Garrison Reynolds, *Maintaining Segregation: Children and Racial Instruction in the South, 1920–1955* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2017).

[18] George W. Chilcoat and Jerry A. Ligon, "'Helping to Make Democracy a Living Reality': The Curriculum Conference of the Mississippi Freedom Schools," in *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* 15 (1): 43–68; George W. Chilcoat and Jerry A. Ligon, "Discussion as a Means for Transformative Change: Social Studies Lessons from the Mississippi Freedom Schools," in *Social Studies* 92 (5): 213–219; George W. Chilcoat and Jerry A. Ligon, "Theatre as an Emancipatory Tool: Classroom Drama in the Mississippi Freedom Schools," in *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 30 (5), September 1998: 515–543; "'We Talk Here. This Is a School for Talking": Participatory Democracy from the Classroom out into the Community," in *Curriculum Inquiry* 28 (2), 1998: 165–193; Jon Hale, *The Freedom Schools: Student Activists in the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Columbia University, 2016); Crystal Sanders, *A Chance for Change*.

Race and the American High School

Within the historiography of the American high school, this project highlights the relationship between African Americans and the institution's development during the 20th century. During the past 30 years, scholars have explored the American high school's evolving purpose and significance. David Labaree, Reed Ueda, and William J. Reese have traced the origins and evolution of the high school—a uniquely American institution. Labaree, in his study of Philadelphia's Central High School, scrutinizes the confluence and contestation of democracy and capitalism. Rather than just being an institution that developed students as democratic citizens, Central High School increasingly became an institution to credential citizens for the job market. While Labaree spotlights a single high school to trace institutional changes, Reese takes a more expansive approach. Reese's *The Origins of the American High School* reveals how high schools developed in the 19th century as a result of grassroots efforts to build upon the foundation of the common school movement. Reese traces how supporters of these schools drew upon networks of people and ideas to develop the institution; however, the institutional form and purpose varied across place. He also contends that high schools prevented the hardening of class in the United States. At same time, though, they did much to cement racial inequalities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.[19] While the work of Labaree and Reese avoid significant engagement with racism and segregation, they do provide a strong comparative lens for understanding the development of African American high schools.

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[19] William J. Reese, *The Origins of the American High School* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), xiv.

James D. Anderson and, more recently, Jay Driskell have revealed how African Americans' push for high school education served as an opening salvo in the long Civil Rights Movement. While many scholars rightly point to the *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court case as a major force in codifying Jim Crow segregation, Anderson points to a lesser known case, *Cumming v. Richmond County Board of Education* (1899), as the greatest obstacle to equitable secondary schooling for the South's African Americans. The *Cumming* decision held that school districts could legally segregate schools. Despite the ruling, African Americans continued to push for secondary schooling and secured modest, though, limited access. These battles may not have always yielded an African American high school; however, they did inaugurate political activism presaging the classical Civil Rights Movement. Most importantly Anderson observed, "The significant shift of the black population from the rural to the urban South during the period 1916 to 1930 forced a new attentiveness to secondary education for black youth."[20] Driskell's *Schooling Jim Crow* traces the fight for Booker T. Washington High School and its relationship to the long the Civil Rights Movement in Atlanta, Georgia. Driskill claimed, "As they fought for Booker T. Washington High School, black Atlantans laid the foundation for a new black politics."[21] Similar to locales throughout the South, including Atlanta, the push for and establishment of Jefferson High School in Charlottesville represented one of the nodes for resisting the Nadir.[22]

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[20] James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 202–203.

[21] Jay W. Driskell, *Schooling Jim Crow: The Fight for Atlanta's Booker T. Washington High School and the Roots of Black Protest Politics* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014), 22–23.

[22] Historian Rayford Logan was the first to use "the Nadir" to describe the period following Reconstruction. While Logan narrowly defined this period as 1877 to 1901, subsequent scholars have extended the chronology into the 20th century. See Rayford

Beginning with Vanessa Siddle Walker, in the mid-1990s, scholars have offered more nuanced and robust accounts of segregated schooling. Rather than viewing segregated schooling as bereft of educational and communal value, Walker asserted that "[t]he small body of material suggests that schooling for African American children during the era of legal segregation may have been more highly valued by some its constituents then has been generally considered. Indeed, it is possible that communities may have lamented the loss of their schools for reasons that were more complex than the fear of loss of jobs, a rationale sometimes cited to explain some community members' resistance to desegregation."[23] Walker's interpretation provided a timely and rigorous corrective within this historiography; however, the microscopic focus on a single school sacrificed a perspective on the larger context of time and place. Recent additions to the historiography have been better attuned to the context of African American secondary schooling.

Allison Stewart, Sharon Pierson, and Pamela Grundy have placed African American secondary schools within the larger contexts of Jim Crow, urban renewal, and civil rights struggles. Alison Stewart's *First Class* traces the rise and fall of Dunbar High School, the first Black public high school in the United States and places it within the context of education reform efforts in the nation's capitol.[24] Sharon Pierson's *Laboratory of Learning* examines Black secondary education during the Jim Crow era by further illuminating the context of valued segregated schooling and a case study of Alabama

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Logan, *The Negro in American Life and Thought: The Nadir, 1877–1901* (New York: Dial Press, 1954).

[23] Walker, *Their Highest Potential*, 4.

[24] Alison Stewart, *First Class: The Legacy of Dunbar, America's First Black Public High School* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2013).

State Teachers College Laboratory High School.[25] Pamela Grundy's *Color and Character* traces the contours of educational reform at West Charlotte High School during segregation, desegregation, and resegregation.[26] The collective work of these scholars reveals the value in spotlighting African American high schools. However, while tracing shifts over time within a single institution is necessary and revelatory, it is also essential to trace shifts between high schools. Doing so will yield a more robust account of institutional change over time.

While some recent historians have conducted institutional case studies, others have offered more general accounts about race and the American high school. Scholars including David Angus, Jeffrey Mirel, John Rury, and Shirley Hill have revealed the successes and failures of the secondary education for Black Americans from a macro perspective. Angus and Mirel's *The Failed Promise of the American High School* examines how American high schools have fallen short in providing socioeconomic mobility for all students. They assert, "We see the shift to custodialism as a fundamental change in the social and economic function of the high school that consequently transformed the nature of the institution."[27] In other words, Angus and Mirel see high schools as becoming increasingly complicit in maintaining the social and economic status quo in the United States. Rury and Hill's *The African American Struggle for Secondary Schooling* illuminates the regional and chronological contours of the fight to secure equitable secondary schooling for African American adolescents. They claim, "The

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[25] Sharon Gay Pierson, *Laboratory of Learning: HBCU Laboratory Schools and Alabama State College Lab High in the Era of Jim Crow* (New York: Peter Lang, 2014).

[26] Pamela Grundy, *Color and Character: West Charlotte High and the American Struggle over Educational Equality* (Chapel Hill: University of Chapel Hill, 2017).

[27] David L. Angus and Jeffrey E. Mirel, *The Failed Promise of the American High School*, *1890–1995* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1999), 3–4.

growth of secondary education for the nation's African American youth did not occur spontaneously or because of White compassion, but rather from prolonged struggle for the cause of educational equity. At a time when high school was becoming a near universal facet of life for White Americans, Black communities wanted the same for their children."[28] Similar to how James Anderson demonstrates the key role played by African Africans in securing universal elementary schooling in the South, Rury and Hill uncover the ways that Blacks fought for the expansion of equitable secondary schooling. Rury and Hill's account offers a strong comparative lens to understand the trends in Black secondary schooling within the Charlottesville context.

In sum, historians of the American high school have examined the origins and development of the institution, experiences of segregated high school education, and the desegregation and resegregation of high schools during the 20th century. The American high school, or the "people's college," originated in the antebellum era. High school education, while more expansive than in other Western nations, was largely limited to white males and some females until the end of the Civil War. However, after leading the push for establishing universal elementary schooling in the South, African American communities turned their attention to securing secondary education.[29] The fight for high schools manifested not just a push for greater access to schooling but also to securing the full benefits of democratic citizenship. While African American high schools may have lacked the full array of resources afforded to many white high schools, scholars have offered a more nuanced narrative about how African American communities mitigated

[28] John L. Rury and Shirley A. Hill's *The African American Struggle for Secondary Schooling: Closing the Graduation Gap, 1940–1980* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2012), 2.

[29] Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860–1935*, 186–237; Driskell, *Schooling Jim Crow*.

the challenges of Jim Crow and African American teachers helped their students reach "their highest potential."[30] In the aftermath of the *Brown* decision, a multitude of local case studies have traced the rise and fall of desegregation efforts and the concomitant consequences for high schools around the United States.[31] Overall, this scholarship has revealed the unique institutional nature of high schools in the United States and ongoing fights for equitable access to comprehensive public schooling.

African American Education in Virginia

Within the historiography of the African American experience, this project focuses on a southern state that has received less scholarly attention compared with other locales. During the past few decades, historical accounts of African American education in the South have mostly taken on a regional approach[32] or have focused primarily on the

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[30] See David S. Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road: Hyde County, North Carolina and the Fate of Black Schools in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1994) Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential*; Alison Stewart, *First Class*; Pierson, *Laboratory of Learning*; Pamela Grundy, *Color and Character*.

[31] See Douglas M. Davison, *Reading, Writing, and Race: the Desegregation of the Charlotte Schools* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Gregory S. Jacobs, *Getting Around Brown: Desegregation, Development, and the Columbus Public Schools* (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1998), Charles C. Bolton, *The Hardest Deal of All: the Battle Over School Integration in Mississippi, 1870–1980* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2005); R. Scott Baker, *Paradoxes of Desegregation: African American struggles for Educational Equity in Charleston, South Carolina, 1926–1972* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006), Jeffrey L. Littlejohn and Charles H. Ford, *Elusive Equality: Desegregation and Resegregation in Norfolk's Public Schools* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012); Tracy E. K'Meyer, *From Brown to Meredith: the Long Struggle for School Desegregation in Louisville, Kentucky, 1954–2007* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Ansley T. Erickson, *Making the Unequal Metropolis: School Desegregation and Its Limits* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).

[32] Studies taking a regional approach include Thomas L. Webber, *Deep Like the Rivers: Education in the Slave Quarter Community, 1831–1865* (New York: Norton, 1978); Ronald Butchart, *Northern Schools Southern Blacks, and Reconstruction: Freedman's Education, 1862–1875* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980), Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South;* Heather Andrea Williams, *Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina

states of North Carolina[33] and Mississippi.[34] The regional approach has constructed a foundation from which to understand the development of Black education in the 20th century. James D. Anderson's *The Education of Blacks in the South*, for example, traces the competing ideological underpinnings of African American education in the South during Reconstruction and the Jim Crow eras.[35] Anderson's seminal monograph provides general trends in the South. However, it is necessary to understand the complexities and nuances within various regions within the South and locales within those regions. Indeed, complementary work both at the regional and local level is necessary to generate a full accounting of African American education. Although recent scholarship has contributed to our understanding, there is more room for uncovering place-based differences within the South.

Press, 2005); Ronald E. Butchart, *Schooling the Freed People: Teaching, Learning, and the Struggle for Black Freedom, 1861–1876* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

[33] Studies focused on North Carolina and locales within the state include David S. Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road*; Douglas M. Davison, *Reading, Writing & Race*; Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential*; Stephen S. Smith, *Boom for Whom?: Education, Desegregation, and Development in Charlotte* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004); Sarah Caroline Thuesen, *Greater Than Equal: African American Struggles for Schools and Citizenship in North Carolina, 1919–1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Roslyn Arlin Mickelson, Stephen Samuel Smith, and Amy Hawn Nelson, eds., *Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: School Desegregation and Resegregation in Charlotte* (Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2015); Pamela Grundy, *Color and Character*.

[34] Studies focused on Mississippi and locales within the state include Charles C. Bolton, *The Hardest Deal of All: the Battle Over School Integration in Mississippi, 1870–1980* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2005) Christopher Span, *From Cotton Field to Schoolhouse: African American Education in Mississippi, 1862–1875* (University of North Carolina Press, 2009); James P. Marshall, *Student Activism and Civil Rights in Mississippi: Protest Politics and the Struggle for Racial Justice, 1960–1965* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2013); Jon N. Hale, *The Freedom Schools: Student Activists in the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016); Crystal Sanders, *A Chance for Change: Head Start and Mississippi's Black Freedom Struggle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

[35] Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South.*

Although historical accounts of North Carolina and Mississippi have dominated the literature on African American education, Virginia has not been completely neglected. Scholarship, in the form of published books and unpublished dissertations, has expanded our understanding of Black education in the Commonwealth during the 20th century. Brian J. Daugherity's *Keep On Keeping On* examines the relationship between the Virginia NAACP and the Brown decision. Daugherity illuminates the role of the state-level NAACP in implementing school desegregation in Virginia. Daugherity claims that "The NAACP was the largest and most important civil rights organization in Virginia during this era … Moreover, the organization's commitment to racial equality enjoyed the broad support of Virginia's African American population—even those who never formally joined the organization."[36] Daugherity's focus on the NAACP's role in civil rights struggles reveals the top-down approach of African American Virginians for securing greater educational equality. While it is true that the NAACP played a key role in civil rights struggles, Daugherity overplays the organization's role by claiming that all African Americans, regardless of whether they joined the organization and paid dues, supported the NAACP in Virginia.

Case studies of Virginia locales have focused on locales that closed schools during the Massive Resistance campaign. Consequently, Prince Edward County has been of particular interest to scholars. Jill Titus's *Brown's Battleground* examines the origins and consequences of closing the schools in Prince Edward County, Virginia. Titus asserts, "In prioritizing the maintenance of white supremacy over educating young people to engage with the world, white residents destroyed the institution that has been termed

[36] Brian J. Daugherity, *Keep On Keeping On: The NAACP and the Implementation of* Brown v. Board of Education *in Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016), 2.

with the 'cornerstone of American democracy'"—the public school. In aggressively pursuing civil rights reform in hopes of creating a better future for their children, African Americans lost even the substandard system that had stood at the heart of the black community for decades."[37] Titus's account illustrates the most extreme example of white resistance to school desegregation—and it is an important story. However, the focus on an extreme situation makes the racism in Prince Edward County seem like an exception rather than the rule in Virginia.

Christopher Bonastia account covers similar ground to Titus. However, Bonastia's account connects the Prince Edward County story with larger political and educational consequences for African Americans throughout the United States. Bonastia's *Southern Stalemate* claims, "White county leaders believed they were creating a blueprint for defying desegregation mandates in the rural South and, they hoped, throughout much of the United States. Had the Supreme Court decided not to strike down the school-closing strategy—thirteen years after the school strike, a decade after Brown, and five years after schools had closed—these Virginia segregationists may have been right. It would take until the 1970s for the schools to become meaningfully integrated."[38] Bonastia provides greater depth and context in his appraisal of Prince Edward County. However, he underestimates the extent to which the white segregationists were successful. School closing is still used an educational reform technique, and schools across Virginia were never "meaningfully integrated."

Norfolk, Virginia, another city that closed its schools, has also been subject to recent examination. Jeffrey L. Littlejohn and Charles H. Ford's *Elusive Equality* traces,

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[37] Titus, *Brown's Battleground,* 10.
[38] Bonastia, *Southern Stalemate*, 2.

beginning in the 1930s and ending in the 1980s, the desegregation and resegregation of the Norfolk Public Schools. Littlejohn and Ford claim, "twentieth-century Norfolk had always congratulated itself on achieving racial equipoise, while keeping elite whites firmly in control. That civic-patting-itself-on-the-back happened after equalization efforts in the 1940s, after token desegregation in the 1960s, after compliance with busing mandates in the 1970s, and after returning to neighborhood schools in 1986."[39] The approach utilized by Littlejohn and Ford provides a good model to think about African American education within a specific Virginian locale during the 20th century. However, Littlejohn and Ford focus most of their attention beyond the classroom without fully explicating how events beyond the classroom influenced school- and classroom-level changes during the 20th century.

While the Richmond Public Schools did not close, the city has also been a popular site for studies of African American education. Robert Pratt, James Ryan, and Carmen Foster have explicated the segregation, desegregation, and resegregation of schools in the city.[40] Pratt's *The Color of Their Skin* and Ryan's *Five Miles Away, A World Apart* focus on the white resistance to the Brown decision including flight to nearby Henrico County. After tracing the attempts to reform schools in Richmond during the 1970s, Ryan argues that the only way to truly reach equity for all students is integration. Foster's "Tension, Resistance, and Transition," reveals the challenges involved with school desegregation in the city's north side. To a greater extent in Ryan's book and a lesser extent in Pratt's

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[39] Jeffrey L. Littlejohn and Charles H. Ford, *Elusive Equality* 3.

[40] Robert A. Pratt, *The Color of Their Skin: Education and Race in Richmond, Virginia, 1954-89* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993); James E. Ryan, *Five Miles Away, a World Apart: One City, Two Schools, and the Story of Educational Opportunity in Modern America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Carmen Foster, "Tension, Resistance, and Transition: School Desegregation in Richmond's North Side, 1960–63" (EDD dissertation, University of Virginia, 2014).

book and Foster's dissertation, these accounts illuminate larger trends in fighting for educational equity in the Commonwealth's capital city.

In the past few decades, Charlottesville has served as canvas to understand African American education and white responses to civil rights. Matthew D. Lassiter, Andrew B. Lewis, Michael E. James, James Salmonwicz, and Dallas Crowe have drawn upon Charlottesville to reveal the city's relationship with African American education.[41] Lassiter and Lewis's *The Moderates Dilemma*, an edited volume, deconstructs Massive Resistance to offer a more nuanced account of Southern white responses to the Brown decision. Lassiter and Lewis claim, "The majority of white southerners inhabited a broad middle ground somewhere between the few liberals who openly embraced the principle of racial integration and the vocal, organized segregationists and political demagogues who pledged to resist any and all encroachments upon the right to maintain segregated schools."[42] Lassiter and Lewis illuminate the gradients of white responses to school desegregation and assert that the majority of Southern whites should be labeled as moderates. While understanding multiple perspectives is a necessary and important endeavor within historical scholarship, the way a historian chooses to label individuals also matters. These 'moderates' were still complicit in the web of white supremacy.

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[41] Dallas R. Crowe, "Desegregation of Charlottesville, Virginia Public Schools, 1954–1969: A Case Study," (PhD dissertation, University of Virginia, 1971); Matthew D. Lassiter and Andrew B. Lewis, *The Moderates' Dilemma: Massive Resistance to School Desegregation in Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998); Michael E. James, *The Conspiracy of the Good: Civil Rights and the Struggle for Community in Two American Cities, 1875–2000* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005); Michael E. Salmonwicz, "Race and Education in a Southern School System: An Organizational History of Charlottesville City Schools, 1985–2011" (PhD dissertation, University of Virginia, 2013).

[42] Lassiter and Lewis, *The Moderates' Dilemma* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 3.

Charlottesville has also been deployed as a landscape to understand the South in relation to other American regions. James's *The Conspiracy of the Good* compares and contrasts Pasadena, California and Charlottesville to reveal the extent to which there were regional differences between civil rights struggles and education in the West and the South. While James does engage with some of the source material used in this dissertation, he does not engage at all with the Charlottesville City School Board's papers, makes limited use of oral history interviews, and makes only passing reference to the city's urban renewal campaign. Dallas Crowe's "Desegregation of Charlottesville, Virginia Public Schools, 1954–1969" examines school desegregation in Charlottesville. Crowe's dissertation focuses particular attention on the white responses to the *Brown* decision and differentiates between whites that were completely opposed versus reluctant to change. Salmonwicz's "Race and Education in a Southern School System" examines the organizational history of the Charlottesville City Schools. Although his dissertation focuses on the district's organization, it does offer a roadmap for thinking about the relationship between the city's schools and the Black freedom struggle.

Overall, this project makes three contributions to the existing historiography. First, it centers its focus on how African American high school teachers and students were involved in the long Civil Rights Movement. Second, it reassesses how high school education changed over time from the African American perspective, deploying a longer chronological scope and focusing less on school desegregation. Third, it recasts the narrative of African American education in Virginia by explicating how African Americans have persisted in working toward educational equity in the context of constant resistance from the state's white population. Overall, this dissertation reveals that rather

than viewing educational equity as a final destination, advocates and policymakers must navigate and anticipate how whites within Charlottesville, Virginia, and the United States will respond to their progress.

Methods and Sources

Using archival materials, school yearbooks, local, state, and national periodicals, curricular and pedagogical materials, and oral history interviews, this dissertation examines the relationship between African American high school education and the long Civil Rights Movement. To account for the bottom-up perspective, the project relies upon oral history interviews. In the early 2000s, when the Charlottesville City School board and City Council were determining what should be done with the Jefferson School building, researchers conducted 30 interviews with people who were connected with the school during the 20th century. The interviewees included African American teachers who taught at and students who attended Jefferson High School, Jackson P. Burley High School, Lane High School, and Charlottesville High School. While these interviews were utilized as part of a public campaign to save the Jefferson High School building, they have been lightly used for scholarly purposes. This project makes extensive use of these interviews. It also draws upon oral history interviews conducted by James Roberts Saunders and Renae Nadine Shackelford. Finally, it draws upon original oral history interviews conducted for the *Teachers in the Movement* project. The totality of these oral history interviews allows for a robust and diverse set of perspectives from within the African American community in Charlottesville.

This project also draws upon school yearbooks, school newspapers, and curricular and pedagogical materials. The school yearbooks have been recovered from a variety of

sources including the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, the Small Special Collections at the University of Virginia, the Charlottesville High School media center, and personal collections. Jefferson High School did not start creating a yearbook until the 1940s. Consequently, the yearbooks provided limited accounting for the first two decades at Jefferson High School. Overall, the project relies on yearbooks from Jefferson School, Jackson P. Burley High School, Lane High School, and Charlottesville High School to view a curated perspective of student life at these schools. Not only have these sources been valuable within their own right, but they have also led me to other sources. For example, a few pages in *The Link*, Lane High School's yearbook, about the Black Studies course led me to the curricular and pedagogical materials for the course. Similarly, the school newspaper at Lane has been valuable resource for revealing the student perspective and how it changed over time. Finally, the curricular and pedagogical materials offer a window into how and what teachers taught at each of the high schools.

To glean the top-down perspective, the project draws upon archival materials, academic reports, and periodicals. The archival materials were drawn primarily from the University of Virginia's Small Special Collections. In particular, the "Records of the Charlottesville City School Board, 1869–2006" collection was integral to developing an account of the top-down perspective. This extensive collection includes various documents related to the Charlottesville City Schools on topics such as school desegregation, facilities management, and finances. The "Papers of the Virginia Council on Human Relations, Charlottesville-Albemarle Chapter (1956–1970), have also been helpful in examining one thread of the local Civil Rights Movement. The academic reports are drawn from researchers at the University of Virginia and from institutions

such as Vanderbilt University and the University of Illinois. The Charlottesville City Board commissioned these reports during the 1960s and 1970s to understand and evaluate various issues of concern including relations between students of different races within the school system. Local, state, and national periodicals have helped me sketch out the narrative's contours. In particular, *The Daily Progress* and the *New Journal and Guide* have yielded reporting on various events within the story but, also, the thoughts and feelings of state and local individuals. And, in some cases, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* of Richmond, Virginia and national newspapers such as *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* assisted in understanding the state and national significance of particular events. The periodicals have been used to map out the major events in various spatial contexts and corroborate findings from both the oral history interviews and archival materials. Overall, these periodicals have been utilized as a compass to corroborate findings in other source material and to help build the dissertation narrative.

Chapter Organization

Chapter one traces the origins of high schools for African Americans in Virginia. It examines how these institutions emerged amidst the Jim Crow political and economic regime in the Commonwealth and, in particular, the city of Charlottesville. While white adolescents access a high school education in Charlottesville at Midway High School and, later, Lane High School, African Americans were forced to leave the city to receive any education beyond eighth grade. The fight for establishing Jefferson High School not only revealed how persistence in organizing could yield gains for African Americans, but it also yielded a physical space where African Americans could continue to cultivate community and social consciousness.

Chapter two traces how African American teachers and students collaborated to cultivate community and social consciousness at Jefferson High School. Despite a lack of overt activism by African American teachers and students, the development of another distinctly African American institution provided a strong foundation from which future generations would draw upon as the political, social, and economic context changed in Charlottesville. Due to overcrowding at the high school and the impending *Brown* decision, the Charlottesville City School board collaborated with Albemarle County Schools and the city of Scottsville to build a new comprehensive high school for African Americans in Charlottesville and the surrounding counties. While such a move led to Jefferson High School's closure, the sense of community and consciousness traveled to Jackson P. Burley High School.

Chapter three examines the involvement of African American teachers and students in the local Civil Rights Movement. When French Jackson, Don Martin, and John Martin desegregated Lane High School in the fall of 1959, they persisted in gaining access to the "best" high school education in Charlottesville. African American teachers and students at Jackson P. Burley High School continued to cultivate community and social consciousness within the classroom. They were also active beyond the classroom in political organizing and local protests. At the same time, the white architects of African American education were busy disrupting the lives of African Americans in the community through urban renewal.

Chapter four explores the contestation of educational space at Lane High School. African Americans' persistence both within and beyond the classroom continued throughout the 1960s until the Charlottesville City Schools were forced to fully

desegregate in 1966. African American students and a few African American teachers at Lane were not satisfied with merely occupying the space, though. They persisted in seeking equitable treatment in the space and expressed their displeasure through protest. However, white administrators, teachers, and students resisted African Americans claims on equitable treatment within the space.

Chapter five illuminates the implementation and consequences of Black Studies and Black Culture Week at Lane High School. Protests by African American students—and supported by African American and white teachers—eventually yielded a Black Studies elective course and an annual celebration of Black Culture Week in the 1970s. The course and the week aimed to center Blackness in a white educational space, which cultivated consciousness about the particular experience of African Americans. However, despite having a critical curriculum for both the course and the week, both fell short in potential due to white resistance, poor pedagogy, and rapid teacher turnover.

CHAPTER ONE

ORIGINS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLING AND CHARLOTTESVILLE'S LONG CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, 1890-1926

Rebecca Fuller McGinness, born in 1892, observed Charlottesville, Virginia's development firsthand. With the exception of going away to college for a few years and a year away with her husband after they married, McGinness spent over a hundred years in Charlottesville. Her life spanned a period of time when Charlottesville transformed from a rural space into an urban space surrounding the University of Virginia. In Florence Coleman Bryant's biography of McGinness, McGinness remembers when the city was incorporated in 1888, it "was more rural than urban. It had dirt streets, no indoor plumbing or electricity. A trolley car ran down the middle of Main Street, mired in mud." The lack of indoor plumbing meant, "honey wagons" traversed the city's streets "to pick up the buckets and replace them with clean, sanitized ones. They were dumped, cleaned, and sanitized down at the City Yard to be reused."[43] Eventually, Charlottesville's modernization campaigns made life more sanitary. However, modern plumbing arrived alongside a spree of anti-democratic and racist policymaking in the city during the early twentieth century.

Between the city's incorporation and its accompanying spatial transformation, McGinness also witnessed Jim Crow's emergence firsthand. Before Jim Crow's arrival in Charlottesville, she recalls, "White families lived all up and down Fifth Street as

[43] Florence Coleman Bryant, *Rebecca Fuller McGinness: A Lifetime, 1892-2000* (Charlottesville: The Van Dorn Company, 2001), 16.

harmonious neighbors. A white family lived across the street from our house. All the children in the neighborhood played together in the yard. Two white girls I played with regularly used to come into our house when we were getting ready to eat."[44] Jim Crow's talons continued to reach into the city's space and consciousness throughout the early twentieth century. After the passage of the Racial Purity Laws and the construction of the Robert E. Lee statue within a downtown park during the 1920s, McGinness remembers, "Jim Crow separated the races in everything. The white people started moving out of the mixed neighborhoods and started selling their homes to African Americans. Before long the neighborhoods were completely African American. It was that way all over town."[45]

While segregation in housing may have emerged in the twentieth century, the city's schools were segregated from the outset. After the Civil War, the Midway School served the city's white students while the Jefferson Colored Elementary School served the city's African American students. McGinness not only attended Jefferson, but, after completing her degree at the Hampton Institute, she taught at the school until her retirement in 1960.[46] When McGinness attended school in Charlottesville, she lacked access to a high school education. However, as a teacher and community member, she observed the fight for and founding of the city's African American high school: Jefferson High School. This chapter traces both the rise of both Jim Crow and African American secondary schooling in Charlottesville. Despite Jim Crow's emergence during the early twentieth century, African Americans managed to secure political and financial backing for the construction of Jefferson High School. Overall, this chapter grapples with the

[44] Bryant, *Rebecca Fuller McGinness*, 21-22.
[45] Bryant, *Rebecca Fuller McGinness*, 22.
[46] Bryant, *Rebecca Fuller McGinness*, 48.

paradox of ascendant white supremacist ideology simultaneous with the emergence of a critical African American institution.

Origins of Public Schooling in Virginia

The public school system's development in the South lagged behind the North for whites and blacks alike.[47] During the eighteenth century in the Virginia House of Burgesses, delegate Thomas Jefferson attempted to create a public schooling system for the state's white upper classes. Jefferson failed. Similar attempts throughout the South also failed during both the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Instead, Southern elites received formal education occurred in private-tutoring arrangements or academies. All African Americans, whether freed or enslaved, faced several barriers to gaining even the most basic literacy. Before Nat Turner's rebellion in 1831, these barriers existed on de jure basis with relatively lax oversight in Virginia. After Turner's rebellion, though, these barriers became crystalized with more stringent legislation and oversight. On the one hand, some freed and enslaved blacks in Virginia became literate by formal and, often, furtive means. On the other hand, only a modest portion (five percent) of the African Americans were literate on the Civil War's eve. For all Virginians, but especially African Americans, the Civil War provided an opening for the development of universal schooling.[48]

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[47] On regional differences in the development of common schooling, see Carl F. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1860* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 182-217. See also Johann Neem, *Democracy's Schools: The Rise of Public Education in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2017).

[48] Thomas Webber, *Deep Like the Rivers: Education in the Slave Quarter Community, 1831-1865* (New York: Norton, 1978); Heather Andrea Williams, *Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2005); Hilary J. Moss, *Schooling Citizens: The Struggle for African American Education in Antebellum America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,

African Americans led the push for universal schooling in the South. During the Civil War, blacks and whites attended schools. With teaching and financial support from the northerners and northern philanthropists, these schools educated black children, adolescents, and adults.[49] Charlottesville, Virginia was just one of many communities where formal schools formed for freed people. Anna Gardner, an emissary of the New England Freedman's Aid Society, arrived in Charlottesville shortly after the war to support a school for African Americans. In a possible attempt to ingratiate herself to the local white population, Gardner named the new school for Thomas Jefferson. Despite Gardner's insensitivity to what the name might invoke for them, Charlottesville's African American children and, some adults, pursued education at the Jefferson School. In 1865, the Jefferson School opened in the city's Delevan Hotel. Gardner transformed the hotel, which had served as a Confederate hospital during the war, into a one-room schoolhouse. The Jefferson School built a foundation that underpinned the development of a public school system in the city following the Civil War.[50]

Throughout the 1860s, southern states codified and funded a system of universal schooling enshrined in newly formed constitutions. As part of congressional Reconstruction, southern states were forced to craft new state constitutions staring in 1866. During these constitutional conventions, a coalition of Northern whites and

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2009); Alisha D. Johnson, "A Class All Their Own: Economic and Educational Independence of Free Color in Antebellum Louisiana," in *Using the Past as Prologue: Contemporary Perspectives on African American Educational History,* edited by Dionne Danns, Michelle A. Purdy, and Christopher M. Span (Charlotte: Information Age Publishing, 2015).

[49] Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 1-28; Litwack, *Trouble in the Mind*, 56.

[50] Lauranett L. Lee, "Crucible in the Classroom: The Freedpeople and Their Teachers Charlottesville, Virginia, 1861-1876," (PhD dissertation, University of Virginia, 2002), 33-38.

southern blacks pushed for the codification of state-supported universal schooling. From Arkansas to Virginia and every southern state in between, public school systems were created. The cumulative creation of segregated universal schooling in these states did not guarantee either educational quality or equality. However, even as Jim Crow emerged, the public schools did become incubators for black liberation. The Jefferson School transitioned from a one-room schoolhouse to a full-fledged school building during the Reconstruction era. Although the school operated as an independent entity throughout Reconstruction, the Jefferson Colored Graded/Elementary School joined the newly formed Charlottesville City School (CCS) district in 1889. The school continued to serve students in grades one through eight until the school later expanded into a high school.[51]

Reconstruction's end inaugurated a precarious and dangerous era for African American education. Although African Americans continued to fight for public schooling's expansion, historian Joan Malczewski contends, "The politics of white supremacy was especially significant at the local level and limited what they could do."[52] Similarly, James Anderson asserts, "Black education developed within this context of political and economic oppression. Hence, although black southerners were formally free during the time when American popular education was transformed into a highly formal

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[51] Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*; Williams, *Self-Taught;* Hannah Rosen, *Terror in the Heart of Freedom: Citizenship, Sexual Violence, and the Meaning of Race in the Postemancipation South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Christopher Span, *From the Cotton Field to Schoolhouse: African American Education in Mississippi, 1862-1875* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2009)

Scot A. French, "African American Civic Activism and the Making of Jefferson High School," in *Pride Overcomes Prejudice: A History of Charlottesville's African American School* edited by Andrea Douglas (Charlottesville: Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, 2013), 31.

[52] Joan Malczewski, *Building a New Educational State: Foundations, Schools, and the American South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 8.

and critical social institution, their schooling took a different path."[53] Overall, the period from the end of Reconstruction to the rise of the Civil Rights Movement, African American education faced a series of ongoing challenges and obstacles including, but not limited, to: extralegal violence against teachers, school arsons, and inadequate funding, However, these immense obstacles did not spell African American education's demise.

In particular, white philanthropic individuals and institutions viewed the state government's apathy about African American education as an opportunity. According to historian William Watkins, the white architects of African American education viewed the whole enterprise as a "political proposition."[54] Following the withdrawal of federal troops in 1876, philanthropic individuals such Samuel Armstrong, Franklin H. Giddings, Thomas Jesse Jones, John D. Rockefeller, Sr., Robert Ogden, William Baldwin, and J.L.M. Curry and philanthropic organizations such as the Stokes Fund, the Slater Fund, and the General Education Board collaborated to develop a system and infrastructure of Black education. Watkins claims the white architects of African American education were "political operatives as much as or more than educators and curricularists."[55] While it is important to keep sight of the individuals at the top and ideological framework underpinning African American education's development into the twentieth century, it is also important flesh out the full contours of Black education at the state and local level.

Despite the general turn towards widespread political and economic oppression in the region notable differences did exist on the local level. As Malczewski observes, "Significant variations existed among states and among communities within the same

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[53] Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South,* 2.

[54] William H. Watkins, *The White Architects of Black Education: Ideology and Power in America, 1865-1954* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2001), 6.

[55] Watkins, *The White Architects of Black Education*, 6.

states or regions in the South, providing evidence of the extent to which local politics determined and limited educational change."[56] At the state level, Virginia led the South in dismantling democracy. However, while statewide politicians and institutions worked to undo Reconstruction, the guises and pace of change depended on the regional and local context within the state. Similar to what Malczewski reveals in her comparative study of North Carolina and Mississippi, the local political and social concerns of both Albemarle County and Charlottesville help explain Jefferson High School's establishment amidst Jim Crow in the city.

Jim Crow Virginia

Jim Crow arose in fits and starts throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Its emergence was not pre-ordained, either. Southern whites lacked a consensus African American's status within the region's political, social, and economic structures. However, between Reconstruction's end and the beginning of the twentieth century, historian Leon Litwack observes, "in the face of racial tensions heightened by disturbing evidence of black independence and assertiveness, whites acted to ensure the permanent political, economic, and social subordination and powerlessness of the black population."[57] To build consensus amongst whites, African Americans were disenfranchised and segregated by law. While intimidation may have already circumscribed African Americans' ability to vote and custom may have separated them from whites, the codification of custom signaled a new era.[58]

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[56] Malczewski, *Building a New Educational State*, 9.

[57] Leon Litwack, *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow* (New York: Vintage Press, 1998), 218.

[58] C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow, 3rd Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 6-7.

In Virginia, the codification of custom arose through the state Democratic Party's efforts. Historian Brent Tarter, in describing the evolution of the Democratic Party's ideology, observes, "White politicians, journalists, clergymen, scientists, and writes and speakers from a wide variety of backgrounds propagated ideas of white supremacy and black inferiority."[59] For example, University of Virginia's Dr. Paul Barringer, a leader in the eugenicist movement, believed that universal schooling "did not keep descendants of slaves from deteriorating into a savage and violent criminal class, their natural condition, because the teachers in many of the schools were also black."[60] It was not long before Barringer's beliefs and ideas would become the prevailing political and legal reality in Virginia. Barringer drew upon his mantle at the University of Virginia to propagate ideas of black inferiority in the Commonwealth and beyond. The white supremacist logic espoused by Barringer would become dominant during the next few decades and influence the state's political consciousness. In turn, that political consciousness shaped how whites and African American viewed education.

The contestation over African American education's purpose was closely tied to politics. In 1902, Virginia held a convention to revise the state constitution. Consequently, delegates from the western and southwestern parts of the state descended upon the state capitol in Richmond to draft a new constitution.[61] While the constitutional convention of 1868 included both white and black delegates, the 1902 convention included only wealthy, white males. The new constitution removed several past provisions including ones recognizing, "the supremacy of the Constitution of the United

[59] Brent Tarter, *The Grandees of Government: The Origins and Persistence of Undemocratic Politics in Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 257.

[60] Tarter, *The Grandees of Government*, 261.

[61] Tarter, *The Grandees of Government*, 265.

States, denounced rebellion against the United States, and outlawed slavery" in the Commonwealth.[62] While the previous constitution relied on local custom to segregate schooling, the new constitution stipulated, "white and colored children shall not be taught in the same school."[63] Although both public and private schools in had been segregated on a de facto basis for several decades, the codification of such a reality manifested a shift in how the state viewed the purpose of African American schooling. African Americans could continue to pursue schooling but the state would do everything within its power to separate and undermine their education.

Changes to the Virginia state constitution represented just the beginning of Jim Crow. Changes to the law, underpinned by pseudo-science developed and disseminated by the University of Virginia professors such as Paul Barringer, marked the interwar period, too. On March 20, 1924, state legislators passed the Racial Integrity Act. The new law "codified a two-tier racial hierarchy in which residents could only fit within the rigid racial categories of either White or colored." According to historian Arica Coleman, the law was "a full-throated endorsement of eugenics, the pseudo science of good breeding that lent credence to the pathology of White supremacy, much like the theories of scientific racism promoted during the previous century."[64] The combination of changes to the state constitution and laws during the early twentieth century dismantled both the reality and, in many ways, the memory of Reconstruction.

Dismantling Reconstruction also occurred in more tangible ways. The University of Virginia named the their newly formed school of education for Jabez Lamar Monroe

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[62] Tarter, *The Grandees of Government*, 266.
[63] Tarter, *The Grandees of Government*, 266.
[64] Arica L. Coleman, *That the Blood Stay Pure: African Americans, Native Americans, and the Predicament of Race and Identity in Virginia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 4.

Curry—a former slaveholder, member of the Confederacy, and white architect of African American education. Before his death, Curry lacked any substantive connection to the University other than a personal relationship with the university's president, Edwin Alderman.[65] Affixing Curry's name to UVA's school of education symbolized the university's complicity in undermining African American progress using education both locally and statewide. Beyond the university, Charlottesville built a statue honoring confederate general Robert E. Lee. The Lee statue, commissioned by Paul Goodloe McIntire on May 28, 1917, was started by artist Henry Shrady and, when Shrady fell ill, completed by Leo Lentelli in 1924. The statue was cast Roman Bronze Works in Brooklyn, New York. To display the statue, McIntire purchased a 45,435 square foot plot encompassed by Jefferson Street, Market Street, First Street Northeast, and Second Street Northeast[66] The statue's presence worked as an educational technology aiming to keep Charlottesville's African American community in their place.

White supremacist ideology may have been ascendant throughout Virginia including Charlottesville, but African Americans did not passively accept Jim Crow. In fact, demographic changes in the city bolstered the African American community's capacity to fight white supremacy. During the Civil War, Charlottesville's African American population grew significantly. Rather than stay on or near the plantations, many African Americans migrated to urban spaces. While not a major population center at the time, Charlottesville offered the chance for African Americans in surrounding counties to start anew. In their descriptive study of Charlottesville's Vinegar Hill neighborhood, James Saunders and Renae Shackelford observe, "The issuing of the

[65] William Watkins, *The White Architects of Black Education: Ideology and Power in America, 1865-1954* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2001), 161-174.

[66] Application to the National Register of Historic Places, June 19, 1996.

Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 cause a great influx of blacks from their rural environments into various cities and towns. As the migration continued, Vinegar Hill became a focal point for black residential and social life. With segregation still intact, black businesses evolved to satisfy a rising demand on the part of blacks for a varied assortment of goods and services."[67] Vinegar Hill was not just the center of African American life in Charlottesville. Eventually, it also became home to the Jefferson School and the many individuals who attended, worked, and supported it.

African Americans possessed few job options during the Jim Crow era in Charlottesville. Drusilla Hutchinson, a life-long resident of the Vinegar Hill neighborhood, recalls, "I took care of people, and babysitter, and helped people out in doing housework. I really loved what I was doing because I didn't have education to do nothing else…Then I worked in a beauty parlor. Back then, there wasn't anything for you to do but maybe work in somebody's kitchen or restaurants, you know, movies and things like that."[68] Hutchinson's employment options were circumscribed both by the lack of access to education and white discrimination within the city of Charlottesville. Her experience echoes others with similar qualifications at the time. However, despite having few options, many African Americans made the most of within the opportunities available to them. Mattie Thompkins, another resident of Vinegar Hill who became a telephone operator, remembers the experiences of her parents. Her father worked at Leggett as a janitor and "he wasn't making anything but like seven dollars a week." He eventually secured a position at Chancellor's Drugstore where he stayed for twenty-seven

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[67] James Robert Saunders and Renae Nadine Shackelford, *Urban Renewal and the End of Black Culture in Charlottesville, Virginia: An Oral History of Vinegar Hill* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc. Publishers, 1998), 1.

[68] Saunders and Shackelford, *An Oral History of Vinegar Hill*, 9.

years. Thompkins's mother was "doing like maid work, going from house to house, cleaning houses. That's about it—domestic work or whatever."[69] Most African Americans were subject to the labor market's ebbs and flows.

Some individuals, though, possessed the means to create their own businesses. George Inge started a grocery store served the community, while J.F. Bell opened a funeral home during the early twentieth century. Both businesses served the city's African American community and, to a lesser extent, its white residents. The City of Charlottesville and the University of Virginia were also major employers. Raymond Bell, the son of J.F. Bell remembers, "People on Williams Street, most of them worked at the City Yard, trash collecting. Years ago when there were not indoor toilets, they had a truck that went around and would empty the outhouses. And blacks worked in those jobs—street repair, excavations, all kinds of work. At one time there was an incinerator right in the City Yard. Trash, all the trash in Charlottesville would be burned in that incinerator. The other place they worked was at the university hospital. They worked at the school, doing domestic chores."[70] As the university modernized and expanded during the early twentieth century, jobs working for the city and university multiplied. Access to the highest-paying jobs with both employers remained elusive for African Americans, though.

Besides owning a business or working for the city, teaching was one of the few jobs that offered a modicum of economic security in the city. Although Anne Gardner and other white teachers from New England founded the Jefferson School, African American teachers soon replaced them. Similar turnover occurred throughout the South.

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[69] Saunders and Shackelford, *An Oral History of Vinegar Hill*, 12.
[70] Saunders and Shackelford, *An Oral History of Vinegar Hill*, 11.

While teaching offered some financial security, African American teachers inhabited a precarious place during the Reconstruction and Jim Crow Eras. Adam Fairclough asserts, "When dealing with whites, black teachers could not demand; they could only request, persuade, and manipulate. Black communities acknowledged these limitations, and they support and respected black teachers as long as the latter displayed integrity and commitment."[71] While Fairclough's contention about African American teachers' plight lacks geographic and chronological nuance, it does capture the experience of some teachers during this time period. Depending on where they were situated, African American teachers did face intimidation by paramilitary white supremacists groups, poor working conditions, unequal pay, and uncertain job security.[72] It did not mean, however, that they were passive and acquiescent to white supremacy.

Rebecca McGinness started teaching at the Jefferson School in 1915. She taught "every grade except for first and second" at Jefferson until her retirement.[73] McGinness became an activist by accident. During a trip to the bank, McGinness discovered that the city's white teachers received a better salary for the same work. She remembers, "We both were teaching the same grade, but her check was larger than mine. After teaching a couple of years without getting a raise, two other teachers and I decided not to sign our contracts when we received them. We decided to ask for a raise. We made an appointment with the superintendent in his home."[74] Eventually, African American teachers in Charlottesville secured pay raises from the Superintendent James G. Johnson and the Charlottesville City Schools during the 1920s. The pay increases did not

[71] Adam Fairclough, *A Class of Their Own: Black Teachers in the Segregated South* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 3.
[72] Fairclough, *A Class of Their Own*, 4.
[73] Bryant, *Rebecca Fuller McGinness*, 48.
[74] Bryant, *Rebecca Fuller McGinness*, 52-53.

completely equalize salaries across the board but did come close. Securing equal salaries was just the beginning of civil rights struggles associated with the city schools in Charlottesville.

The Struggle for Secondary Schooling

A dramatic expansion of secondary schooling occurred during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Virginia. In 1890, there were 76,702 African Americans, aged 15-19, living in the state with less than one percent attending any form of secondary schooling. By contrast there were 112,447 whites, in the same age cohort, living in the state with approximately four percent of those students were attending either a private or public secondary school. By 1910, there were a similar number of African Americans living in the state but the number of students attending secondary schooling had increased to four percent. By contrast, with an increase in population of nearly 30,000 white residents, the percentage of whites that attended secondary schooling jumped to ten percent. And secondary schooling continued to expand at an exponential rate throughout the twentieth century. By 1934, approximately fifty-five percent of white adolescents and twenty-one percent of black adolescents attended secondary schools.[75]

J.W. Lane served as CCS superintendent from 1905 to 1909. James G. Johnson succeeded him. Johnson served as CCS superintendent from 1909 to 1945.[76] In 1922, Virginia's General Assembly passed a law requiring all children "between the ages of eight and fourteen" to attend school. Political and legal decisions, throughout the region, limited the development of secondary schooling for African Americans. While many scholars point to the Supreme Court's *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision as the turning point for

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[75] Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 189-190, 236-237.
[76] Moore, *Albemarle: Jefferson's County,* 327.

du jure school segregation, historian James Anderson points toward another court case: *Cumming v. Richmond County Board of Education.* The *Cumming* decision created significant obstacles for African American secondary schooling's expansion. Overall, the ruling "meant that southern school boards did not have to offer public secondary schooling for black youth."[77] Even without legal backing, though, African American high schools were still established throughout the region even as Jim Crow emerged. By 1916, there were 64 public high schools for African American students. At that time, Virginia had eleven such schools.[78]

In 1890, Charlottesville's Midway School expanded their course offerings to include high school courses. Consequently, white students could take advanced coursework in the same building and the same city. The curriculum included Latin, French, history, mathematics, natural philosophy, and chemistry. Students, who lived within the city limits, were charged three dollars per month. If students have parents who paid an annual property tax valued at least $1000, then the monthly fee was waived.[79] The expanded course offerings quickly led to overcrowding at the Midway School. As a result, the Charlottesville City School board passed three resolutions in 1893. First, the Board observed the limitation of using a converted hotel to house the school for white students. Rather than remodeling and expanding the hotel, the board contended, "The old building should be torn down and a new one erected." Second, they resolved that due to an increase in Charlottesville's school-age population that the new building should have a capacity of no less than 800 students. Furthermore, such a building should be constructed

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[77] Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 192-193.

[78] Thomas Jesse Jones, *Negro Education: A Study of Private and Higher Schools for Colored People in the United States* (New York: Phelps Stokes Fund, 1916), 15-16.

[79] Moore, *Albemarle: Jefferson's County,* 320.

as soon as possible." Third, the board resolved that the Jefferson School building is scarcely fit for school purposes. Another should be added without delay."[80] There was a delay on the Jefferson School building. The school's building did not receive significant attention for another decade.

In contrast, the Midway School received a new building shortly after the resolution. The Charlottesville City Council borrowed $25,000 in April and quickly started constructing a new building for the high school. The new building opened—a month later than expected—in October. Midway High School employed four full-time teachers. J.W. Lane, J.W. Donner, Annie Caldwell, and Emma Foster "aimed to prepare students to attend the University of Virginia." Of course, at the time, only white male students could attend the University of Virginia. Soon after the high school's founding, the school formed a football team that practiced near principal Lane's house.[81] By 1905, the Midway School consisted of twenty-nine teachers with twenty-six classes, while the Jefferson School consisted of eight teachers with eights classes. "In the first two years of operation the two-year high school had 30 pupils and 2 teachers, while the lower six grades had an enrollment of 503 and 6 years. Two years later the 6-2 plan was expanded to the more familiar scheme of 8-4 of today, and in 1894 Charlottesville awarded its first diploma to a graduating class of one: Nettie M. Godwin. A year later, three more graduates, all girls, received diplomas: Nellie Arundale, Mabel P. Ferguson, and Bessie Yager."[82]

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[80] Moore, *Albemarle: Jefferson's County,* 320-321.
[81] Moore, *Albemarle: Jefferson's County,* 321.
[82] Moore, *Albemarle: Jefferson's County,* 320.

On April 18, 1914, Superintendent James G. Johnson offered a report on the state of the Charlottesville City Schools.[83] Johnson's report included information about buildings and equipment, organization, course of study, and the teaching force. While providing a detailed and exhaustive accounting of the school district's white schools, Johnson makes a promise to supply a similar report on the Jefferson School. Such a report never materializes either in the newspaper or notes of the school board. In Johnson's personal writing and correspondence, Jefferson emits a faint light in his consciousness. On the one hand, his negligence means that Johnson and the district fails to provide the necessary tangible resources for the school's African American teachers and students. On the other hand, his negligence provided an opening for African American teachers and students to cultivate a community without direct oversight by the city's white architects of Black education. In 1924, Midway High School was renamed Lane High School in honor of local educator James W. Lane.[84] White adolescents attended Lane High School in the Midway School building until 1940, when Superintendent Johnson led a capital and building campaign to construct a new building. The new building displaced several African American families and an African American church. The families did not receive compensation for their displacement and the church disappeared.[85]

After learning about the expansion at the Midway School, Charlottesville's African American community started their own struggle to secure secondary schooling.

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[83] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, VA, Box 66, Folder 1.

[84] James W. Lane was a teacher, principal, and superintendent of the Charlottesville City Schools. He served as the superintendent before James G. Johnson. See Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, VA, Box 66, Folder 1.

[85] Salmonwicz, "Race and Education in a Southern School System," Appendix A.

Despite their best efforts, though, struggle continued for several decades while generations of white Charlottesvillians possessed access to a high school education within the city limits.[86] Before Jefferson High School's establishment, African Americans had to leave the city to pursue education beyond elementary school. Albemarle Training School (ATS) offered the closest option for several decades. Similar to the Hampton Institute and Tuskegee Institute, ATS provided, "basic elementary education followed by two years of training in vocational agriculture, domestic science, or industrial education" beginning in the 1890s. For more than forty years the school remained focused on vocational training. Mary Greer, the school's third principal, instituted significant reforms upon her appointment in 1931. Not only did she spark changes that led to the establishment of "a formal four-year high school curriculum," but she also advocated for the the consolidation of secondary schooling in the Albemarle County and Charlottesville City Schools.[87]

The first recorded meeting of community leaders about a high school for African Americans occurred at First Baptist Church in the 1890s. As historian Scot French acknowledges, a single newspaper article survives as a reference to this meeting. Although nothing tangible resulted from that initial meeting, the church would be a key site of the struggle for the high school. Reverend Clarence M. Long, the pastor at First Baptist, helped revive the struggle after World War I. Rebecca McGinness remembers, "He went to bat to help to secure the basic right for African American children in Charlottesville" and "stirred up the white people so much that they thought it better to

[86] French, "African American Civic Activism and the Making of Jefferson High School," 31.

[87] Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, "Albemarle Training School," *African American Historic Sites Database*, assessed January 10, 2018, http://www.aahistoricsitesva.org/items/show/12.

concede to the African American community's demand for a high school than to allow him to stir up the African-American community any further."[88] Eventually, Long was run out of town by the city's white elites including individuals involved with the Charlottesville City Schools. Before he left Charlottesville, though, he laid the foundation for future struggles.

Reverend Long used both his platform as a preacher and the physical space available to him to advocate for an African American high school. He started the fight for a high school by organizing a Parent Teacher Association. The group consisted of the community's Black teachers and parents met in the basement of First Baptist Church. He also advocated for the founding of a high school on a regular basis from the pulpit. Long recalls, "I never missed an opportunity to plead the cause of the Negro. I urged them to build homes and to educate their children…I always had the courage to speak my convictions'"[89] While speaking his convictions led to his ouster from serving as the pastor to First Baptist Church, Long's organizing and speaking helped Charlottesville's Black community imagine a future that included more comprehensive educational programming for their children.

Long's use of the pulpit led to direct action on several occasions. For example, in 1914, Black residents protested the requirement that all males take a course in industrial training. Several African American pastors in the city, "protested the Charlottesville School Board's requirement of manual training in industrial arts for boys enrolled at Jefferson Grade School." After the church services on Sunday, Superintendent James G. Johnson heard from several members in that African American community that they

[88] Bryant, *Rebecca Fuller McGinness*, 36-37.

[89] French, "African American Civic Activism and the Making of Jefferson High School," 52.

wanted their boys to be educated in more than "to work with their hands." As a result of the protest, "the superintendent and board eliminated the Carpenter Shop at Jefferson School—a measure that could be interpreted as both palliative and mean-spiritedly punitive."[90] In other words, Johnson gave the African American community what they wanted but such an act should not be interpreted as an act of good faith.

When Reverend Long left the city, others filled the leadership vacuum including Thomas J. Inge and Jackson P. Burley.[91] Inge inherited the grocery store in Vinegar Hill from his father. Burley worked as an educator in Charlottesville and Albemarle County. Both continued to engage with the Parent Teacher Association founded by Long and organized the larger African American community on several occasions to push for the high school. Long, Inge, and Burley may have been leaders in the struggle for a high school. But they were not alone. In the early 1920s, African American community leaders created a formal petition to build an African American high school. The petition declared,

> "Whereas, since the City of Charlottesville offers nothing higher to the Negro Youth to the Eighth Grade at the Jefferson School, and whereas, each year we have large classes to graduate who must go from home at such an early age to pursue higher courses, and since sending our children away at the age of fourteen years, which is the average age at which they graduate, we incur a great expense besides depriving them of the home training and influences; Therefore, we the undersigned petitioners, citizens of Charlottesville, Va., do ask that you grant us a High School for the Colored Youth of said City. We are deeply grateful for the educational advantages which we have and pray that the time is ripe for giving us a High School."[92]

This petition was signed by hundreds of Black residents in Charlottesville. Whether or not superintendent Johnson ever read the petition—there's no evidence that he did—the

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[90] French, "African American Civic Activism and the Making of Jefferson High School," 48.

[91] Bryant, *Rebecca Fuller McGinness*, 37.

[92] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 17.

results were tangible: Jefferson High School opened in 1926. Jefferson High School's emergence did not occur over night, though.

James G. Johnson made the case for expanding the Jefferson School with white elites in the city. On March 16, 1922, Johnson addressed Young Men's Business Club to provide an analysis of the Charlottesville City Schools as a whole. On the state of the Jefferson School building, Johnson argues, "it is a good building and has very good equipment; it is fairly well adapted to school work according to the needs of present conditions, but it is totally inadequate in capacity to accommodate the enrollment that is to be cared for each session. Changes entailing a moderate cost would make it a splendid plant for upper grade academic work with some added industrial features."[93] Overcrowding was a significant problem at the school. Johnson observes, "The building for colored pupils would comfortably care for 400 pupils but has to serve about 700; the result is that almost every school there has to run a half-day or three-fourth-day basis…added to this serious handicap in the limited amount of time any child may be in school each day is the additional drawback of a heavy load in enrollment for every teacher."[94]

Other political leaders in Charlottesville heard Johnson's push for a new building to serve African American students at the time. "By 1920 city and county had a combined population of 36,693, reflecting rather slow growth during the past four decades; for in 1880, before the incorporation of Charlottesville, the community could boast of 32,618 souls." In terms of racial breakdown, Charlottesville had 7,635 native whites, 197

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[93] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, VA, Box 66, Folder 1.

[94] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, VA, Box 66, Folder 1.

foreign-born whites, and 2,947 blacks.[95] On March 26, 1923, Mayor John R. Morris announced a bond election for April 10, 1923. The bond was to meet several need within the city including expanding and improving the Charlottesville City Schools. In addition to purchasing land to build another white elementary school in the city, the bond also called for funds to "enlarge the present Jefferson Colored School Building by the addition of certain rooms and to make such other necessary improvements to the present building and grounds at said Jefferson Colored School as necessary to meet the needs of properly housing the colored school children of the City."[96]

The petition was only the beginning. Johnson contributed editorials to the *Daily Progress* in support of expanding the Jefferson School into a high school. Historian Scot French observes, "Johnson stressed the benefits of the project—including the plans for a two-year high school—to 'the larger citizenship of the present and future.' He urged skeptics, presumably white, to take a 'sympathetic' view of matters and do 'the right thing to give us a more intelligent and a happier population'."[97] Building the new high school not only required the acceptance of the city's white community. It also required passing a bond to cover the cost of building and opening a new school. To bolster his chances of passing the bond, Johnson sought support from organizations "such as the League of Women Voters, the Kiwanies Club, and the Young Men's Business Club."[98]

The combination of the petition and efforts by Superintendent Johnson yielded the necessary support for the bond. Despite African American voters being disfranchised by

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[95] Moore, *Albemarle: Jefferson's County,* 324-325.

[96] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 1.

[97] French, "African American Civic Activism and the Making of Jefferson High School," 60.

[98] French, "African American Civic Activism and the Making of Jefferson High School," 60.

the state through poll taxes and literacy test, the city passed a bond of $290,000. The bond paid for the Jefferson School to be enlarged from eight to sixteen classrooms. While the efforts of the African American community and Johnson were key to the bond's passage, those reasons weren't the only ones. Not only did the bond support the expansion of the Jefferson School but also supported he construction and opening of Venable Elementary.[99] Without allocating funds for a new white elementary school, it is difficult to imagine that the bond would have passed. The convergence of black and white interests ultimately led to the establishment of Jefferson High School. During the development of plans for the new African American high school, the construction company discovered issues with the nearby heating plan. So, rather than just expand the current Jefferson School into a comprehensive building, Johnson decided to construct a new building for the school. After receiving approval from the Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction, Johnson and the Charlottesville City Schools moved to develop and construct a new building whose main entrance would be on Commerce Street. Such a location made the school "inconspicuous to all but the African American residents who lived and worked in Vinegar Hill and Star Hill neighborhoods."[100]

Despite the legal and political web undermining African American access to secondary schooling, the city's African American community organizing helped yield greater access to secondary schooling. Building the high school also helped relieve overcrowding at Jefferson Elementary.[101] Also, from the perspective of school officials

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[99] French, "African American Civic Activism and the Making of Jefferson High School," 63.

[100] French, "African American Civic Activism and the Making of Jefferson High School," 63.

[101] French, "African American Civic Activism and the Making of Jefferson High School," 63.

and other white elites in the city, the addition of the high school meant that African Americans had a greater incentive to stay in Charlottesville rather than seek secondary schooling away from the city. As we'll see in the next chapter, most of the students at Jefferson High School also worked before and after school at the university and other establishments serving white people in the city. For African Americans in the city, Jefferson High School's founding meant students could pursue a secondary education in the city and still receive support from their families and communities. It also revealed that despite the presence of Jim Crow and white supremacist ideology in the city's consciousness, African Americans could assert themselves politically and see tangible results.

Conclusion

Jefferson High School's (JHS) establishment would eventually provide a viable option for students who sought a high school education. Even when JHS opened, though, some African Americans were skeptical about the value of a high school education. Walter Jones, a resident of Charlottesville for 40 years, remembers, "Albemarle Training School was a good trade school. That's where I went to school at. I didn't go to a city school. At that time, Albemarle County School had better credits than Jefferson did. Jefferson didn't have as high credits at that time as Albemarle Training School did."[102] Jones's hesitancy was probably warranted at the time. During the early 20th century, the city's African Americans faced limited employment opportunities—with or without a high school education. As Charles Johnson, a black man who unsuccessfully sought the Democratic nomination for Charlottesville City Council in 1960, contends, "Back in those days, the ideas [sic] was prevalent among blacks that you didn't need so much

[102] Saunders and Shackelford, *An Oral History of Vinegar Hill*, 15–16.

education, that your position in life would be just a human beast of burden, services in one way or another. They felt that you didn't need any more education at that time."[103]

Although the establishment of JHS may have marked progress in the struggle for equitable secondary schooling, it should not be mistaken as an equally supported and regarded institution by Superintendent James G. Johnson and the Charlottesville City School Board. Johnson and the board managed the situation with the city's African American community, but they were not interested in providing an equal, let alone equitable, high school institution. While Jefferson High School and Midway High School provided high school educations that included 11th grade instruction, Johnson and the board added 12th grade to Midway without doing the same for Jefferson. This progress should be not dismissed entirely, though. Rebecca McGinness did not directly benefit from the founding of JHS. However, many of her future students did, though. The establishment of JHS became a point of pride in Charlottesville's African American community. McGinness recalls, "It took a long, hard struggle and a lot of agitation to finally get a high school for African Americans. It came too late for me to take advantage of it, but I was very impressed with the dedication and persistence those who worked for it demonstrated.[104] During a historical era when Charlottesville's African Americans lacked political power and representation, they persisted and navigated within the system to force Charlottesville's white architects to build an institution that would underpin future struggles for civil rights.

Building the physical structure represented a critical juncture in the long struggle for civil rights in Charlottesville. Within the physical space of JHS, African American

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[103] Saunders and Shackelford, *An Oral History of Vinegar Hil*, 18.
[104] Bryant, *Rebecca Fuller McGinness*, 36.

administrators and teachers cultivated an atmosphere of community and social consciousness that undermined messages of black inferiority percolating in the city, state, and nation during the early 20th century. JHS may not have been able to completely mitigate the obstacles facing African Americans at the time. But, like a caterpillar that builds a cocoon to prepare for life as a butterfly, the high school prepared the city's African American secondary students to face the realities of the world and to imagine a more equitable future both within and beyond Charlottesville.

CHAPTER TWO

"PILLARS OF THE TOWN": CULTIVATING COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS, 1926-1951

> "…the people who are basically pillars of this town would not have been had it not been for a school like Jefferson. Jefferson has put out some people that have contributed a lot not only to Charlottesville but a lot of people around the world."[105]
>
> -William Gilmore, Graduate of Jefferson High School, 1948

In 1945, William Gilmore moved from Nelson County, Virginia to Charlottesville. Gilmore, upon his arrival in the city, enrolled as a sophomore at Jefferson High School. Before heading to school each day, he worked at either the Albemarle Hotel or at the University of Virginia cafeteria. When he had finished working for the morning, Gilmore took a short walk, from the hotel, or a longer walk, from the university, along West Main Street to the high school. Since several of his classmates also worked at the hotel and university, peers would have likely accompanied Gilmore on his commute. A trolley car traveling between the university and the C & O station would have followed his route, too. And walking along West Main, at that time, Gilmore had unimpeded views of Carter Mountain and Monticello. Furthermore, instead of an asphalt road, his path would from the university to JHS's red brick building located on the corner of 4th and

[105] Oral history interview with William Gilmore by Lynn Carter (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript, accessed, October 1, 2016, https://www.jmrl.org/ebooks/Jefferson%20School%20volume%201.PDF

Commerce Street. After two years of this morning routine, Gilmore graduated from JHS in 1948.[106]

Upon graduating from Jefferson High School and serving in the military, Gilmore attended North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College in Greensboro, North Carolina. He secured a job at hotel in Greensboro through a connection between a white hotel owner in Charlottesville and another white hotel owner in Greensboro. He combined funds from the hotel job and the GI Bill to pay for tuition and living expenses. After graduating from college, Gilmore worked for the Federal Department of Corrections for over a decade before retiring in the 1990s. Drawing upon his training in criminal justice and psychology, he wrote briefs that to help correctional authorities determine whether or not a prisoner should be released. In reflecting upon his life, Gilmore credited success in his life to the foundation built during the time he spent at JHS. When asked what he thought about efforts to preserve the Jefferson School in the early 2000s, Gilmore remarked, "the people who are basically pillars of this town would not have been had it not been for a school like Jefferson. Jefferson has put out some people that have contributed a lot not only to Charlottesville but a lot of people around the world."[107]

When Jefferson High School opened in 1926, few could have known the influence the school would have on William Gilmore, his classmates, his teachers, his principal, and Charlottesville's African American community. JHS, once established, became both a key site to cultivate a space where African American teachers and

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[106] Oral history interview with William Gilmore by Lynn Carter (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[107] Oral history interview with William Gilmore by Lynn Carter (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

administrators secured some measure of socioeconomic stability for themselves and fostered a critical consciousness within their African American students to resist Jim Crow beyond the school's walls. Furthermore, the school's physical space helped cultivate the consciousness of African American teachers and students beyond the school walls as activists organized against the local and state white architects of African American education.

The Great Depression and African American Political Organizing

The Great Depression touched areas throughout the United States to varying degrees. On the Great Depression in Virginia, Ronald Heinemann observes, "The depression was severe in the state, yet mild when compared to its impact elsewhere."[108] The relative mildness led to a set of political paradoxes during the New Deal era. "New Deal programs benefited thousands at the time, yet their enduring effect was minimal," Heinemann asserts, "Old Dominion voters gave Franklin Roosevelt landslide victories, yet returned his most vociferous critics, Harry Byrd and Carter Glass, to the Senate with greater majorities."[109] On the one hand, Virginia accepted the federal largesse available during the New Deal. On the other hand, the state wanted to continue their tradition of anti-democratic politics. And, similar to other states at the time, the federal funds and programming in Virginia were unequally dispersed along racial lines.

Charlottesville's residents and some African Americans, in particular faced challenges brought on by the economic crisis. For example, "Domestic labor, in Charlottesville and at the University, has been reduced; construction work is at a

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[108] Ronald L. Heinemann, *Depression and New Deal in Virginia: The Enduring Dominion* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983), ix.

[109] Heinemann, *Depression and New Deal Virginia*, ix.

standstill and many, many Negroes are in need of immediate help."[110] During the Scottsboro case, a staff writer at *The Reflector,* pushed readers to think not only about the boys facing a racist judicial system in Alabama but also to think about the "Charlottesville Case." The writer contended, "We have in our midst, hundreds of young men and women, growing into manhood and womanhood, without the slightest idea of their civil rights. We have also, hundreds and hundreds of matured citizens, who have lived these many years without putting forth the least show of effort to demand certain rights as American Citizens."[111] The Community Welfare Organization provided some relief to people seeking clothing, food, and money. However, the challenges were drastic and widespread in the city as they were in many parts of the country.

In 1930, Charlottesville had a total population of 15,245 residents. African Americans constituted 4,083 or nearly twenty-seven percent of the city's population.[112] From 1933 to 1935, city residents received a combined total of $222,093 from the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and the Federal Emergency Relief Administrators (FERA). Within an average month, during this time period, approximately 1200 residents—or eight percent of the total population—were receiving some form of

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[110] "S.O.S." *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), December 2, 1933, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.12.02.33

[111] "Scottsboro or Charlottesville" *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), August 26, 1933, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.08.26.33.

[112] U.S. Census Bureau, Total Population, 1930, Prepared by Social Explorer, (Accessed Dec. 11, 2017).

assistance from the federal government.[113] African Americans criticized the inequitable dispersals from Roosevelt's New Deal. In 1933, *The Reflector* emerged on the newspaper scene in the city. It was owned and operated by African Americans. It provides a window into the political consciousness of some African Americans within the city. On the New Deal, the newspaper observed, "In this age of 'boards' it would mean a great deal to the 12,000,000 Negros in this country, if the president saw fit to create a board designed to investigate and report on certain economic conditions that so greatly handicap one twelfth of American workmen."[114]

Despite the Great Depression and its consequences, Charlottesville's African American community continued the swell of political organizing that yielded Jefferson High School**.** Some of the organizing was related to improving the schooling experience for Jefferson High School's students. For several years, the African American community battled with the city council over the resurrection of the Booker T. Washington Park Recreational Center. Jefferson High School utilized the park for extracurricular activities including football. On February 17, 1934, *The Reflector* ran an article about the situation. The staff observed, "Over five years ago…Mr. Mcintire gave a large tract of land, located on Preston Avenue, for the building of a Negro Recreational Center. A Negro committee was formed, the ground named, some funds obtained, and then activity ceased."[115] The

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[113] Heinemann, *Depression and New Deal in Virginia,* 203.

[114] "The Negroes New Deal," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), May 26, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.05.26.34

[115] "Hope on the Horizon," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), February 17, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/ra

article also notes that African Americans are not the ones at fault for the cessation. Instead, there are "hundreds and hundreds of Negro citizens and many white friends" who are ready "to follow a logical procedure that will put into practical use Mr. McIntire's gift of five year's standing."[116]

In 1933, within the pages of *The Reflector* exhorted the city's African Americans to activate the civic league. In 1933, the paper asserted, "We feel that a civic league in this community would do much to inculcate unity and power at the polls and in everyday life. We are urging citizens to give the plan consideration in their homes, in their clubs and in their various places of business. We have talked long enough. Now is the time for action. Now is the time for action."[117] So, while some elite whites believed that building Jefferson High School would curb activism within the city, in many ways it provided a model. Despite being disfranchised, African Americans organized and protested for the full rights of citizenship. The need to organize a civic league went beyond just political concerns. Organizing a civic league was also about dealing with social and economic issues afflicting the city during the Great Depression. Another *Reflector* article called for citizens to demand inclusion into the government programs developed by the Roosevelt Administration. Securing those funds would allow African Americans in Charlottesville

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[116] "Hope on the Horizon," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), February 17, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.02.17.34

[117] "Wanted at Once!! Action," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), August 19, 1933, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.08.19.33

to improve streets, build sidewalks that "would aid in the brightening of our residential sections and make them better places in which to live" and "provide employment for hundreds of men who are now idle." The article notes that without organizing on the part of African Americans through an organization such as the civic league than the funds will be disbursed inequitably.[118]

Despite previous instances of activism, some African Americans felt that other members of the community lacked follow-through on civic activism. In *The Reflector* on July 21st, 1934, the author contended: "Charlottesville negroes, unlike negroes living near large industrial or agricultural centers enjoy a somewhat permanent order of existence that is not necessarily governed by so-called Conditions of the times. The logic in organization cannot be seen because there is apparently nothing to be done, which of course is the natural trend of the mass mind in a state of satisfaction."[119] The author is implying that the economic context in Charlottesville inhibits the participation of African Americans in civic activism. On the one hand, the author could be implying that the situation is not bad enough to push people towards activism. On the other hand, the author could also be implying that the inextricable link between the university and the city precludes African Americans from expressing discontent. While the context beyond

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[118] "Dr. Clarke Forman's Advice to the Negro," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), December 16, 1933, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.12.16.33.

[119] "Charlottesville, Yours and Mine," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), July 21, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.07.21.34

Jefferson High School still inhibited widespread activism amongst African Americans within the city, the school provided a foundation for future activism.

Illiteracy and the Dropouts

African Americans' access to secondary schooling continued to expand during the mid-twentieth century. However, it still lagged behind access for white students. In May1934, a national conference on African American education was held in Washington, D.C to discuss the state of African American education in the United States.[120] At the conference, it was revealed, "fourteen Southern States spend $40,000,000 and more, annually on education for the whites, than they spend on education for the Negro. So, before adjourning the delegates to the convention adopted a program that will mean more employment for Negro teachers and better wages, if the plan is successfully put in operation."[121] The platform included a call for the expansion of Black education both in K-12 and higher education. It also included a call for better salaries and working conditions for African American teachers. Finally, it included a call for national standards of adequate financial support that "should be equitably distributed."[122] Each of these issues emerged, to varying degrees in Charlottesville.

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[120] "The Foundation of Our Democracy" *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), June 2, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.06.02.34

[121] "The Foundation of Our Democracy" *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), June 2, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.06.02.34

[122] "The Foundation of Our Democracy" *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), June 2, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/ra

The expansion of schooling helped curb illiteracy for African Americans in Charlottesville. Despite the existence of the Jefferson Elementary and Jefferson High School, though, illiteracy remained an issue in the city. There's no doubt that the Jefferson School's presence made a difference following the Civil War. By 1930, ninety-one percent of African Americans over ten years old were literate. However, that meant nine-percent of African Americans were illiterate, which was double the amount of illiterate whites in the city.[123] *The Reflector* observed, "It sounds incredible at a time like this, that there are so many right in our midst who can neither read nor write, to whom the printed page means nothing." To solve the issue, they called for "the professional men and women of our city would organize themselves into a sort of 'Help the Intellectually Meager' club and devote a couple hours a week to training adults in night school, think of the great amount of oil that may be produced to help make the well of progress move more smoothly."[124]

Compared to illiteracy, though, access to a high school education was a larger issue before World War II. Many African American students in Charlottesville never entered the high school or left the high school before graduating. Charlottesville was not the only place dealing with this issue either; this was a regional issue. On October 13, 1934, citing a government report by Carl A. Jessen, the *Chicago Defender* reported: "Fewer than 10 percent of high-school age Negroes in 15 southern states are enrolled in

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[123] U.S. Census Bureau, Literacy, 1930, Prepared by Social Explorer, (Accessed Dec. 11, 2017).

[124] "Night School for Adults" *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), June 23, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.06.23.34

public high school."[125] Building a high school in the Charlottesville may have increased the likelihood of students pursuing a high school education. But it did not guarantee that all or even most would finish their degree.

When Jefferson High School opened, the Charlottesville City School Board started tracking African American students' progress as they moved through the system. The Charlottesville City School board created specific folders for African American students who left school before graduating from eleventh grade. Unfortunately, the background information does not include any explanation beyond poor grades. The Great Depression created mass unemployment for all people in the United States; however, African Americans were disproportionately affected by employment. While that may have been a contributing factor for staying in school, it could also work in the other direction. African Americans may not have seen the value in pursuing a high school education given the lack of opportunities with or without a degree. World War II was also a factor in students' decision to finish high school. Some students in Charlottesville, both white and African American, left school early to join the military. After World War II, the number of students who left JHS before graduating decreased substantially.[126]

African American students, who did graduate from Jefferson High School before the war, often pursued higher education. Mary Sellers Carter was one of the few. Carter

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[125] "Only Small Percentage of Race Children in South in High School, Survey Shows," *The Chicago Defender* (October 13, 1934); For the full report, see United States Office of Education, National Survey of Secondary Education, Carl Arthur Jessen, Leonard V Koos, and William John Cooper, "National Survey of Secondary Education," (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1933),

[126] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 81, Folders 2-4. The archivists have labels these folders as "Jefferson High School drop-outs." However, the use of that term at this time period is ahistorical. "Drop-out" as a social category did not exist until the postwar period.

was part of the first graduating class at Jefferson High School. Upon graduating from JHS, She attended Virginia State University during the Great Depression. In response to the inequalities of the public schooling experience, She remembers, "We walked - we walked to school - you know, you talking about advantage or whatnot. When I went to school here and that was from elementary school to high school - high school there was no such thing as a day off because of snow. And there were no school buses either. You walked."[127] And the streets from Ridge Street to the Jefferson School weren't paved. By 1934, Jefferson High School was one of only six accredited African American secondary schools in Virginia. At the time, approximately four thousand African Americans lived in Charlottesville. Nearly half of the African American population owned a home. On Main Street, there were twenty-four businesses that were owned and operated by African Americans living in the city. Based on information collected by *The Reflector* in 1934, "more than twenty-five percent of Jefferson High School graduates are attending, at present, institutes of higher learning.[128]

During and after World War II, it was common for students to both work and attend school. Rudolph Gofney graduated from JHS in 1941. Gofney contends, "Most kids who could get a job after school, got a job. Because it was during the Depression years, the Depression. And funds were limited. At that time, blacks were at the bottom of the economic pole. In a way, if you wanted to move up, you had to get a job, you had to

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[127] Oral history interview with Pocahontas Sellers, Mary Sellers Carter, and Virginia Carter by Jean Hiatt and Roulhac Toledano, (August 13, 1994), Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[128] "Facts to Remember About Charlottesville," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), April 7, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.04.07.34

do something to beat the rest. That was necessary. So most of the people who did that, most of the people who aspired to move up, had to do something differently…If there was a football game or a basketball game or what not, then all of the community would participate in it because that was probably the only thing happening at that particular time. So it was a real wholesome time at that time in history."[129] Students worked a variety of jobs in the city. Priscilla Whiting remembers, "I went to work when I was a senior. It was a dress shop downtown called Smart and Thrifty." Grafton Payne, another student a year behind Whiting, also worked at the store. "We'd unpack the clothes, and put them on the hangers," recalls Whiting. "Most of them you had to put the tags on, and that's the kind of stuff you'd do if you went to work after school."[130] William Gilmore claims, "Most other kids I knew worked while they went to school. Cubbie Anderson worked, Baker worked downtown. Most of them are deceased. Bill Chapman who used to play football, there were a lot of guys working and going to school."[131]

Housing and Schooling

In the midst of the Great Depression, a graduate student at the University of Virginia Phelps-Stokes fellow Helen Camp de Corse wrote "Charlottesville—A Study of Negro Life and Personality." De Corse's observations about Charlottesville's African Americans include racist and classist descriptions and analysis. However, the text offers insight into the local political, social and economic context of the city. In describing the overall state of housing for African Americans, De Corse observes, "The areas of the city

[129] Oral history interview with Rudolph Goffney by Chana Ewing, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript, https://www.jmrl.org/ebooks/Jefferson%20School%20volume%201.PDF

[130] Oral history interview with Priscilla Whiting by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 9, 2003), 10th Street, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[131] Oral history interview with William Gilmore by Lynn Carter (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia.

occupied by Negroes lie near the railroads and in low-lying regions. These areas represent in many instances places of fresh settlement and transition. The Negro is gradually encroaching upon white settlement. Frequently and unfortunately he is occupying the insanitary and unsightly former homes of the white people. The areas occupied by Negroes in Charlottesville are clearly defined—their homes and businesses set apart from white occupation, hence there is little racial friction." De Corse's observation about the segregation of African American homes and businesses manifests the local consequences of Jim Crow in Charlottesville.[132]

The condition of housing for African Americans varied widely. Most African Americans rented their homes from whites in the city. Due to negligent white landlords, the rental properties were often poorly maintained. The conditions surrounding these areas also illustrated a lack of concern for the city's African Americans. Houses near the gas house are situated near "a stream carrying refuse" from the building. While the stream usually just ran alongside the rental homes, there were times when the combination of rain and refuse overwhelmed the stream. Not all the areas inhabited by African Americans faced negligent and environmental racism. De Corse reported, "The west end of Preston Avenue, to Rugby Road is occupied by Negro home owners, whose houses are good and yards attractive." She also spotlights the Vinegar Hill neighborhood and the Ridge Street neighborhood as places of "education and prosperity."[133] Overall, the neighborhood descriptions demonstrate not only the stratification by race but also class in Charlottesville during the 1920s and 1930s. The stratification can along class

[132] Helen Camp de Corse, "Charlottesville—A Study of Negro Life and Personality," (MA thesis, University of Virginia, 1933), 7.

[133] De Corse, "Charlottesville—A Study of Negro Life and Personality," 7-10.

lines depended on the how and the extent to which one's job was connected to the University of Virginia.

In certain parts of Charlottesville, the living conditions were particularly subpar. On November 18, 1933, *The Reflector* called for a "City Improvement Plan." They observed, "There are sections of our city where the residents have been paying taxes either directly or indirectly yet each rainy day they find themselves knee-deep in mud and cinder paths." To deal with these conditions, they proposed, "A loan could be secured from the public works fund and streets and sidewalks could be constructed. The cost of the work could be paid by the property owners over a certain term of years with a removable interest." Not only would such a plan have improved the overall conditions within the city but, according to the newspaper, "it would give our many idle men work to do" and "make various Negro rental sections in Charlottesville modern, sanitary places in which to live and in turn produce citizens proud of and helpful to their country."[134] Despite the range of housing situations in the city, proximity to the schools was not an issue for most African American residents.

Jefferson High School was centrally located in the city. Ruth Harris (nee Coles), a student at both schools, remembers, "Yeah, very convenient. Sometimes, it wasn't too convenient when you wanted to stroll home with your friends and stay out a long time, because you were expected to be in the house after school within five minutes of the time

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[134] "Negro Relief in Charlottesville" *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), November 18, 1933, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.11.18.33

school let out. So you couldn't play very long."[135] In response to a question about walking to school, Martin recalled, "There was a stream of children along Ridge Street, Oak Street, Dice Street. Some people would have lunch bags or pails, and everyone would have book bags. If we were due at ten of nine, we would leave at about twenty-five before nine. About seventy students walked to school together. Everyone was synchronized to leave at the last possible moment. Some of the younger students would go early to play, but the older you got the less you wanted to do that. A whole stream of us, walking to school and walking home. We went to Inge's grocery. Sometimes we'd stop and get apples."[136] However, Jefferson High School was situated next to a gas plant. Rudolph Gofney remembers, "Yes, the number one thing I remember is that the gas house was right next to the school and the noxious odors and the gasoline, not gas but cooking gas, and that type of thing. There was no EPA or any pollution laws at that time so the fumes were just released into the air and the school was right next to it, or just about."[137]

While most students who attended Jefferson High School lived in Charlottesville, a few students lived outside of the city. For example, Dr. Braxton Coles lived in East Town. He left the house at "about six o'clock" to attend school. The trip took "an hour

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[135] Oral history interview with Bernadine Gines, Ruth Harris, and Frances Wood by Lois McKenzie, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript, https://www.jmrl.org/ebooks/Jefferson%20School%20volume%201.PDF

[136] Oral history interview with Kenneth Martin by Alexandria Searls (March 17, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript. Martin's account of students walking to Jefferson High School is mentioned by a number of individuals interviewed as part of the Jefferson School Oral History Project.

[137] Oral history interview with Rudolph Goffney by Chana Ewing, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

and a half to two hours."[138] Although Coles attended Jefferson Elementary and Jefferson High School, only one of his thirteen siblings attended the school. Coles and his sister Carrie both decided against attending Albemarle Training School. While Coles never mentions a reason for his siblings decision to stay at the county school, it is not hard to see that the distance would be a prohibitive factor in their decision-making about where to attend high school. Eventually, Coles moved to Charlottesville. "That was one of the biggest differences. I had no social life connected to the high school because after the first two years, I got a job at a boardinghouse and they gave me room and board [in Charlottesville]"[139] Working at the boardinghouse meant that Coles had to sacrifice involvement in extracurricular activities. "No, I couldn't even attend sporting events because I had to go to school and rush to the boarding house and start getting ready to take in the guests and I even started helping her cook."[140] The sacrifice was worth it to Coles, though because "those boys in my family, all my brothers, most of them dropped out of school"[141] His brothers ended their schooling and start working in various jobs. In contrast, after graduating from Jefferson High School, Coles attended the Hampton Institute and studied pre-med. After attending college in Hampton, Virginia, he moved to Chicago, Illinois and eventually entered dental school. He practiced dentistry from 1961 to 1989.

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[138] Oral history interview with Dr. Braxton Coles by Jacky Taylor, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript, https://www.jmrl.org/ebooks/Jefferson%20School%20volume%201.PDF

[139] Oral history interview with Dr. Braxton Coles by Jacky Taylor, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[140] Oral history interview with Dr. Braxton Coles by Jacky Taylor, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[141] Oral history interview with Dr. Braxton Coles by Jacky Taylor, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

With the exception of students such as Dr. Braxton Coles, the close proximity between housing and schooling had significant consequences for the cultivation of community. Students were involved in sports. Clarence Jones attended JHS from 1940 to 1943.[142] Jones was an active participant in extracurricular activities. He played the French horn for the school band. The band performed concerts in school auditorium and at parades and football games. Jones also played on the football and baseball teams after school.[143] For their games, James remembers playing "Dunbar, in Lynchburg, Addison in Roanoke, Maggie Walker and Armstrong in Richmond, Peabody in Petersburg and Alexandria and Lexington." The team's uniforms were red with black trim. They practiced and played their games at Wine Cellar field and Booker T. Washington Park. Both locations required students to walk approximately a half-mile from the JHS campus. Overall, Jefferson High School's location created conditions where community could be cultivated. Conditions alone do not lead to community, though.

Cultivating Community

Jefferson High School's teachers and students were not involved in overt activism during the school's existence. Several factors contributed to their reticence. Rudolph Gofney, a 1941 graduate of Jefferson High School recalls, "There was not as much activism then as there is now. I mean the desire was there. But there were restraints. You see, there were reprisals. If you acted, if there was something that you didn't like, that you knew was oppressive, if you addressed it outright, then there were reprisals. The courts were not behind you, nothing was behind you. And it was not a good time for

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[142] Oral history interview with Clarence Jones (July 2001), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[143] Oral history interview with Clarence Jones (July 2001), Charlottesville, Virginia.

activism, or for that type of thing."[144] Gofney observes that the surrounding context made it difficult to pursue any form of action beyond the classroom. However, JHS's teachers and the young people enrolled drew upon the space to cultivate community.

African American teachers were critical to cultivating community at Jefferson High School. Rudolph Goffney remembers, "The churches and the schools were basically the center of the community, the heart of the community. That's where you saw people, that's where you did things, and you interacted. And, as I said earlier, most people knew everybody else. It was pleasant. Remarkably pleasant for the times and conditions."[145] Jefferson High School, according to Theresa Price, "meant everything to the African American community. It was full of people here servicing those students."[146] Price remembers, "We had some great teachers. And in order to give you things so that the school was accredited, and so you could get into most colleges, she was one of the people willing to go to summer school or do something to make herself accredited so that she could teach. She taught French, she did the music program, you know, the chorus, along with Pauline Garrett's mother."[147] She also asserts, "Its people like this that made such a difference and made that school (JHS) like a home and also a symbol at the same time."[148]

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[144] Oral history interview with Rudolph Goffney by Chana Ewing, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[145] Oral history interview with Rudolph Goffney by Chana Ewing, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[146] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[147] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[148] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia.

Florence Coleman Bryant was one of the teachers who cultivated community and social consciousness at JHS. Bryant, a native of Caroline County, Virginia, attended college at the Hampton Institute. Upon graduating from Hampton, she applied to teach in the Charlottesville City Schools because her dorm's matron suggested that it might be a good school division to start her teaching career. According to Bryant, Jefferson School's principal Owen Duncan selected her for an interview out due to the quality of her cover letter. Duncan hired Bryant to teach at the Jefferson School—the city's elementary school for African America students. Bryant recalls, "I took a room with a lady on Anderson Street. Another teacher, the Jefferson Home Ec[onomics] teacher, was there also. I had a $1,500 a year salary."[149] After a few years teaching at the elementary school, Bryant moved to the high school for the 1947-48 school year. Bryant taught English to freshman and sophomores, while also engaging students beyond the classroom in several ways.[150]

Bryant relished the opportunity to work with high school students. When principal Duncan approach Bryant about moving up from the elementary school to the high school, she embraced the idea because "The new assignment was more in keeping with my training, my student teaching experience and my personal preference. The students were older, and therefore, more mature. They were, in addition, more self-directed and goal-oriented. It was easier for me to adapt my instructional program and teaching methods to their needs."[151] She also enjoyed the opportunity to know students beyond the classroom setting. She helped with several clubs and extracurricular activities including creating the

[149] Oral history interview with Florence Coleman Bryant by Alexandria Searls, (March 12, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript, https://www.jmrl.org/ebooks/Jefferson%20School%20volume%201.PDF

[150] Florence C. Bryant, *Memoirs of a Country Girl* (New York: Vantage Press, 1988), 141.

[151] Florence C. Bryant, *Memoirs of a Country Girl* (New York: Vantage Press, 1988), 141;

school yearbook.“ Jefferson was the only school we had, you know. We had an appreciation for Jefferson because of all the kinds of activities, like May Day.”[152] Bryant’s work in the classroom and during extracurricular activities was aided and abetted by the proximity between housing and schooling in the city.

Jefferson High School had a range of extracurricular activities. For example, the Deluxe Glee Club was formed in the fall of 1933. Mr. J. Franklin Brown organized and led the group of twenty male students. The club’s first performance was held on April 30th in the JHS auditorium.[153] According to *The Reflector,* the organization’s purpose was “the presentation of Negro Spirituals and Melodies in the original manner.” The performance was slated to include “a group of best known and most beautiful songs rendered with the same rhythm and deep feeling that placed them on a pinnacle in the world of music and caused them to be considered as one of the outstanding contributions of our race.”[154] The songs were “expressive of the slave in the field, the patient christian [sic], who had still has faith in deliverance on the jolly, carefree stevedore, strumming his cares away” because the Glee Club aimed, “to preserve all of the original sincerity of purpose depicted in the Negro’s most valuable contribution to the world.”[155]

The close proximity between housing and schooling meant students could be involved in building community after school. And they were heavily involved. They participated in a number of clubs. These included girl scouts, Glee Club, French Club,

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[152] Oral history interview with Florence Coleman Bryant by Alexandria Searls, (March 12, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[153] “Deluxe Glee Club to Make Formal Bow,” *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), April 21, 1934.

[154] “Deluxe Glee Club to Make Formal Bow,” *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), April 21, 1934.

[155] “Deluxe Glee Club to Make Formal Bow,” *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), April 21, 1934.

choir, band, dramatics, and the Jeffersonian club (school newspaper). The Jeffersonian club was started in 1935. The club had several community aims including "To educate the community as to the work of the school" and "to promote co-operation [sic] between parents and the school."[156] The club also had specific aims for students. In particular, it aimed "develop students' power of observation and discrimination concerning the relative merits of news articles" and to "develop qualities of co-operation; tact, accuracy, tolerance, responsibility, initiative, and leadership."[157] Clubs provided an opportunity for students to develop their interests and bolster the ties of community. Based on an analysis of the existing yearbooks from Jefferson High School, all senior students were involved in one or more clubs during their time at the school.[158]

With relatively limited oversight on a regular basis, teachers and students created the school's atmosphere. Jefferson High School had limited police presence. At the time, Charlottesville had an all-white police force. Kenneth Martin remembers, "We had one school guard, Mr. Payne. He was white. Then we also had crossing guards—students who were appointed by the teachers a week at a time, and they put a sash on. Mr. Payne was at 4th Street and Commerce, a busy street. He was fat and had a very cherubic delightful face and he greeted you every morning with a big smile. He was a member of

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[156] Jefferson School Collection, Isabella Gibbons Local History Center, Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, Charlottesville, VA, Crimson and Black, 1942.

[157] Jefferson School Collection, Isabella Gibbons Local History Center, Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, Charlottesville, VA, Crimson and Black, 1942.

[158] Jefferson School Collection, Isabella Gibbons Local History Center, Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, Charlottesville, VA, Crimson and Black, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1950, 1951. All students at the Jefferson School and Jefferson High School were represented in a class picture for their respective grade. However, the seniors received individual pictures, which included a list detailing their extracurricular involvement.

the Charlottesville Police and wore a uniform."[159] Payne's presence ensured that students walking to the schools would be safe from cars and the trolley running along the streets nearby the school. Payne did not, however, stay at the school after he concluded his duties at the crossing guard. He returned in the afternoon to conduct the same duties. The lack of police presence at JHS meant African American teachers and students could carve out a space where they did not have to contend with white surveillance to the same extent as beyond the school space.

Discipline was handled on a decentralized basis. Dr. Braxton Coles remembers, "Well, one of the principals we had would take you down to the furnace room—the boys—and pull your pants down and use that paddle on you. One time was all I needed."[160] The teachers, according to Coles, treated girls differently. "I think the teachers made them stand in the corner. But discipline wasn't too much of a problem, because with the control. You didn't have much time to do mischief because the teacher was more person to person with, as much as she could, you know?"[161] On discipline problems, Frances Wood claims, "In the first place, all the teachers knew your parents, and the parents knew the teachers, and if you did anything you shouldn't do at school, word got home before you did. So…you didn't that to get home.'[162] The larger community and networks within the community created a de facto disciplinary structure for Jefferson High School.

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[159] Oral history interview with Kenneth Martin by Alexandria Searls (March 17, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript. Payne was later killed by a car who hit him, while he was on duty.

[160] Oral history interview with Dr. Braxton Coles, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia.

[161] Oral history interview with Dr. Braxton Coles, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia.

[162] Oral history interview with Bernadine Gines, Ruth Harris, and Frances Wood by Lois McKenzie, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

Cultivating Social Consciousness

Throughout its existence, Jefferson High School aimed to cultivate a consciousness of students' immediate surroundings. For example, in the fall of 1934, Principal Mrs. C.B. Duke settled on a theme for the Patron's Day Exhibit. Duke declared that the theme would be "a Century of Progress."[163] In response, the senior class at JHS focused on the evolution of "Negro Education in Charlottesville" by collecting "pictures and data from the venerable residents of the city" and "wrote themes and posters to that effect."[164] The junior class focused on politics within Charlottesville and they visited "City Hall for statistics dealing with population and the evolution of the voter's interest."[165] The sophomore class had two projects; one in history and the other in English. In history, they focused on the Civil War and World War. Students reconstructed battle scenes from the wars. In English, they focused on the evolution of newspapers. Students collected and analyzed newspapers from 1834 to 1934. In their totality, these projects reveal not only that students were concerned with local issues but also how to approach learning about them.

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[163] "Jefferson School Notes," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), April 21, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.04.21.34

[164] "Jefferson School Notes," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), April 21, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.04.21.34

[165] "Jefferson School Notes," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), April 21, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.04.21.34

Within the regular curriculum, African American students did not spend as much time in high school as their white peers. On the curriculum at JHS, Laura Robinson asserts, "All of the classes that were taught at Jefferson were not the same as what was taught in the White school system. We did not have as many classes to do as they had to do. We completed eleven years of schooling at Jefferson because we had to take off to college.[166] Despite having different classes than the white high school, Robinson recalls, "Yes, I had science classes, I had math classes. I had history class, English, and what else did I have? Geometry. Algebra. French.[167] While Robinson and her peers at Jefferson spent fewer years in high school, they were still receiving a liberal arts education that was preparing them for secondary schooling and life beyond Charlottesville.

JHS's teachers were preparing students for the world beyond the classroom. Gofney contends, ""It was demanding, because the teachers were trying to prepare…they were telling you what the situation was and preparing you for a better life. So they were demanding. They asked you to take advantage of what you had. To prepare yourself for the future. If you wanted to aspire for more."[168] Frances Wood remembers, "All my teachers were my favorites. They were all wonderful people. We had great teachers. Dedicated teachers. Hard working teachers."[169] In particular, Mrs. Rosemary Byers had a memorable influence on Wood. "I can think of Mrs. Rosemary Byers, who was my French teacher. And we used to have the French Club and we used to meet at her house.

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[166] Oral history interview with Laura Robinson by Ashlin Smith (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[167] Oral history interview with Laura Robinson by Ashlin Smith (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[168] Oral history interview with Rudolph Goffney by Chana Ewing, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[169] Oral history interview with Bernadine Gines, Ruth Harris, and Frances Wood (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia.

That was one good opportunity to be able to go somewhere. Away from home. And Mrs. Florence Bryant, who is here with us today. I had her in English. All of my teachers, as we said, were favorites. I could just go back and name most of them."[170]

During this era, there was less direction about what and how teachers were expected to teach. In terms of pedagogy, Florence Bryant remembers, "Conducting classes was different then. Now there's so much more interaction with the students. When I came out, it was almost rote. You had your lesson plans."[171] "Nobody told me what to teach. There were no curriculum guides.[172] The curriculum materials were limited at Jefferson High School. Bryant recalls, "We had the same books as the other schools. We didn't see any black faces in those books. They were state textbooks. In the high school we had *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which was about it. We didn't have a lot of outside reading. We didn't have a lot of outside reading. Negro History Week…during that week, we all dealt with African-American history in the fields we were teaching in. That was in February, founded in the 1920s by Carter Woodson."[173]

All students were required to purchase their books. On the books at JHS, Gofney remembers, "We had to buy them. Because when I was in school we had to buy them. The School Board did not provide books for students. And I don't think it was on a white or black basis. Or course I didn't have access to the conditions of whites. But we had to

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[170] Oral history interview with Bernadine Gines, Ruth Harris, and Frances Wood (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia.

[171] Oral history interview with Florence Coleman Bryant by Alexandria Searls, (March 12, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[172] Oral history interview with Florence Coleman Bryant by Alexandria Searls, (March 12, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[173] Oral history interview with Florence Coleman Bryant by Alexandria Searls, (March 12, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

buy our books. So if you didn't have money to buy books, you didn't have any books."[174] Some students did not have the means to purchase their books, though. Rather than go without books, students would share. "What I am saying is that if you had homework or whatever to do, and you needed your books, you had to get together to do it. You didn't, you weren't presented with a set of books,"[175] asserts Gofney. Sharing the books had some positive consequences. Because students had to share their books, they were more likely to study together. He remembers, "You just…when you were assigned a project or something to do, you worked together with someone else. If you didn't have the books that you needed for yourself, then you worked with other kids, that was a lot of fun."[176]

School assemblies provided JHS students and teachers with another outlet to develop community and racial pride. On November 11, 1933, *The Reflector* reported, "The Senior class was in charge of assembly program all of this week. The program was as follows: Opening Song—Holy, Holy, Holly; prayer and chant, student body; Scripture Reading, Mr. Lorenzo Price; Recitation, 'Ode to Ethiopia,' Miss Adele B. Martin, Instrumental Solo, 'Deep River', Miss Gracie Burley."[177] During Negro History Week in 1934, the Jefferson High School choir performed both at the school and on a radio broadcast in the community. On the program, *The Reflector* reported, "Members of the High School Chorus are receiving much praise for their splendid program broadcasted

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[174] Oral history interview with Rudolph Goffney by Chana Ewing, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[175] Oral history interview with Rudolph Goffney by Chana Ewing, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[176] Oral history interview with Rudolph Goffney by Chana Ewing, (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[177] "Jefferson School Notes," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), November 11, 1933, accessed October, 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.11.11.33

over Station W.E.H.C…They sang 'The Negro National Anthem,' 'Pickainny Sandman,' and 'My Task' beautifully. Then Miss Betty Actie, who was a charming mezzo soprano sang 'Who Knows'. Miss Elizabeth Harris concluded the program with an instrumental solo, entitled 'Mighty Lak' a Rose."[178]The Negro History Week programming of 1934 extended beyond the school setting to Black churches in the area. *The Reflector* reported on the programming at Ebenezer B.Y.P.U. The group sang The Negro National Anthem, T.J. Sellers presented on Negro History, Miss Eva Powell gave a paper on "The Life of Frederick Douglass," and Miss Evelyn Lightfoot gave a paper on the "Life of Booker T. Washington." The presentations were interspersed with spirituals and poems, too.[179]

There are different opinions about the extent to which African American history was taught at Jefferson High School. On the one hand, William Gilmore contends, "Oh, yes. Black history was taught every day."[180] On the other hand, most teachers and students who were interviewed claim that Black history was confined mostly to a single week in February. Whiting remembers always having African American history. She said the school made a particular effort during Negro History Week. She remembers having events put on by students to celebrate Black history.[181] On Negro History Week, Helen

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[178] "Jefferson School Notes," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), February 24, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.02.24.34

[179] "Church Notes," *The Reflector* (Charlottesville, Virginia), February 24, 1934, accessed October 26, 2016, http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/saxon/servlet/SaxonServlet?source=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xml&style=/xml_docs/rp_news/raceplace_news.xsl&level=single&order=none&item=va.np.reflector.02.24.34

[180] Oral history interview with William Gilmore by Lynn Carter (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[181] Oral history interview with Priscilla Whiting by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 9, 2003), 10th Street, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

Sanders claims, "The only time we had African-American history was in February. You know that's the great African-American...thing of the month now. But when I was coming along, there was only one week. We had several Black newspapers. And, we were bored. Over the years, over a years' period of time, every Black newspaper see, we were poor. But we didn't have newspapers and magazines." The Black newspapers, including the Amsterdam News, were passed around amongst students. Sanders remembers learning about Paul Dunbar, Sojourner Truth, Phyllis Wheatley, and Frederick Douglass.[182]

While Jefferson High School lacked the facilities for students to fully engage their education in subjects such as science, teachers mitigated educational inequality by centering the African American experience. Carter G. Woodson started Negro History Week during the same year that the Jefferson School opened. Social studies teachers such as Thomas D. Moultrie and Hamlet P. Bowler drew upon Woodson's *Negro History Bulletin* to craft Black history lessons for their classrooms throughout the 1940s. Gilmore, a student in Mr. Moultrie and Mr. Bowler's courses, recalls receiving instruction in Black history both during Negro History Week but also throughout the year in their English and social studies courses. In written sources and oral history interviews, neither Moultrie nor Bowler were perceived as activists by students such as Gilmore. However, the curriculum resources they drew upon in their lessons offered a striking counter narrative to the white hegemonic historical narratives present in the books provided by the Charlottesville City Schools.[183]

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[182] Oral history interview with Helen Sanders by Lindsay Nolting (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[183] Oral history interview with William Gilmore by Lynn Carter (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

Overall, the people who inhabited Jefferson High School cultivated community and social consciousness that transcended their experience at the school. On how Jefferson High School's curriculum and teachers prepared him for life, Gilmore contends, "It helped me in many ways. One very specific way was to believe in myself. I think my instructors at Jefferson High School were the leading cause of that. They would always say, 'There's nothing you can't do if you put your mind to it.' I think that kind of gives you, at least it gave me, inspiration to do things that I probably would never have done. Because I was taught that not only in school, but at home, that if you want something you can get it. You pay the cost for getting, whatever it is. And also it helped me to respect people. I'm almost appalled at what I see today, but we were taught both at school and at home that you respect people. You don't have to agree with them. But at least you respect them. If you did something or said something that was disrespectful to a senior person, you had a problem."[184]

Conclusion

Throughout the existence of Jefferson High School (JHS), the larger political, social, and economic context of Charlottesville worked against the school's continued existence. While the Great Depression did not hit Virginia as hard as it did some other states, it still impacted African Americans throughout the commonwealth. The white architects of African American education continued to resist any semblance of educational equality. To build Lane High School, the Charlottesville City Council performed an act of plunder against the city's African American community. During the 1930s, they exercised the right of eminent domain over land and properties owned by

[184] Oral history interview with William Gilmore by Lynn Carter (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

African Americans. After removing African Americans and their homes from the land along Ridge Street and Preston Street, the city used Works Progress Administration funds to build the new high school.[185] Not only did the new high school tear African Americans from their homes and lands, but it also yielded better facilities for the city's white students. In addition, neither the city nor the Commonwealth of Virginia paid the full price of constructing the school because the federal government provided most of the necessary resources.

Despite the continued resistance of the city's white architects, African Americans did not acquiesce to unequal schooling. African American teachers and students made the most of their educational space and resources at JHS. For the African Americans who taught at and attended JHS, the school became a critical site for cultivating community and social consciousness. While only a limited number of African American students attended and graduated from JHS during the Great Depression, the mere fact that the school endured the political, social, and economic crises of the time was a significant feat. Besides the city's African American churches, no other site and space contributed more to the persistent struggle for civil rights in Charlottesville. Besides some teachers supporting the NAACP salary equalization campaigns in Virginia, all teachers focused on creating social change within the walls of the school and their classrooms. JHS's teachers and students were not involved in overt activism such as protest movements that would mark the classic Civil Rights Movement. However, JHS's teachers provided students with the educational capital to continue their education and inculcated within them the ideas of democracy and racial pride.

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[185] Alexander Hyres, personal picture (May 27, 2018).

JHS closed in the spring of 1951. Jackson P. Burley High School replaced Jefferson in the fall. During its several decades of existence, JHS produced several alumni who proved to be "pillars of the community." Many of JHS's students left the city to pursue higher education and careers elsewhere. But some students did return to the city, a few of whom became educators within the Charlottesville City Schools. Many of JHS's teachers would continue cultivating community and consciousness at the city's schools at Jackson P. Burley High School and, eventually, Lane High School. By closing Jefferson and opening Burley, the white architects of African American education believed they were staving off calls for equalized schooling via school desegregation. But, as the next chapter illuminates, the persistence of African American teachers and students continued within and beyond the classroom. At the same time, white resistance became more insidious and sophisticated, reaching within and beyond the schools.

CHAPTER THREE

"TO TAKE THEIR PLACE AS FUTURE LEADERS": TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN THE MOVEMENT, 1951-1966

> "So that they might be prepared to take their places as future leaders of this 'Great Society,' the seniors became thoroughly grounded in the constitution."[186]
>
> -*Jay Pee Bee,* Social Studies Department section, 1965

Jackson P. Burley High School opened in the fall of 1951. On the one hand, Burley's existence coincided with significant civil rights gains at the local, state, and federal level. At the federal level, the *Brown v. Board of Education* decisions were handed down in 1954 and 1955. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights of 1965 and President Lyndon B. Johnson signed that legislation into law. Changes at the federal level were being felt in states and local communities including Charlottesville. On the other hand, despite such progress, white resistance continued well beyond the period known as "massive resistance." Several scholars have examined massive resistance to school desegregation at great length and detail in locales throughout Virginia including Charlottesville.[187] While schools were critical sites of white resistance,

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[186] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1965.

[187] Robbin L. Gates, *The Making of Massive Resistance: Virginia's Politics of Public School Desegregation, 1954-1956* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964); R.C. Smith, *They Closed Their Schools: Prince Edward County, Virginia, 1951-1964* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965); Benjamin Muse, *Virginia's Massive Resistance* (Gloucester: P. Smith, 1969); James Ely, Jr., *The Crisis of Conservative Virginia: The Byrd Organization and the Politics of Massive Resistance* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976); Alexander Leidholdt, *Standing Before the Shouting Mob: Lenoir Chambers and Virginia's Massive Resistance to Public-School*

it is also important to examine the resistance occurring at the nexus between schools and the surrounding community.

Urban renewal manifests an important form of resistance. Historians have traced the origins and consequences of urban renewal in locales including, but not limited to, Detroit, Chicago, Flint, Nashville, New York, and St. Louis.[188] Alongside racial covenants, redlining, and blockbusting tactics, urban renewal intentionally and systematically created racial inequality in urban spaces during the postwar period. Although initial historical examinations of urban renewal downplayed its influence on public schooling, recent scholars such as Andrew Highsmith and Ansley Erickson have revealed how such efforts reconstructed the relationship between housing and schools.

Integration (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997); Matthew Lassiter and Andrew Lewis, *The Moderates' Dilemma: Massive Resistance to School Desegregation in Virginia* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998); James Morris, "A Chink in the Armor: The Black-Led Struggle for School Desegregation in Arlington, Virginia and the End of Massive Resistance," in *Journal of Policy History* 13 (3), July 2001: 329-366; Michael James, *The Conspiracy of the Good: Civil Rights and the Struggle for Community in Two American Cities, 1875-2000* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005); Jill Titus, *Brown's Battleground: Students, Segregationists, and the Struggle for Justice in Prince Edward County, Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Christopher Bonastia, *Southern Stalemate: Five Years Without Public Education in Prince Edward County, Virginia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Jeffrey Littlejohn and Charles Ford, *Elusive Equality: Desegregation and Resegregation in Norfolk's Public Schools* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012); Daugherity, *Keep On Keeping On;* Nancy MacLean, *Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Rights's Stealth Plan for America* (New York: Viking, 2017)

[188] For more on urban renewal in large cities and metropolitan areas, see Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Arnold Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Andrew Highsmith, *Demolition Means Progress: Flint, Michigan, and the Fate of the American Metropolis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015); Ansley Erickson, *Making the Unequal Metropolis: School Desegregation and Its Limits* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016); Samuel Zipp, *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Colin Gordon, *Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the Fate of the American City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008)

Consequently, shifts in the spatial organization of schooling intentionally devalued African American homes and undermined access to an equitable public education experience.[189]

Urban renewal efforts are often associated with cities and large metropolitan areas. However, similar efforts also occurred in smaller cities across the United States. Charlottesville, Virginia was one of those cities. During the 1950s and 1960s, the Charlottesville City Council took several steps to hollow out the center of African American life and culture in the city: the Vinegar Hill neighborhood. In 1954, just months before the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, the Council adopted a resolution to establish a housing authority to deal with all the "unsanitary and unsafe dwelling accommodations in the city." While the resolution took another six years to reach the ballot, Charlottesville residents—at least those who were registered to vote and could pay the poll tax—passed the resolution by a few hundred votes. The resolution's passage marked the beginning of the end for Vinegar Hill. By the mid-1960s, the Charlottesville City Council and Housing Authority drew upon 2.4 million in federal dollars and 608,000 in local dollars to remove and forget Vinegar Hill. Charlottesville's urban renewal and removal efforts shaped housing for hundreds of African American residents and, by extension, the experiences of all the city's African American students, teachers, administrators, and community members long after the bulldozers left.[190]

This chapter examines white resistance and black persistence during the classical Civil Rights Movement. On the one hand, it spotlights how the state and local white

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[189] Highsmith, *Demolition Means Progress;* Erickson, *Making the Unequal Metropolis*

[190] James Robert Saunders and Renae Nadine Shackelford, *Urban Renewal and the End of Black Culture in Charlottesville, Virginia* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc. Publishers, 1998), 2-4.

architects of African American education disrupted life beyond the classroom to undermine the gains of educational equity gained by a new school building at Jackson P. Burley High School and school desegregation at Lane High School. On the other hand, it highlights how African American teachers and students persisted in seeking educational equity through continued cultivation of consciousness within the classroom and protest beyond it.

Building Burley

In the years before the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, many Southern localities commenced school building campaigns. Virginia was no different. In the counties and cities surrounding Charlottesville, school districts constructed new elementary schools and high schools at a rapid rate. In late 1940s and early 1950s, Louisa County, Buckingham County, Nelson County, Madison County, Orange County, Greene County and Fluvanna County spent millions of dollars to construct new segregated African American elementary and high schools.[191] Charlottesville also built new schools several years before the *Brown* decision. In 1949, Charlottesville and Albemarle County voters approved a $1,000,000 bond.[192]

Jackson P. Burley High School was part of that building campaign. In 1949, the Charlottesville School Board decided to merge Jefferson High School, Esmont High School, and Albemarle Training School into a single school building for all African Americans in the city and county. A year later, the Charlottesville City Schools and Albemarle County Schools purchased a seventeen-acre tract of land from Jackson Price

[191] "Oglesby Says Ruling Will Kill State's Public School System," *The Daily Progress,* May 17, 1954.

[192] Paul M. Gaston and Thomas T. Hammond, "Public School Desegregation: Charlottesville, Virginia, 1955-62," (Presentation, The South: The Ethical Demands of Integration, Nashville, TN, December 28, 1962), 2.

Burley's family. Burley, a former teacher in the Albemarle County Schools, retired in 1935 and passed away ten years later. Mrs. Burley, who also worked in the county schools as a supervisor, oversaw the sale of land tract. The Burley family had lived on the land for several decades. But with her husband's passing, Mrs. Burley decided to sell the land and relocate to Atlanta, Georgia where their daughter lived. To memorialize his work as a teacher and community leader, the Charlottesville School Board named the new school for Burley.[193]

After purchasing the land near Rose Hill Drive, the school district hired the J.W. Daniels Construction Company to build the school. Pendleton S. Clarke of Lynchburg and Baker, Hayward, and Lorens of Charlottesville, architectural firms, collaborated on the school's design. The school's design included an auditorium enhanced by a stage with light facilities for drama presentations. Outside the auditorium was a large lobby. On the opposite side of the school from the auditorium sat the gymnasium. The gymnasium contained seven hundred and twenty seats and came equipped with a motorized dividing wall to create two basketball courts—one for the boys and one for the girls. Downstairs from the gym was the cafeteria, which included both a large ice box and a refrigerated garbage room. The vocational shops sat in a separate building behind the main school building.[194]

Construction on Jackson P. Burley High School commenced in 1950. Between the two school districts, the school's estimated cost ran to $732,000 for the building and over

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[193] Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, "Jackson. P. Burley School," *African American Historic Sites Database*, accessed December 5, 2016, http://www.aahistoricsitesva.org/show/220; "Burley High Opens With Fall Session," *New Journal and Guide* (Norfolk, VA), September 15, 1951. Note: I have been unable to locate the first name of Mrs. Burley.

[194] T.J. Sellers, "New $1,400,000 High School Dedicated," *New Journal and Guide,* March 29, 1952, A5.

$100,000 for classroom equipment and surrounding campus structures. However, by the time the school actually opened, the total cost ran to $1,400,000. Not only was the building more expensive than estimated, but also it was unfinished when the school opened. On the one hand, the exterior was finished. The building was constructed using dark brick and included a dramatic entrance. On the other hand, the interior left much to be desired. Although the classrooms and gymnasium were finished, the auditorium, cafeteria, athletic fields, basement, and vocational shops were unfinished. Despite the unfinished interior, twenty-six African American teachers and five hundred and forty-three African American students from Charlottesville and Albemarle County started classes in September.[195]

In late March 1952, the city and county held a dedication ceremony for the new school. The dedication was held in Burley's new—and now complete—nine-hundred-seat auditorium. Joseph T. Henley, the chairmen of the Albemarle County School Board, led the proceedings. Burley's Band and Choir played music, Dr. E. D. McCreary offered an invocation, and Reverend Waddell Ward gave the benediction. Several local and state white architects of African American education also attended the ceremony. The architects included University of Virginia President Colgate W. Darden, Jr., state superintendent of public instruction Dowel J. Howard, the executive secretary of the Virginia Teachers Association Dr. J. Rupert, and Virginia Governor John S. Battle.

Battle, a native of Charlottesville, attended the ceremony as the guest of honor. His presence at the ceremony had less to do with his connection to Charlottesville and

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[195] Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, "Jackson. P. Burley School," *African American Historic Sites Database*, accessed December 5, 2016, http://www.aahistoricsitesva.org/show/220; "Burley High Opens With Fall Session," *New Journal and Guide* (Norfolk, VA), September 15, 1951.

more to do with making a political statement about segregated schooling in Virginia. During his remarks at the dedication, Battle lauded the cooperation between the city and county schools in building the school as an educational plant. Regarding the school's larger political and economic significance, Battle declared, "[W]e must have just as good schools for our Negro citizens as we have for our white citizens…and that must be done not because of any impelling force from the federal courts but because its right." In mixed racial company, Battle's remarks earned mixed reviews. A few people offered affirmation, while African Americans in the crowd sat in silence.[196]

Human, W. Walsh, chairman of the Charlottesville City Schools, spoke next at the school's dedication. Walsh contended that Burley High School was now one of the best African American schools in Virginia. Walsh punctuated his speech by sharing his views about the relationship between schooling and democracy. Walsh observed, "Here is evidenced the functioning of a fundamental tenet of democracy, of American democracy. In dedicating this property to the education of Negroes, so that they may enjoy these fundamental rights of man, the obligation inherent in the rights of majority is thus recognized and fulfilled." The building may have evinced a tangible support for African American education in the city and county. But, more than anything, the building manifested one of the many ways that Southern locales would evade and resist the impending *Brown* decision.[197]

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[196] For more on educational plants or parks and their role in desegregation, see Ansley Erickson, "Desegregation's Architects: Education Parks and the Spatial Ideology of Schooling" in *History of Education Quarterly* 56 (4), November 2016: 560-589; T.J. Sellers, "New $1,400,000 High School Dedicated," *New Journal and Guide* (Norfolk, VA), March 29, 1952.

[197] Sellers, "New $1,400,000 High School Dedicated," March 29, 1952.

School Desegregation and Urban Renewal

In 1958, Governor J. Lindsay Almond ordered the closure of white schools throughout Virginia including Charlottesville's Lane High School. Rather than accept token desegregation, schools such as a Lane closed. While Charlottesville did not close their schools for several years like Prince Edward County Schools, they did close from September 1958 to February 1959. At the beginning of the school year, private tutors taught French Jackson, Don Martin, and John Martin, the African American high school students who had been selected to desegregate Lane. When Lane reopened, Jackson and the Martin brothers moved to the district office to finish out the school year. Finally, in the fall of 1959, they desegregated Lane High School.[198]

Following the token desegregation at Lane High School, Charlottesville held the referendum on urban renewal in 1960. Over the next five years, removal and "renewal" caused great disruption in the Vinegar Hill neighborhood. Hundreds of black residents were displaced. Although some of the houses posed safety and sanitary risks for the residents, most houses did not. Race was most reliable predictor of whether a house was demolished. The Charlottesville Housing Authority provided housing to displaced residents at the Westhaven Housing project. African American businesses were also

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[198] On massive resistance and school closure in Virginia, see Benjamin Muse, *Virginia's Massive Resistance* (Gloucester: P. Smith, 1961/1969); Matthew Lassiter and Andrew Lewis, ed., *The Moderates Dilemma: Massive Resistance to School Desegregation in Virginia* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998); Jill Titus, *Brown's Battleground: Students, Segregationists, and the Struggle for Justice in Prince Edward County, Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Christopher Bonastia, *Southern Stalemate: Five Years Without Public Education in Prince Edward County, Virginia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Jeffrey L. Littlejohn and Charles H. Ford, *Elusive Equality: Desegregation and Resegregation in Norfolk's Public Schools* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012); Brian J. Daugherity, *Keep On Keeping On: The NAACP and the Implementation of* Brown v. Board of Education (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016)

disrupted and displaced. Over a hundred business lost revenue and their physical buildings with only modest reimbursement from the urban renewal funds. So, while African American high school students were receiving a seemingly more equitable schooling experience at Burley High School and Lane High School, the city's white elites were disrupting African American life beyond the classroom. And that disruption would continue as full-scale desegregation took hold in the late 1960s.[199]

There was not a single consensus about the condition of Vinegar Hill amongst the African American community. Before urban renewal, George Ferguson remembers, "You had restaurants to open up and close down, open up and close down. That was on Main Street, that section of Vinegar Hill. Now, behind Vinegar Hill, they were all, more or less, residences. Those residencies that people complained about, most of the properties were owned by whites renting to blacks, and a lot of them had outdoor toilets."[200] Booker Reaves observes, "Even though there were different economic levels of black people who lived in the Vinegar Hill area—some had better homes than others—they were all very closely knit, and they were people who were helpful to each other in times of stress, and they were people who would come together and work with people all over town. I know. I lived, as I told you, in the Ridge Street area, and my parents had lots of friends in that area and I had friends out there."[201]

Similar to the lack of consensus about the condition, there is some dispute about the close-knit nature of Vinegar Hill. On the one hand, Alies Jones remembers, "They were nice people. I used to could cross from my yard to somebody else's, and

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[199] Saunders and Shackelford, *Urban Renewal and the End of Black Culture in Charlottesville, Virginia*, 2-4.

[200] Saunders and Shackelford, *An Oral History of Vinegar Hill*, 27.

[201] Saunders and Shackelford, *An Oral History of Vinegar Hill*, 30.

somebody'd holler across their yard to me. And we'd borrow wood and coal and stuff like that from each other. Them was good old days then. I'm talking about when I was a little girl. Friends looked out for us, and we was just neighbors, that's all, neighbors. We looked out for each other.[202] On the other hand, Walter Jones asserts, "Do you want to know the real truth? Blacks ain't never been closely knit, not unless something comes along now, because that's why the Caucasian race has always been able to get over them, get over and do anything they want to do, whenever they want to. Because blacks never could stick together. You know, they never had the love for each other and that type of thing. A curse is on the black people, in a way of speaking."[203]

Despite the variance in opinions, there was no denying that urban renewal disrupted African American life in Charlottesville. George Ferguson observes, "The renewal came about, and any time you have anything that is disrupted, there are a lot of people who don't like it. But we lived at a time of change. I would say that the majority of those homes were properties that were rented, and the few nice homes that were there, I imagine that the people were satisfied with them. But the whole area was blight."[204] Florence Bryant contended, "The physical condition of Vinegar Hill was poor. Grace [Grace Tinsley, nee Kenny] lived across the street…When they tore it down, I gave it some thought…It doesn't matter how poor a neighborhood is, there's an affinity for the neighborhood, for the people, who live there. You're destroying family roots, which is always bad."[205]

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[202] Saunders and Shackelford, *An Oral History of Vinegar Hill*, 29.
[203] Saunders and Shackelford, *An Oral History of Vinegar Hill*, 27.
[204] Saunders and Shackelford, *An Oral History of Vinegar Hill*, 28.
[205] Oral history interview with Florence Coleman Bryant (March 12, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript, https://www.jmrl.org/ebooks/Jefferson%20School%20volume%201.PDF

Activism Within the Classroom

Although a handful of African American students desegregated Lane High School during the late 1950s and 1960s, most African American students attended Jackson P. Burley High School. Some of the students, who initially desegregated Lane, petitioned the Charlottesville City School board to leave Lane. Garwin DeBerry, Vernetta Lewis, Diane Gardner, Deborah Charlene Brown, and Clyde Melvin all returned to Burley due to, in most cases, a feeling of exclusion at Lane.[206] Garwin DeBerry enrolled at Lane High School in the fall of 1962. While Berry was allowed to attend classes, he was not able to play football. "We were told you can go to school, you can go to class, but that's about all you can do, you can't do any extracurricular activities because no one would participate against us," recalled DeBerry. "I decided to ask mom is it okay if I could go to Burley, I hadn't gone to Burley yet, but she said, look it was a pretty tough situation getting you into Lane, I will see if we talk to somebody who will let you play." DeBerry never played for Lane. After making several attempts to play at Lane, DeBerry transferred to Burley High School. Eventually, he played football at Virginia State University.[207] Pat Edwards also attended Burley High School as a student. Initially,

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[206] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #142210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va. Box 1, Folder 93; Box 2, Folder 4, 11, 17, 18. On students deemed eligible for school desegregation, see Box 2, Folder 31, 32-36

[207] Stephon Dingle, "Former Football Coach Reflects on Segregated 1960s at Lane High School" CBS 19 http://www.newsplex.com/home/headlines/Former-Football-Coach-Reflects-On-Segregated-1960s-294441101.html; Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #142210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va. Box 1, Folder 93. Upon graduating from Virginia State, DeBerry started his coaching career in New Jersey. Eventually, he returned to Charlottesville and coached at Lane High School. DeBerry became an assistant coach under Tom Theodose—the same coach who would not allow him to play when he attended Lane—in 1972. "It was just a great experience with him and he was just like man I just wish you had been able to play, and I said yeah well that's water under the bridge now, let's get

Edwards wanted to be part of the token desegregation efforts at Lane High School. The NAACP approached her about desegregating Lane. Her parents, though, believed she would be better off at Burley. Based on Edwards's conversations with her peers at Lane High School and her experience at Burley, she believes her parents were right. Edwards speaks glowingly about the way her teachers cared for student's academic and personal well-being. She credits her teachers as the reason for pursuing a career as a teacher.

Many of the teachers and administrators from Jefferson High School moved to Burley.[208] Florence Bryant was one of those teachers. Bryant taught English at Burley and continued her involvement in extracurricular activities.[209] After three years at Burley, Bryant moved back to Jefferson as an elementary school teacher. African American teachers and administrators brought the caring environment with them, which allowed another generation students to reach "their highest potential."[210] In the 1965 of the Jay Pee Bee yearbook, the staff wrote, "To our Sponsors, Mrs. Pleasants, Miss Porter, Mrs. Rawlins, and Mrs. Williams, we dedicate "Reflections - 1965" Jay Pee Bee because of their faithful service, their wisdom and kindness, and above all their patience to us over the past five years. It is with profound gratitude and affection that we shall always remember them."[211]

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this coaching thing going," remembers DeBerry. In 1979, DeBerry succeeded Theodose as the head coach at Charlottesville High School. In assuming that position, he became the first African American head coach in the area.

[208] I conducted an analysis of the last yearbook for Jefferson High School (1950/1951) and the first yearbook for Jackson P. Burley High School (1951/1952) for these figures.

[209] Oral history interview with Florence Coleman Bryant (March 12, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[210] Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), Chapter 6.

[211] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1965, 2.

Burley's teachers were valued and respected. In final yearbook, the staff dedicated the volume to the nine teachers who had been at the school from the beginning: Mrs. Lillie M. Brown, Mrs. Pauline Garrett, Mrs. Emma B. Bryson, Mrs. Gladys W. McCoy, Mrs. Alberta H. Faulkner. Mrs. Thelma H. McCreary, Mrs. Zelda H. Murray, Mrs. Alma W. Pleasants, Mrs. Commora B. Snowden.[212] On the dedication page, the staff wrote, "We are fortunate in having nine teachers who have dedicated their services to this school for fifteen years—its entire life history. Witnessing the sad and desolate moments, as well as many proud and glorious ones, they have watched and contributed immeasurably to the growth of Burley High since its beginning in 1951."[213] Unlike the teachers at Jefferson High School, Burley's teachers earned their degrees and were trained at institutions throughout the South and North. Of all the teachers, the yearbook staff wrote, "The value of the golden thread runs so true among the faculty members here at Jackson P. Burley High School. The wisdom, patience, and love our administrators and teachers display provide the nucleus around which revolves the aspirations of human kind. The individual preparation and contributions of our teachers are so invaluable that there can be no doubt as to their sincerity, earnestness and dedication to our school."[214]

Burley High School's teachers and students continued to cultivate community and consciousness. Burley students were exposed to a mix of liberal arts and vocational training. Students took courses in French and Latin language, speech and drama, World and U.S. History, Typing, Physical Science, Algebra I, Carpentry, Masonry, Farm Mechanics, Health and Physical Education, chemistry, and practical nursing. During the 1965-1966, school year the English department held their first Shakespeare festival. The

[212] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.
[213] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.
[214] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.

department also had students read and act out scenes from Hamlet. In ninth grade English, the students read Charles Dicken's *Great Expectations*.[215] In the speech and drama class, students worked to "improve the art of communication by learning the technique of effective speaking.[216]" In Latin class, students translated from Ceaser's Gallic Wars. In music classes, students were exposed to European classical music. The Yearbook notes, "By being a member of the band, the choir or music appreciation class the students are introduced to many renowned composers as Bach, Beethoven and Wilhousky as well as many of the great contemporaries."[217] Based on the available source material, the English curriculum did not center the writings of African American authors. However, the Eurocentric nature of the curriculum reflects the resources available.

Math and science courses benefitted from both the improve facilities and expansive expertise of Burley's teachers. In math classes, students were exposed to a range of high-level math. Students took courses in basic math, modern math, algebra, plane geometry, solid geometry, and trigonometry.[218] The access to these courses provided students with the content knowledge and credentials to continue their education after high school. Teachers drew upon better lab facilities to expose students to In a chemistry class displayed in the school yearbook, students could be seen "calculating the number of liters of hydrogen that can be produced from one mole of metal at room temperature."[219] Social studies courses aimed to provide an expansive view of history and prepare students for future citizenship. In world history, students "began with the stone

[215] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.
[216] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.
[217] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.
[218] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.
[219] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.

age [sic] and persisted through the centuries studying the beginnings of history and the contributions of early men to our present civilization."[220] The social studies section also mentioned the department's aim as preparing tomorrow's citizens. A caption accompanying a picture of students sitting in rows observes, "So that they might be prepared to take their places as future leaders of this "Great Society," the seniors became thoroughly grounded in the constitution."[221]

The vocational courses were separated by sex. Female students took courses in homemaking, which involved cooking and sewing. "Homemaking classes add girls in developing skills to carry out wisely and intelligently the duties of the homemaker." The yearbook carries pictures of young women "working on some of the fashions that they'll model later in the year."[222] Male students took courses in agriculture, carpentry, masonry and industrial to study "the fundamental principles of the work and then apply their knowledge to the carrying out of a worthwhile project."[223]Both male and female students took courses in business education. The purpose of the courses was to "introduce students to the various business occupations and train them to be proficient in their selective areas." In these courses, students became more familiar with the machines such as typewriters utilized by businesses in the area.[224] Students also took a business law course. As part of the course, students visited the corporation court and were hosted Judge Bridgeforth. They also observed Law Day USA, celebrated on May 1st each year, and were visited by school board member Henry Mitchell.

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[220] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.
[221] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.
[222] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.
[223] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.
[224] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.

Similar to Jefferson High School, all students were active in extracurricular activities at Burley. In the *Jay Pee Bee*, each senior student's picture was accompanied by a list of his or her involvement in various activities.[225] Burley touted several different student-run and faculty-supported organizations. The organization include: student patrol, Future Teachers of America, Burley Bulletin Staff (school newspaper), ICT Club, Choir, Marching Band, Science and Math Club, National Honor Society, Quill and Scroll Club, Dramatics, the Rainbow Art Club, NHA, VIAC, Le Cercle Francais. Students participated in the Student Participation Association. Each homeroom class had a representative. The yearbook claims, "Voting is a responsibility. The class of '65 leads the way." Students from the Science and Math club took part in math and science competitions.[226] Burley also had a host of athletic opportunities. The school offered football, track, and basketball. Unlike Jefferson High School, though, sports were limited to male students.

Parents were welcomed to Burley. And parents reciprocated that welcoming atmosphere through their involvement in the school. Theresa Price recalls, "At Burley, I thought it was pretty interesting that we had better participation in the PTA, and that was surprising because people had to come distances to be there."[227]Jackson P. Burley High School held open houses at the end of the school year, so students and teachers could share their work. In 1962, Burley held the open house on May 15th and invited parents and the community. Each department including the Fine Arts, Foreign Language, Health

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[225] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1965.

[226] "Jay Pee Bee," Jackson P. Burley High School Yearbook, 1966.

[227] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia.

and Physical Education, Language Arts, Science and Math, Social Studies, and the Practical Arts (Vocational) shared their work from 2pm to 8pm.[228]

Relationships developed between Burley and the University of Virginia. Theresa Price recalls, "An interesting partnership at the same time was Paul Gaston with the business department at Burley. He said, 'I'll see that we get…hire a secretary if he can find us one.' So Elizabeth Crenshaw moved into his office, she's still there. And the same thing was true for the school of engineering." Price notes the unique position held by Gaston. Gaston, according to Price, got away with this being the big blond southerner.[229] Kenneth Martin, noting the change that came with lawsuits associated with school desegregation, observed, "I remember one year some University faculty came in and staged a play. Using black students. Pat Edwards, Paul Scorr had the lead roles. Some little princess. Put on for the whole school. Prior to that, all the plays were put on by the black teachers themselves.'[230]

Activism Beyond the Classroom

While the Charlottesville City Schools resisted school desegregation, there were other public spaces stripping away the tangible vestiges of Jim Crow. For example, trains and buses were desegregated in 1956. The city also removed segregation signs, too.[231] Several political organizations became prominent during the 1950s and 1960s. Simultaneous with efforts at the national level to enfranchise African Americans, Charlottesville organizations worked to change the local circumstances. Jane Foster, a

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[228] Small Special Collections, Broadside 1962.C4 J2.

[229] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[230] Oral history interview with Kenneth Martin by Alexandria Searls (March 17, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[231] Hammond, *Albemarle: Jefferson's County,* 435.

local activist at the time, remembers, "The league of women voters was pretty moderate about everything, but one good thing they did was pull the voting out of the back room where you went to register to vote. You had to keep asking and asking." Foster asserts, "You had to be pretty brace to get yourself into that registrar's office. And they would have…you could register to vote in public, in the markets and places, so they got it out of the back room. It was just amazing how the old southern Democrats had this town in their clutches."[232] Voting was just one aspect drawing the attention of activists at the time.

The local NAACP group became more prominent during this period. Although the African American community in Charlottesville had a history of organizing during the early twentieth century, the city did not have a NAACP chapter until the mid-century. In 1947, Reverend Benjamin F. Bunn started the chapter.[233] Before the *Brown* decision, members of the Charlottesville NAACP "complained that facilities at Burley, only three years old, were inferior to those found at Lane and expressed alarm when the councilors tried to divert $70,000 earmarked for Burley to Jefferson.[234]" Florence Bryant was an active member during her time at both Jefferson and Burley High Schools. Eugene Williams joined the local chapter of the NAACP when he returned to Charlottesville in 1953. When Williams first started attending NAACP meetings there was less than ten people present. And there were only 65 registered members of the local chapter. Williams

[232] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[233] Ablemarle-Charlottesville NAACP, http://www.albemarle-cvillenaacp.org/about-us/

[234] Hammond, *Albemarle: Jefferson's County,* 434.

became the chairman of the membership committee. "And the first year (1955)," Williams recalls, "we increased our membership from 65 members to 900 members."[235]

The local NAACP was active in developing membership and supporting school desegregation. During the next year, 1956, membership increased to 1500 members. "We just developed a membership drive that motivated people to do something that they can feel proud of," remembers Williams. The increase in membership provided the means for the local chapter to be influential on issues such as school desegregation. By 1958, the Charlottesville NAACP branch possessed 711 members; a year later it possessed 637 members. The National NAACP commended the Charlottesville branch's "outstanding achievement" in the "successful desegregation of the public schools. As a result of legal action by its attorneys, eleven Negro children were admitted to previously all-white Lane High School and Venable Elementary School." The Charlottesville also "supervised the tutoring of children by the School Board."[236]

The NAACP was not the only organization fight for the civil rights of African Americans in Charlottesville. In 1942, Reverend Benjamin Bunn organized and served as the chairman of the Intra-Racial Commission. Reverend Bunn was the pastor at First Baptist church. The group consisted of both African American and white members including "Lambert Molyneaux and Jack Dalton of the university community, Rabbi Leonard Kasle, and Dr. Dwight M. Chalmers."[237] Eventually, this commission became the Charlottesville chapter of the Virginia Council on Human Relations (VCHR). Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the group organized around issues related to African

[235] Oral history interview with Eugene Williams by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (February 17, 2004), Dogwood Properties, Charlottesville, Virginia.

[236] NAACP Papers, "Thalheimer Awards: 1960 Winning Branches," Reproduced from the Collections of the Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

[237] Hammond, *Albemarle: Jefferson's County,* 433.

American labor and housing. The group's organizing strategies drew upon the work of other civil rights struggles throughout the South.[238] The local chapters of the NAACP and VHCR collaborated on a range of endeavors including protests.

The Council on Human Relations made inroads on hiring practices within Charlottesville. Theresa Price taught at Burley. She was also involved with the Virginia Council on Human Relations attacked a range of issues afflicting African Americans in the city. In particular, the group focused on housing and jobs. The group talked to employers in Charlottesville about having more open hiring practices. Employers' response, according to Price was "It's too soon. You young women are pushing this too much, and all of our employees would quit, and our customers wouldn't come back."[239] Gene Foster remembers, "You understand that the...what the employment situation was at that time. Not a single secretary, at the University or the hospital was Black."[240] The only jobs that Black women could attain at the university were as janitors, messengers, and orderlies in the hospital. As a result of the organizing and pressure applied by the group, African Americans were hired as clerks and cashiers at Safeway. However, access to jobs was limited by the intransigence of both less educated, conservative whites and the educated and liberal whites. The teachers from Burley were not the only ones involved in movement activities.

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[238] Hammond, *Albemarle: Jefferson's County,* 433.

[239] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript

[240] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

During the 1960s, sit-in protests occurred throughout the South.[241] Charlottesville was just one of many locales where sit-ins were used as a means of desegregating public spaces. Buddy's Restaurant on Emmet Street became a prime target for desegregation. Paul Gaston's account of events has become the dominant written narrative. In 1957, Gaston arrived in Charlottesville to become a professor in the history department at the University of Virginia. He retired in 1997. Between his arrival and retirement, he was an active member of the community. In May of 1963, members of the Virginia Council on Human Relation's local chapter were having a picnic at a UVA law professor's house. Paul Gaston recalls, "It was the end of the season for the Virginia Council on Human Relations and some of the people in the local branch of the NAACP. We were a group—the two groups meeting together—who had spent the year, as we had spent on many previous years, talking to local restaurant owners, motel operators, theater owners, employees, asking them if they wouldn't open up Charlottesville a little. We'd spent a lot of time negotiating with them, patiently talking, appealing to reason."[242]

Near the end of the picnic, Floyd Johnson addressed the assembled people. Johnson, a young African American minister, said, "We're going to have some sit-ins. You know, you're all aware of what's been going on in Birmingham. You're all aware of how we've negotiated patiently here for such a long time, and yet this is still a closed city. And we've got to do something about it. So all of you would like to join the sit-in

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[241] Howard Zinn, *SNCC: The New Abolitionists* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 1964/2013), 16-39; Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* Tomiko Brown-Nagin, *Courage to Dissent: Atlanta and the Long History of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Iwan Morgan and Philip Davies, *From Sit-Ins to SNCC: The Student Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012)

[242] Paul M. Gaston, *"Sitting In" in the 'Sixties: An Historian's Memoir* (Charlottesville, 1999), 1.

movement, come down to my church."[243] While sit-ins had become a commonplace tactic throughout the South at the time, Charlottesville had lagged behind. Gaston observed, "Integration was proceeding in a token fashion at a snail's-like pace. All the power of the community was arrayed against it."[244]

Johnson's call to action occurred just two months after a speech by Martin Luther King, Jr in Charlottesville. King gave a speech in Cabell Hall. Gaston contends, "He made a speech that rocked the place. It was filled; there were a thousand folks there. Hundreds of them came up to touch him afterwards. The dynamism that the man suggested was impossible to believe unless you really saw it."[245] King's speech and the local's peoples response to it set the stage for individuals at the picnic to move from words to action. A few days after the picnic, several individuals—including Gaston—showed up to Johnson's church. "Floyd read from a book about what you do in a sit-in, explaining how women protect themselves when they're going to be kicked, how men protect themselves, how you must be certain to be non-violent what sort of movements you use to avoid appearing violent," recalled Gaston. Many in the group believed that Charlottesville's segregationists would not become violent.[246]

After learning about how to conduct a sit-in, the group split into two groups. "One group, team one, went to a restaurant on Emmet Street across from U-Haul, it's where La Hacienda is now." The second group, including Gaston, went to a restaurant across from the Cavalier Inn. The restaurant was called "Buddy's Restaurant" and its tagline was

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[243] Gaston, *"Sitting In" in the 'Sixties,* 1-2.
[244] Gaston, *"Sitting In" in the 'Sixties,* 6.
[245] Gaston, *"Sitting In" in the 'Sixties,* 7.
[246] Gaston, *"Sitting In" in the 'Sixties,* 9.

"Just a Nice Place to Eat."[247] The group including people from both races sat down. They were not served. The place closed without the group being served; however, they were not attacked on the first visit. The groups returned when the restaurants opened again. When the group attempted to enter the restaurant on the next day, a group was standing in the doorway. Gaston remembers, "It was his job to be the host of all the guests who might come to the restaurant, and also to express the proprietor's sincere regrets to those who would not be welcome in the restaurant. He was a man of substantial proportions, and one had the feeling that one was not going to have a sit-in inside that restaurant that day." In response, the group formed a line led by Floyd Johnson and attempted to enter the door. The man at the door was not alone. Gaston recalls, "Down there, at this particular restaurant, all of the pent-up fears, anxieties, and hatreds of the community began to be focused. Hecklers gathered on the line. Some of them were U.Va. Students. Some of them were wearing Nazi arm bands, and distributing literature from a group called the Thunderbolt, or something of that sort."[248] He received anonymous, threatening calls that evening.

On Memorial Day, the hecklers turned violent. When the group attempted another sit-in at the restaurant, Floyd Johnson had to leave for a while and get some food. During Johnson's absence, Gaston was placed in charge. While Gaston was in leading the group, two individuals approached him. The individuals attacked Gaston. "And so he him once hard across the face, and then again pretty hard; and then the third time not so hard, and a fourth time he just sort of grazed me." The two men pulled Gaston outside where he returned to the line. The men left before the police arrived. Gaston spoke with the police

[247] Gaston, *"Sitting In" in the 'Sixties,* 9.
[248] Gaston, *"Sitting In" in the 'Sixties,* 10-11.

who left as Floyd Johnson and William Johnson, another African American leader in the struggle, returned. Johnson and Johnson met the same fate as Gaston. "This time the two men weren't so gentle. This time they beat hard. Floyd had to spend two nights in the hospital, and William was beaten pretty bad too. I was not there; I did not now about this until later."[249]

Gaston, Johnson, and Johnson each filed assault charges. Lawyers from the University of Virginia represented Gaston, while Sam Tucker "who was a pioneer NAACP lawyer in this area," represented Johnson and Johnson. [250] Gaston received a mixed response from students. On the one hand, students from his Southern History course gave him applause when he entered the classroom for their final exam. On the other hand, a student—in the middle of the night—slashed Gaston's tires. Janitors and grounds crew people came to Gaston's office to offer their support.[251] The trial for occurred after finals week for the University of Virginia.

All the individuals involved in the sit-in were acquitted. Gaston argues, "There were just too many people who were watching the trial, and even in the worst hanging court there'd have been no way that we could have been found guilty. Likewise, it would have been very difficult to find the others innocent. So, we were just acquitted, and they were found guilty and fined by the judge ten dollars and given thirty-day suspended sentences."[252] Buddy's Restaurant did not become desegregated as a result of the sit-in demonstrations. Gaston notes, "There were no more protests there. The restaurant kept open until July 2, 1964. It closed on that day, and the owner put up a sign. He was a man

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[249] Gaston, *"Sitting In" in the 'Sixties,* 14.
[250] Gaston, *"Sitting In" in the 'Sixties,* 14-15.
[251] Gaston, *"Sitting In" in the 'Sixties,* 16.
[252] Gaston, *"Sitting In" in the 'Sixties,* 18.

of principle; he just didn't believe in being pushed around. July 2, 1964 was the day that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 became law, making it illegal to deny service to black people in restaurants like this one."[253]

While Gaston's account has become the dominant narrative about the sits-in, he was not the only one there. Berdell McCoy Fleming, a high school student at the time, was also involved. Fleming was born in Charlottesville, Virginia at the University of Virginia hospital. She was both educated in Charlottesville and became an educator within the city after going away for college. When Fleming was growing up, the Charlottesville City Schools did not yet offer kindergarten. So, she attended the Janie Porter Barrett Daycare Center—the oldest preschool in central Virginia. Fleming attended the Jefferson School for grades one through seven. Of her teachers at Jefferson, Fleming recalls, "they were solid teachers and community members, so you saw them in other places. You saw them in church. And girl scout activities."

After seventh grade at Jefferson, Fleming moved over to Jackson Price Burley High School. "Burley was not just a school—it was the center of our culture," recalls Fleming. "A lot of community events were going on at Burley."[254] Burley teachers continued the tradition of providing educational capital to students during an era of segregated and inequitable schooling. Burley had "absolutely wonderful teachers." Due to a lack of access to other industries, according to Fleming. African Americans continued to pursue teaching as a profession. The teachers were "very smart" but "they couldn't break in to other industries." Fleming's mother taught at Burley. Her mother had attended Ohio State University. She taught French at Burley and was fluent. Upon

[253] Gaston, *"Sitting In" in the 'Sixties,* 19.

[254] Oral history interview with Berdell Fleming by Derrick Alridge and Chenyu Wang (January 29, 2018), Curry School of Education, Charlottesville, VA.

graduating from Burley, Fleming left the city to attend college at Norfolk State University.[255]

Despite never being mentioned in Gaston's "official" account, Fleming participated the sit-in at Buddy's. Fleming felt an obligation to join the sit-in since she had not desegregated Lane. Donald Martin was one of her friends growing up. After he finished each day at Lane High School, Fleming recalled Martin walking over to Burley High School to hang out with his friends. Fleming's best friend—who's mother was also a teacher—also participated in the sit-in. Mrs. Palmer, a woman from Fleming's church, and some of the SNCC people trained Fleming and her friend Alicia Lugo. "We were just teenagers and told to get the training," recalls Fleming, "We were told to take a book and read." She remembers being taunted at, things were thrown, and people spit on her. Despite that she was continued to stand. Eventually, the owner gave in and closed his restaurant. She is a close friend of Paul Gaston. "We never felt uncomfortable or unsafe." Fleming cites Mrs. Palmer as the reason for staying there during the sit-in.[256]

While there's no doubt that historian Paul Gaston played an integral role in the local sit-in movement. However, by centering himself as the hero of the story, other individuals have been left out of the story until recently. Fleming and her friend wanted to be involved in the local movement. From Fleming's perspective, it was the least she could do as her peers desegregated Lane High School. Fleming's perspective is important for another reason, too. Often when historians have focused on high school students,

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[255] Oral history interview with Berdell Fleming by Derrick Alridge and Chenyu Wang (January 29, 2018), Curry School of Education, Charlottesville, VA, video.

[256] Oral history interview with Berdell Fleming by Derrick Alridge and Chenyu Wang (January 29, 2018), Curry School of Education, Charlottesville, VA, video.

there is a tendency to view students as autonomous individuals. However, in Fleming's case, Mrs. Palmer was integral to her participation in the sit-in.

Conclusion

African American teachers and students were involved in resistance within and beyond their classrooms. At Jackson P. Burley High School, similar to Jefferson High School (JHS), teachers and students continued to cultivate community and social consciousness within the classroom. However, unlike at JHS, teachers and students at Burley became involved in activism beyond the classroom. As the political, social, and economic context changed in Charlottesville, teachers such as Florence Bryant and Theresa Price, and students such as Berdell Fleming, organized and protested against injustice within the local context. At Lane High School, students desegregated a previously all-white space. While some of those students returned to Burley, students such as French Jackson and the Martin brothers started a wave that ultimately led to desegregation.

At the same time, Charlottesville's white resistance did not stand idle. Following the *Brown* decision, Charlottesville's city council and predominantly white voters decided to displace the African American community in Vinegar Hill. While this displacement did not directly impact all African Americans in the city, it revealed yet again that the city was willing to plunder the places and possessions of African Americans to benefit white progress.

Full-scale desegregation ended segregated schooling for all high school students. After massive and passive resistance for over a decade, the Charlottesville City School Board was forced to desegregate all of the district's schools for the 1966 school year. In

1965, Raymond Bell became the first African American on the Charlottesville City School Board.[257] Bell's advocacy, along with the organizing of the NAACP, VHCR, and others, ultimately led to school desegregation. Though the Burley building still bears an inscription of "Jackson P. Burley High School" today, the school was immediately closed as a high school and eventually converted into a junior high for the Albemarle County Schools in the 1970s. Rather than having students desegregate Burley High School or split students amongst the two city high schools, all of the city's students crowded into Lane High School.[258]

[257] Hammond, *Albemarle: Jefferson's County,* 435.

[258] Florence C. Bryant, *Memoirs of a Country Girl* (New York: Vantage Press, 1988), 157–158.

CHAPTER FOUR

"A LITTLE MORE DEFIANT, A LITTLE MORE MILITANT": CONTESTING EDUCATIONAL SPACE, 1954-1968

"About 11 black students sus
Pended or expelled in seeming
Ly minute technicalities; we
Want to know the facts, but
Then, we have a good name to
Uphold, and Heuegal is such a
Professional man…

Forever we'll sing
Out,
Shout out the cry…

Hail to an institution which
Perpetuates the racist atti
Tudes of its students? Hail to
A school in which discovery and
Communication are only secondary
To grades? Hail to a school
Which continues to uphold crumb
Ling values of citizenship in
Conjunction with the DAR?

Hail to Lane High!"

-Beth Coughlin[259]

Charles E. Alexander, also known as Alex-Zan, was born in Charlottesville in July 1952. Seven years of later, Alexander became one of the "Charlottesville Twelve." As mentioned in the dissertation's opening, the path to desegregation had many obstacles. Elizabeth Taylor, Alexander's mother, was approached by the NAACP's Eugene Williams to join the suit against the Charlottesville City Schools brought by Oliver Hill, John Tucker, and Henry Marsh. Rather than desegregate schools in Charlottesville and other locales in Virginia, Governor Lindsey Almond ordered their closure in September 1958. Consequently, Venable Elementary School and Lane High School closed, for all students until February 1959. Alexander was set to start first grade in the fall of 1958. However, when Venable closed, he was forced to start the school year at the Charlottesville City Schools District Office working with the other students and a tutor. Rather than starting his formal education Alexander received "just personalized lessons, tutoring, and what have you." Not only did he receive a limited education, but he had to travel further to the district office than he would have to Venable. Even when the schools opened in February, Alexander remained at the District Office until the end of the school year. Finally, on September 1, 1959, Alexander desegregated Venable Elementary alongside eight other African American students.[260]

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[259] Blast, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, MSS 13797, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va, Folder 1, Beth Coughlin, "Locker Room Blues," *Blast* 1 (2), May 1969.

[260] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript, https://www.jmrl.org/ebooks/Jefferson%20School%20volume%201.PDF; On Lane High School's closure, see Benjamin Muse, *Massive Resistance,* 74-76, 112; Lassiter and Lewis, *The Moderates' Dilemma*, 84; James, *The Conspiracy of the Good*, 329-330, 336, 349; Daugherity, *Keep on Keeping On,* 70.

While Alexander went to Venable, most of his friends continued at Jefferson Elementary. When asked about whether the teachers and students at Venable were accommodating and kind, Alexander responded, "Yes, they were pretty nice." He attended Venable through seventh grade. During that time period, the Charlottesville City Schools decided to build an upper elementary and middle school. For Alexander's eighth grade year, the school district was operating a split schedule for Buford, the upper elementary school, and Walker, the middle school. So, students at neither school went the full day; Walker was open from 8am to noon and Buford was open from noon to 4pm. So, even as the school district desegregated schools ostensibly in the name of educational equity, students were actually spending less time in the classroom due to poor facilities management by the school district. Alexander's history teacher at the time was Jeannine Baliles. Gerald Baliles, her husband, became governor of Virginia. Alexander attended Walker for his eighth and ninth grade year before moving onto to Lane High School. At Lane, Alexander would become radicalized by the white administration's treatment of African American students.[261]

This chapter examines the contestation of educational space by African Americans such as Charles Alexander at Lane High School. On the one hand, it spotlights the various ways African American teachers and students persisted amidst the racialized educational space at Lane. In particular, it reveals the range of responses by those teachers and students during periods of massive and passive resistance. On the other hand, it highlights the range of responses by white administrators, teachers, and students. Most white administrators, teachers, and students resisted the inclusion of African

[261] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

Americans into Lane's spaces; however, some teachers aided and abetted the protest movements by African American teachers and students.

Overcrowding at Lane High School

Lane High School opened in the fall of 1940. George Ferguson, former president of the local NAACP, recalls, "Some of the nicer residences that I recall in Vinegar Hill area were on Preston Avenue where Lane High School is now. Blacks lived on one side of the street, and whites lived on the other, and they had, they came up to Fourth Street. But those were taken over by eminent domain—the city—when they built that Lane High School back down there in the '30s."[262] In the late 1930s, the Charlottesville City Schools spent $517,000 to build Lane High School. Just a decade earlier, they spent $100,000 to build Jefferson High School.[263] The money made a difference. In contrast to the squat industrial building with small windows that housed JHS, the building housing Lane boasted big windows and columns and a dramatic entry. The building stood at the intersection of Preston Avenue and Ridge Street, which was less than a mile from the Jefferson School and Jackson P. Burley High School.[264] So, unlike many other larger cities throughout the United States, no busing was required to implement the school desegregation orders.[265] In fact, throughout the twentieth century, African American high

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[262] Saunders and Shackelford, *An Oral History of Vinegar Hill*, 28.

[263] "High Schools," *The Daily Progress* (August 2, 1938).

[264] Alexander Hyres, "Map of the Spatial Organization of Secondary Schooling in Charlottesville, Virginia," https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/1/edit?mid=1dU3kET5hwLwKo6RBZ6LFpEnbASw&ll=38.04507784091853%2C-78.4835815731019&z=15

[265] For more on busing in larger cities, see Ronald P. Formisano, *Boston Against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); Tomiko Brown-Nagin, *Courage to Dissent: Atlanta and the Long Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Karen Benjamin, "Suburbanizing Jim Crow: The Impact of School Policy on Residential Segregation in Raleigh," in *Journal of Urban History* 38 (2), March 2012: 225-246;

school teachers and students had walked past Lane on their way to JHS and BHS. Just as African American high school students had walked to school during the era of segregated schooling, those students would continue commuting to school during the era of desegregated schooling. While the building's location within the city did not create a significant burden on African American teachers and students, the spatial dimensions within the building became a significant issue over time.

John Frederick Harlan was just one of the white students who benefitted from a high school education in close proximity. Harlan's grandfather and father both served on the Charlottesville City School board. He enrolled at Lane High School in September of 1939. So, when the new building opened, Harlan walked the extra distance from his parent's house on Ridge Street down to the intersection at Preston where the new high school was situated. He graduated from Lane High School in 1943. Because he was a white male, Harlan could continue his education at the University of Virginia. In fact, Lane and UVA had an agreement that provided college credit for high school courses similar to the Advanced Placement program today. Harlan attended UVA for a before joining the war effort. Once World War II ended, Harlan returned to Charlottesville and graduated from UVA.[266] After graduating from Lane, Harlan remained in Charlottesville.

Jeffrey Littlejohn and Charles Ford, *Elusive Equality: Desegregation and Resegregation in Norfolk's Public Schools* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012); Tracy K'Meyer, *From* Brown *to Meredith: The Long Struggle for School Desegregation in Louisville, Kentucky, 1954-2007* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Matthew Delmont, *Why Busing Failed: Race, Media, and the National Resistance to School Desegregation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016); Ansley Erickson, *Making the Unequal Metropolis: School Desegregation and Its Limits* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016); Pamela Grundy, *Color and Character: West Charlotte High and the American Struggle Over Educational Equality* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017)

[266] Oral history interview with John Frederick Harlan, Jr. by Lynn Carter and Diane Berkeley (March 7, 1995), Charlottesville, Virginia.

He followed in the footsteps of grandfather and father and served on the Charlottesville City School board. For several decades, white students—and only white students—like Harlan attended Lane. However, that changed, as massive resistance became passive resistance.

Initially, Lane High School's building, within itself, did not create problems for school desegregation. After the schools reopened in 1959, the Charlottesville City Schools desegregated the schools on a token basis. When Jackson and the Martin brothers joined the student body in the fall, they constituted less than one percent of the total population. However, during the Freedom of Choice era—from the fall of 1959 through the fall of 1966—the number of African Americans increased steadily from three to one hundred and twenty-two. At the same time, Rock Hill Academy was founded. Rock Hill was the city's high school segregation academy.[267] The absence of several hundred white students during this period alleviated spatial concerns. By 1966, though, African Americans constituted ten percent of the student population. At the same time, fewer than a hundred white students were attending Rock Hill. When full-scale school desegregation occurred a year later, African Americans constituted twenty percent of the student population. Since the Charlottesville City Schools had long been in denial that school desegregation would actually occur, they did not have an adequate facilities plan to handle the city's secondary students in a single building.[268]

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[267] Paul M. Gaston and Thomas T. Hammond, "Public School Desegregation: Charlottesville, Virginia, 1955-62," (Presentation, The South: The Ethical Demands of Integration, Nashville, TN, December 28, 1962), 10-11; Hammond, *Albemarle: Jefferson's County,* 436. The city's segregation academy elementary school was called Robert E. Lee Elementary.

[268] Holden, *The Bus Stops Here*, 54, 75.

Overcrowding led to several problems at the school. Gerry Gable, a *Daily Progress* staff reporter, wrote a lengthy piece on the relationship between overcrowding, discipline, and racial confrontations in 1968. Gable wrote, "Efforts are being made to remedy a discipline problem and racial prejudice existing on a small scale at Lane High School, the Charlottesville School Board learned last night."[269] Superintendent Edward Rushton addressed the board. On discipline problems at the school, Rushton claimed it "has to do with overcrowding conditions and with race relations and every effort is being made to improve the situation."[270] Some board members asked pointed questions during Rushton's presentation. Ray L. Bell heard from reliable sources that "one or two Lane teachers" possess racial prejudice. Bell wanted to know how the district planned to handle the issue.[271] Rushton again framed the problem as a lack of understanding and offered a solution based on that assumption. "Start talking and we find out how people feel and can then work to bring about a better understanding. We are aware of prejudice on both sides, but as long as we can keep this line of communication open there is hope," said Rushton.[272]

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[269] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44, Gerry Gable, "Overcrowding Is Blamed for Lane Problem," *The Daily Progress* (April 19, 1968).

[270] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Gerry Gable, "Overcrowding Is Blamed for Lane Problem," *The Daily Progress* (April 19, 1968)

[271] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Gerry Gable, "Overcrowding Is Blamed for Lane Problem," *The Daily Progress* (April 19, 1968)

[272] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Gerry Gable, "Overcrowding Is Blamed for Lane Problem," *The Daily Progress* (April 19, 1968)

In April 1968, superintendent Edward Rushton created a committee to address the issues. Ten students and eight teachers from both races served on the steering committee. The committee's aim was to "avoid misunderstandings brought about by the lack of communication between different races."[273] Rushton contended that as a result of the committee, he hoped "that student grievances will be brought to the attention of the proper authorities."[274] Rushton also pointed to the addition of twenty-nine new clubs in the last year—putting the total number of clubs at 49—involved "90 percent of the students as compared to a former 10 percent." He avoided any discussion of a racial breakdown of student participation. Rushton also sought help the University of Virginia. He noted "that the city and school administration had the opportunity to utilize 'both the human and financial resources' of the University of Virginia's consultative resource center in dealing with the discipline problem. And, to relieve overcrowding, Rushton planned to utilize empty space at the Jefferson School.[275]

Consequently, the constraints on educational space at Lane created additional tension during desegregation in the late 1960s. Lane High School's capacity was 1,000 students. In 1967, the student body totaled over 1,300. Several proposals were offered throughout this period to alleviate the space concerns. For example, in 1969, the Lane

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[273] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Gerry Gable, "Overcrowding Is Blamed for Lane Problem," *The Daily Progress* (April 19, 1968)

[274] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Gerry Gable, "Overcrowding Is Blamed for Lane Problem," *The Daily Progress* (April 19, 1968)

[275] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Gerry Gable, "Overcrowding Is Blamed for Lane Problem," *The Daily Progress* (April 19, 1968)

Parent-Teacher Association suggested using the Jefferson School as a consolidated space for the district's ninth grade students. Superintendent Rushton dismissed the idea, though. He argued "moving the ninth grades to Jefferson School would cripple the junior high program, and would in no way relieve overcrowdedness [sic]."[276]The Charlottesville City School Board studied several possibilities for relieving the space problems. "How large must the school bond issue to finance two new high schools and a conversion of Lane High into a middle school be?" asked *Daily Progress* reporter Nancy Talmont, "The Charlottesville School Board found last night that is getting closer to the answer—as complicated as it is."[277] The cost of land for the new schools and the specific plans for the schools would influence the final price. However, superintendent Rushton believed he possessed enough information to discuss the plans for the schools Caudill, Rowlett, and Scott of Houston, Texas. Stainback and Scriber, local architects, served as associate architects.

Eventually, Rushton and the LHS administrators decided to utilize the space at the vacant Jefferson School to ease overcrowding. On June 21, 1968, *The Daily Progress* reported, "Lane juniors and seniors would utilize five classrooms around the auditorium at Jefferson School to relieve overcrowding at the high school."[278] The use of the

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[276] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Bob Wimer "Tighter School Discipline Said Bringing Calm" *The Daily Progress* (November 26, 1969).

[277] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Nancy Talmont, "High School Planning Report Ready" *The Daily Progress* (February 9, 1968).

[278] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Gerry Gable, "Lane to Use Classrooms at Jefferson Next Fall," *The Daily Progress* (June 21, 1968)

classrooms at Lane would alleviate overcrowding and "would not disrupt the Jefferson program." In addition, it would "allow all study halls at Lane to be held in regular classrooms instead of in the cafeteria and enable the library to be expanded into two existing classrooms."[279] Due to the close proximity of the two schools, transportation would not be an issue at all. Students walked less than a mile to the Jefferson School. Shifting some classes to the rooms at Jefferson also allowed Lane to consolidate their guidance services for students. Previously, the guidance services were spread in rooms throughout the school.[280]

Despite using the Jefferson School to ease overcrowding, the number of students far exceeded capacity. Overcrowding at Lane exacerbated the problems between students, faculty, and administrators during the 1960s and 1970s. The problems could have avoided, too. If the Charlottesville City Schools had planned for full-scale desegregation, then they would have known that a larger building was necessary to meet the needs of all the city's high school students. Initially, Rock Hill Academy, the segregation academy high school, eased the space the concerns at Lane.[281] However, as the number of students decreased at Rock Hill and Burley closed, space became a significant issue.

Space was not the only issue, though. "When they closed Burley," Lane teacher Susan Scott recalls, "They took away their football team, their band…the Black history

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[279] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Gerry Gable, "Lane to Use Classrooms at Jefferson Next Fall," *The Daily Progress* (June 21, 1968)

[280] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Gerry Gable, "Lane to Use Classrooms at Jefferson Next Fall," *The Daily Progress* (June 21, 1968)

[281] "Private School Unit Applies for Charter," *The Daily Progress* (July 12, 1958). Lassiter and Lewis, *The Moderates' Dilemma*

day, except at Burley they would have two or three days of celebration and commemoration and they took every bit of it away. They did not attempt to integrate it into the school curriculum at all! So that the whole curriculum and activities were slanted towards the White middle class."[282] Lane was disenfranchising students. Scott believes the school was sending the message that the Black students they weren't valued in the school. "You have to assimilate, and your way of speaking is no good, and your way of talking to loudly is no good, and your club and school activities aren't valuable enough to give them place in our curriculum and our after school activities." The football and baseball teams were the lone exception in this trend. However, all of these issues pushed African American students and teachers and a small cadre of rebellious white teachers protest the treatment of African Americans within Lane High School.

Discrimination permeated several parts of school programming. For example Jefferson High School and Burley High School had Honor Society. However, when school desegregation occurred, Lane discontinued the club. When they brought the club back, issues quickly arose. Theresa Price, one of the few African American teachers at Lane, was on the committee to resurrect the club. Dorris Curry, a student in the Honor Society at Burley, transferred to Lane. Price approached the Honor Society leader at Lane and said, "Listen, you know, there's a young lady here already who is a member of the honor society. So what are you going to do with the students who were already members

[282] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

before you discontinue this thing."[283] Price said the woman—she wouldn't speak her name in the interview—frightened her and thought "she was going to hit me."[284]

Some African American students refused to acquiesce to the racist and discriminatory actions at Lane. Price remembers, "There was a group of Black kids that were unhappy at Lane. And so, oftentimes they would riot or threaten to riot. And they were very disruptive in the classroom, because, you know, the White teachers felt threatened by some of the students. That's still true. So Cherry Pie took advantage of it. He's a very smart fellow. Took advantage of that fear. One day they were going to walk out and Lorraine and I said, "We can't let them go by themselves, so we walked with them."[285] Alex-Zan was another student involved and, according to Price, "had a great time being disruptive."[286] Tank Wells was another student who caused disruption at the school. "He could do anything he wanted, nobody could accuse him."[287] Theresa Price believes that because her and the other Black teacher Lorraine Williams walked out, they were able to protect the Black students from the administration.

Students and Teachers in the Movement

African American students such as Charles Alexander, James Bryant, Corlis Turner, and others fought the racism they faced at Lane High School. These individuals did not have a single means or vision for Corlis Turner was an African American student

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[283] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[284] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[285] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[286] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[287] Oral history interview with Theresa Price, Jane and Gene Foster by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (June 29, 2003), Charlottesville, Virginia.

who was involved in the Lane cheerleading squad in school and the NAACP chapter outside of school. In a profile of Corlis, *Lanetimes* reported, "Corlis is quite proud of the racial balance on the squad this year. She feels that this aspect has eliminated a great deal of tension in certain areas at Lane." According to Corlis, "The girls on the squad get along very well together and all are receptive of suggestions and new ideas."[288] At the time of the profile, she wanted to attend Morgan State University. She served as treasurer for the local NAACP chapter. "Being in the NAACP," asserted Turner, "has helped me a great deal as far as leadership is concerned. Last year we worked with such activities as Voter Registration." She attended both the statewide and national conventions of the NAACP during her time at Lane.

Charles Alexander's three years at Lane High School brought great change to the school. In reflecting on his experience at Lane, Alexander said, "Oh I remember Lane a lot because did a lot. We had walk-ins, sit-outs, boycotts, and everything at Lane."[289] Alexander and his group of friends, known as the "Wrecking Crew," led the push. Alexander described the group as "a little more defiant, a little more militant" than the other African American students at Lane. Unlike other members of the "Wrecking Crew" who attended segregated schools before Lane, Alexander was one of the twelve students who desegregated the Charlottesville City Schools in 1959. Before attending Lane High School, Alexander attended Venable Elementary School and Buford Junior High School. Both schools were populated almost entirely by white teachers and white administrators.

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[288] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; "Turner Devotes Time to Cheering; Clarke Reflects on Japanese Culture," *Lanetimes* (October 20, 1970)

[289] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

Similar to other locales throughout the South, school desegregation had a devastating impact on African American teachers and administrators in Charlottesville. Whereas African American teachers and administrators had populated Jefferson High School and Burley High School for several decades, many were dismissed and, the ones who remained were often demoted. Booker R. Reaves, a teacher and administrator at the city's segregated schools, became an administrative assistant for the school district office.[290]

Alexander was influenced both by the local context in Charlottesville but also other social movements at the time. African Americans' political organizing in other parts of the country shaped Alexander's approach to protest. "Of course during those days, the Black Panthers and the militancy and the first raising was happening[291]," said Alexander. Rather than following the model of non-violence espoused by Martin Luther King, Alexander and the other members of the Wrecking Crew viewed the Black Panthers as the model for fighting racism within Lane High School. Lane's principal marked Alexander as a problem. He was suspended during his tenth grade year for instigating a fight at the school. He claims that the administrators at Lane and the Charlottesville City Schools had declared him "a threat to the Virginia school system.[292]" While Alexander acknowledges that the school tried to bring whites and blacks together at the school, he believes the meetings didn't work because Blacks at Lane felt they "just weren't being treated right."[293]

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[290] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[291] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[292] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[293] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

One of the biggest issues at Lane was the lack of Black teachers. Alexander recalls, "The teachers, there weren't enough black teachers."[294] When Jackson P. Burley High School was closed, very few African American teachers were hired at Lane High School. While the local NAACP fought for school desegregation, they were less concerned with desegregating teachers. Eugene Williams, contends, "I don't think we ever questioned the teaching staff…per se. It did come to surface that we had teachers and principals that did not want to comply, and then we would have to deal with them individually according to whatever the situation was."[295] Overall, Charlottesville and the Charlottesville City Schools were not prepared for the implementation of school desegregation. However, Williams asserts that not one school system was prepared for the implementation phase. Williams' wife taught in the Charlottesville City Schools. She taught at Lane High School. "Then I think she transferred to Buford, then she transferred from Buford to Walker, and Charlottesville High. But she was not accommodated by the superintendent."[296] She was one of the first Black teachers at Lane. "And they did not give her a classroom that year. She would go from one room to the other with her briefcase, but no desk." She taught business courses at Lane. Williams believes the school wanted his wife to feel uncomfortable at Lane. She had few friends at Lane during that period.

Gladys McCoy, Berdell Fleming's mother, was one of the few African American teachers that went to Lane. She was removed from the class after six months "with no

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[294] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[295] Oral history interview with Eugene Williams by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (February 17, 2004), Dogwood Properties, Charlottesville, Virginia.

[296] Oral history interview with Eugene Williams by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (February 17, 2004), Dogwood Properties, Charlottesville, Virginia.

idea what the problem was." Maude Fleming called the NAACP about the situation. Samuel Tucker represented her in the case. She was the oldest black teacher at the time in Lane. She was able to retain her retirement funds, which the Charlottesville City School board was trying to revoke. Despite receiving her pension, Berdell Fleming contends that the situation was "emotionally destructive" for her mom. Fleming was living in Delaware with her husband at the time. Her husband was in the Air Force. The African American community supported her mother at the time. "She was fine with teaching African American students."[297]

Although African American students fought for greater representation of African American teachers on the faculty, they did find some white allies and advocates within the Lane faculty. Susan Cone Scott was one teacher who advocated for Black students. Miss Cone was a young English teacher when Alexander attended high school. "We were sort of supportive of her…we sort of like created a little bond with her. I don't know—because she was young and attractive, or what—but she was sort of a little more open."[298] With only three black teachers on the faculty at the time, advocacy from teachers such as Susan Cone made a difference for Alexander and his fellow students. Scott started teaching at Lane High School in the fall of 1966. Scott taught at Lane until January of 1969. She grew up in the West End of Richmond and remembers, "the only Black people I knew were servants, and I knew something was wrong." Scott attended Sweet Briar for three years. At Sweet Briar, she was "involved in some Civil Rights work." Before her senior year, she transferred to Barnard in New York City. She had left Virginia for New

[297] Oral history interview with Berdell Fleming by Derrick Alridge and Chenyu Wang (January 29, 2018), Curry School of Education, Charlottesville, VA.

[298] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

York City when she was 21. She swore that she "would never come back to the South."[299] However, she returned to Virginia and pursued a master's degree in English literature at the University of Virginia. And when a teaching job became available at Lane, "it was like a realization that it was where my roots were and I needed to stay here."[300]

Scott had close relationships with Lane's Black teachers particularly Loraine Williams and Theresa Jackson. She remember, "They were wonderful…They kept their sense of humor, they kind of held their own dignity, and they did not tell me much about what was going on. I was probably going to them and babbling about what was going on…their humor was wonderful, and no, they did not complain once."[301] While Scott became friends with Williams and Jackson, Scott believes they "were very isolated." Scott remembers, "I suspect that's why Lorraine was in her classroom rather than up in the teacher's lounge. Because most of the long-term, senior teachers who had made sure they taught in the basement schools, were now facing Black teachers in their schools.[302] In other words, the teachers who were willing to support massive resistance through continuing education when Lane was closed were teaching African American students. If those teachers had been unwilling to teach in those schools, then it would have created additional pressure for superintendent Ellis and Governor Lindsay to open the schools.

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[299] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[300] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[301] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[302] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

At Lane, Scott taught English and French. She recalls, "At that point they had a tracking system, or level system, and I taught mostly fourth level students, which means that they were reading on a fifth to seventh grade level, they were given books with Sir Gowan and the Green Knight in it for tenth grade. And they were mostly Black."[303] The school was not well equipped to meet these students need. "I'm not even sure that year I had any college bound students. And basically, most of my students I had to fabricate a curriculum for, and get materials from outside the school that they could use."[304] Most of her students were in their first year at Lane because they had transferred from Burley. "Lane was already overcrowded, and I forget the figures, whether it was 300 students or 500 students. They needed to build a new school, but under those circumstances, there is a lot of close physical contact because you were so crowded."[305]

Scott taught English to many students who were behind in reading. Rather than use the textbook provided by the school, she drew upon a text called *Hooked on Books*. "It was a little paperback book, and here I am with these, all these low-level students, and I mean low-level on their reading abilities, and they weren't all Black. There were White kids in there, too."[306] *Hooked on Books*, according to Scott was a book by "two psychologists who worked with juvenile delinquents." She used her own money to purchase materials for the class and utilized the pedagogical techniques described by Daniel Fader and Elton McNeil. Each student was provided a thick spiral notebook.

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[303] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[304] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[305] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[306] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

Students were required to write at least one page a day. If they reached the one-page threshold, then they were given an "A." "The idea is that writing for most students is painful," contended Scott, "They get papers back with red mark all over them, and it's just a way to expose yourself to criticism."[307] Using this approach to writing provided students with a safe space to develop their writing ability.

Scott admits that this approach allowed some student to just copy from a book. She contended that even if they were just copying from another book that they were still working on their handwriting. For many students, though, the journal became a place where students could put down ideas and issues that they were grappling with at that moment. Scott also used prompts to spur students writing and thinking. One day she asked students about reincarnation. After explaining what the term meant, she asked students what they would like to come back to life as. "And my Black male students, there was a preponderance in every class that they wanted to come back as poodle. And I don't think it's just because I had a standard poodle. And they would say, 'Because the poodle is loved, and brushed, and washed," remembers Scott. "I mean it was mind-blowing. Often, it was the toughest, meanest boys in the class that would say this."[308] Overall, Scott viewed her pedagogical approach as a success. "They loved it," she remembers, "You gave them their own book. It didn't cost any…I mean it was such a minimal technique. You know I got the newspapers, the *Progress* would you free newspapers, so I told them to read classified ads. I think they do this now with many

[307] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[308] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

students, it may be it kind of replaced Home Ec. And how to write a letter of application, and…just tried to do stuff that made sense to them."[309]

Scott supported the African American student protests in the fall of 1968. She recalls, "The first time they all walked out, they came and got me" and "it happened to be my free period and I went up there and they kind of welcomed me to the meeting." When the students walked out during this period, they ended their walkout at a church on the corner of Gordon Avenue and 14th Street. Teachers were not allowed to leave the school during their free period for any reason—let alone protest. "I was a rebel," Scott contends. "I was furious about what was going on and I did it. Within the next couple of months, they gathered in the main front hall of Lane, and by then it was mostly Black, but there'd be a few White students in a group like this. People who believed that was going on was wrong."[310] In response to the protest in the front hall, principal Nichols addressed the crowd standing on a box. Scott remembers that Nichols "really had a gift for saying the wrong thing." Nichols pleaded with students and said, "I'm a fair person, I'm fair to everybody." As he was pleading with the students, he would seek support from Scott. She did not support Nichols, though. Nichols never sought retribution against her, though. "I don't think he dared. I don't think they dared." During this same time period, Scott started making connections within the African American community through organizing with the local Democratic Party. She met Eugene Williams through the local party.[311]

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[309] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[310] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[311] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

Eventually, the Charlottesville City School administrators engaged in concerted efforts to hire more African American teachers and staff members. On December 10, 1969, *The Daily Progress* reported on those efforts. Superintendent Edward Rushton claimed, "We are making a conscious and deliberate effort to seek an increased percentage of well qualified Negro teachers and administrators."[312] A week after Rushton's press conference, the district sent Booker T. Reeves, former principal at the Jefferson School and current school board clerk, and Charles C. Todd Jr., the district's director of personnel, on a recruiting trip to Atlanta University in Atlanta, Georgia. John Gaines, principal at the McGuffey School, and Mrs. Diana Wright, a teacher at the Jefferson School, traveled to Virginia Union University to recruit African American teachers. These recruiting efforts did not originate with Edward Rushton. In the article, Wimer wrote, "Rushton noted that increased efforts to recruit black teachers are a result of demands placed on the school system by the Charlottesville branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and a recent school board policy which stated in part that 'the administration will work to increase the number of black teachers and administrators (in the school system)."[313] The recruiting trips continued into the following year at Virgina's colleges and universities including James Madison University, Radford University, Mary Washington University, Longwood University, and the University of Virginia.

During the 1968 school year, the African American students started an Afro-American Club. Scott served as the sponsor at first. The group focused on learning about

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[312] Bob Wimer, "Rushton: 'Conscious Effort' to Hire More Negro Staff," *The Daily Progress* (December 10, 1969)

[313] Bob Wimer, "Rushton: 'Conscious Effort' to Hire More Negro Staff," *The Daily Progress* (December 10, 1969)

African American writers at first including Langston Hughes. Scott possessed no previous training nor had she been exposed to African American writers in graduate school at the University of Virginia. She tried to expose herself to African American authors but "it was such a busy time."[314] Eventually, though Scott was replaced. "What happened to all of us White rebellious teachers," asserts Scott, "is that as more radical people began to advise the young people, they began to push us out too. Because they didn't want some good-hearted White person being the sponsor of the Afro-American club. They wanted an African American. They were beginning to think that if you weren't Black, you could not comprehend the Black experience."[315] Scott drew upon her experience as a Jew to connect with her African American students. "And I was real open with them, and I think that's why I was able to related to them. And why they related back to me, why let me in."[316] Scott was hurt when the African American students sought a different advisor. "It's like, huh, now I'm nowhere," Scott remembers, "The White staff and faculty don't like me, and now you're doing this. Now I never felt it with the Black teachers I was friends with…I will never know whether that had something to do with how sick I got, I got really sick."[317]

The only way for Black students to be heard, according to Charles Alexander, was through overt action. Alexander and others would "hold up a hallway or a staircase" or "block a door." They were also willing to confront the school's administration, if

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[314] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[315] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[316] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

[317] Oral history interview with Susan Cone Scott by Jacky Taylor and Liz Sargent (May 18, 2004), Charlottesville, Virginia.

necessary. The school's administration, in response to the demands made by the school's black students, held special listening sessions or would call the students' parents.[318] To draw particular attention to their plight, Alexander remembers organizing a walkout where they marched from Lane High School to Trinity Church on the corner of Tenth Street and Grady. When the students arrived at Trinity Church, they spoke with Reverend Mitchell. The students "expressed some grievances about how they were being treated."[319] Participation in extracurricular activities was of particular concern to the Black students. Alexander remembers, "I think sports team was a little bit different, the band, well, even today you're always a little bit more welcome in sports than you are maybe are in the band, the drama club, and all other things."[320]

Alexander's approach to creating change at Lane High School had consequences for his high school experience. He recalls, "I couldn't play varsity basketball because I was a militant, and they cut me because they thought I was going to be a threat to the team. They thought I was going to control the team. So I played in the recreation league, years ago."[321] The perception of Alexander and his group stemmed not only from their behavior within the school. The Wrecking Crew also protested their treatment, at school and in the community, beyond the classroom. Alexander remembers, "We used to stop traffic on Main Street, and we didn't allow traffic to come down 10th Street from Main

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[318] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[319] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[320] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[321] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

Street."[322] The Charlottesville police were called to breakup the demonstration. And, during Alexander's time at Lane High School, the police became a larger presence within and surrounding the high school. Alexander said, "I remember them coming, but they just came…Now I do remember once they came and they arrested my cousin because he swung and hit the principal, the assistant principal, who was Dave Garrett, and he had to go to go court."[323]

James Bryant did not identify as a militant in the same way as Charles Alexander. However, he also experienced racism and resistance at Lane High School. Bryant was born and raised in Charlottesville. In 1960, he started first grade at Jefferson Elementary. He stayed at Jefferson until fifth grade, and then he had a choice. During the "freedom of choice" era, he applied to attend Venable School. He lived right behind Venable in public housing. He was not selected.[324] Despite having his transfer request denied, Bryant still faced changes related to school desegregation. During his sixth grade year, Bryant had his first white teacher and first experience attending school with white students. As a result of living in public housing, he thinks the teachers believed he had lower aspirations, since he lived there. "When we integrated into the white schools, it was very, very different," He recalls, "Teachers thought we couldn't read." Bryant attended junior high in the Charlottesville City Schools. He remembers African American students being tracked into the lower math and English classes. Some of the teachers at the junior high had taught at Burley.

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[322] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[323] Oral history interview with Charles E. Alexander by Liz Sargent and Alexandria Sargent (August 31, 2002), Omni Hotel, Charlottesville, Virginia, transcript.

[324] Oral history interview with James Bryant by Danielle Wingfield-Smith (January 30, 2018), Curry School of Education, Charlottesville, VA

In 1969, James Bryant entered Lane High School as a sophomore. “It was really bad at Lane because there were a lot of racial issues and problems,” Bryant recalls. One particular instance at Lane reveals how Bryant experienced racism. He recalls going into see the guidance counselor Miss Garrett. “She never looked at me. She stood with her back to me. “College? You need to get that notion out of your head and pickup a trade.” Bryant: “I was devastated. I was crushed.” He left the room crying. Miss Woodset, the only Black guidance counselor, took Bryant’s case. She had taught at Jefferson. Woodset took him on her caseload. At that moment, Bryant vowed he would never do the same thing to another student. Despite the trauma caused by Miss Woodset, Bryant would eventually attended Virginia Union University and became a music teacher in Madison County. He observes, “With all the trauma and drama [at Lane], I figured it was a good fit for me.”

Bryant was an active participant in the fight against racism during his time at Lane. He recalls, “We fought throughout that period for racial equality. We didn’t have any black administrators. We didn’t have any black teachers. So, we marched and we protested.” Whenever we would march and leave the school, we would go to my church—my godfather’s church, Trinity Episcopal Church. It was formerly located on 10th and Page. We knew that Reverend Mitchell would meet us there. The late Mr. George Ferguson, leader of the NAACP, would meet us there to console us and try to give us guidance.” Since the school lacked a critical mass of African Americans, the students left the school space and sought out a more welcoming space. Eventually, the student’s activism yielded actions by the school’s administrators and division. Lane hired a single African American administrator and some African American teachers who had

recently graduated from the University of Virginia during the late 1960s and early 1970s. As detailed in the next chapter, some of those teachers oversaw the implementation of the Black Studies elective course. Bryant remembers, "We protested and said we want a Black history class. I said, 'We need a Black history class to talk about the struggles and achievements of Black Americans. And because of our protest, we eventually got a Black history class. It was one class during his senior year." The protests led to a Black History course. But it was on the terms set by the school's administration. And, in the beginning those terms, failed to meet the vision expressed by Bryant and others.

Several different groups of African American students worked to affect change at Lane and in the community. The Raiders club was "composed of black youth" and aimed to "help and improve their community."[325] The club had 16 members with students ranging in age from age 12 to 17. The only requirement for joining the club was "an ability to get along with people and to work wholeheartedly for the improvement of the community." Van Johnson, the president of the group, was a sophomore at Lane. According to Johnson, the club was formed "when a group of friends and neighbors decided to organize in order to do volunteer work in the community." Bobby Walker served as the vice-president, Glenda Walker served as the secretary, Sabrina Walker as the assistant secretary, and Melvin Walker as the treasurer. The club raised funds through "dances, bake sales, cook-outs, and the sale of a variety of products." The money was donated to St. Paul's Episcopal Housing Task Force.[326] In addition to engaging in community work, the club also had a basketball and a wrestling team. They also took

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[325] Ramona Paige, "Black Raiders League Works for Community," *Lanetimes* (March 25, 1970)

[326] Ramona Paige, "Black Raiders League Works for Community," *Lanetimes* (March 25, 1970)

field trips to Washington, D.C and Richmond. On the weekends, the club also hiked in various locations around Albemarle County. Reverend C.H. Brown, the club's sponsor, chaperoned the group on these outings. The club also had a monthly newspaper called *The Raider Progress*.

Despite the racism they faced at Lane High School, some African American students still managed to continue their education beyond high school. Brenda Brown was accepted into Virginia State College, Michael Lewis, Richard Johnson, and David Dawson were accepted into Wilberforce University, Clinton Bryant was accepted into the Hampton Institute, Vivian Williams into Ferrum College, and Diane Brown into Virginia Union.[327] Vivian Williams expressed frustration with handling racism at Lane. Williams observed, "I think the race problem at Lane is terrible, but when you try to make things better you are called a 'tom' or something else. I am not in this world to live up to your expectations, and you are not here to live up to mine. If there is something that I am doing and you don't like it, all I can say is that it is your problem to solve it."[328] Williams was an African American woman who graduated from Lane High School in 1973. She attended Ferrum Jr. College with the intention of majoring in journalism. The teacher who had the biggest influence on Williams was her journalism teacher Ms. Julia Shields. The other teachers who had an influence on Williams were Mr. Percy Woods, Mr. Stanley Ryan, and Mr. Roger Smith. Her favorite musicians at the time were The Temptations, The ChiLites, and Al Green.

The student newspaper also profiled Michael Lewis. "Michael Lewis, a six foot tall senior, has set his goal to become the 'baddest' disc jockey in the U.S." Lewis

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[327] "Seniors Express Views of Lane," *Lanetimes* (May 30, 1973)
[328] "Seniors Express Views of Lane," *Lanetimes* (May 30, 1973)

attended Wilberforce University, where he intended to study radio and television. He chose Wilberforce, in part, because of "the college's co-op program which allows a student to obtain a job in his major field of studies."[329] The profile included a retrospective of Lewis's time at the school. "As a sophomore, Michael was a member of the track team, but due to his having trouble with his knees and because he felt there was racial prejudice on the team, he was forced to quit in his junior year. In spite of this, he was quite successful as he finished sixth in the regions in the 440 yard dash and finished fifth in the district." In reflecting on his time at Lane, Lewis called the school "disgusting and troublesome." Lewis was a member of the Student Council Association at Lane. He served as a senior class representative in the Association. In response to a question about what he hopes to see at Lane after he graduates, Lewis asserted, "the educational program at Lane will change in that it will prepare students better in the fields of their interest."

Conclusion

The contestation of space would continue until Lane High School closed its doors in the spring of 1974. African American teachers—at least, the few employed at Lane—and students faced latent and overt forms of racist resistance from many white students, teachers, and administrators. "It was a constant struggle," James Bryant observes. "To this day, the Black graduates will not come back to the reunions."[330] Without a critical mass of African American teachers backing them, African American students expressed their displeasure in using a variety of means. Some white faculty members and white students supported African American students. However, white teachers and students who supported the African American students faced criticism and retribution from other

[329] "Seniors Express Views of Lane," *Lanetimes* (May 30, 1973)

[330] Oral history interview with James Bryant by Danielle Wingfield-Smith (January 30, 2018), Curry School of Education, Charlottesville, VA

white students. In the end, African American student protests may not have yielded significant change in the hiring of African American teachers, guidance counselors, or administrators. However, changes in the curriculum represent one area where protests led to a tangible reform effort.

The creation of a Black Studies course at Lane High School originated in part as consequence of violence perpetrated by some white students at Lane. On May 10, 1968, six white students assaulted an African American Lane student who was returning from the senior class carnival. After the assault, the student was taken to the University of Virginia hospital for treatment. In response, on the following Monday, a group of approximately 200 students—nearly one-fourth of them white—boycotted school for the day. The boycotting students met less than a mile from LHS at Trinity Episcopal Church and drew up a list of demands for the school's principal, John E. Heugal, and Superintendent Dr. Edward Rushton. The student demands included creating a Black history course, hiring an African American guidance counselor, developing remedial reading and speech programs, hiring a greater proportion of African American teachers, purchasing voting machines for all school elections, improving student and teacher relations, and providing a more robust orientation program for students and teachers. Although Principal Heugal ignored the students' demands, Dr. Rushton agreed to implement several reforms based on their requests.[331]

To meet the students' demand for a Black history course, LHS instituted modest changes to school's curriculum. Rushton also included several other additions to the budget for the 1968–1969 school year at the meeting. These additions consisted of

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[331] Anna Holden, *The Bus Stops Here: A Study of School Desegregation in Three Cities* (New York: Agathon Press Inc., 1974), 87–88.

"instructional aids for four department heads, a materials resource aid in the library, a records clerk for guidance, an expanded remedial speech program and new instructional materials stressing Negro history."[332] Thus, the demands articulated by students in the spring of 1968 led to tangible changes within Lane's curriculum. Rushton also noted that the school district was in the process of writing a grant, under Title III of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, for "corrective reading services, coordinated student activities, guidance services, and materials for independent study."[333] The next chapter places the spotlight on the school's curriculum and pedagogy to illuminate how Black black students and teachers attempted to center Blackness within the school's classrooms during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

[332] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869–2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Gerry Gable, "Lane to Use Classrooms at Jefferson Next Fall," *The Daily Progress* (June 21, 1968)

[333] Records of the Charlottesville School Board, 1869-2006, #14210, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, Box 66, Folder 44; Gerry Gable, "Lane to Use Classrooms at Jefferson Next Fall," *The Daily Progress* (June 21, 1968)

CHAPTER FIVE

"THE WHOLE MESS IS *AMERICAN* HISTORY": CENTERING BLACKNESS AND ITS LIMITS, 1967-1974

> "The general attitude seems to be Black students telling about their private history, and white students looking at it as something removed from their own history. But the whole mess is *American* history, and it all happened at the same time."[334]
>
> -Editorial in *Lanetimes*

In 1969, across town from Lane High School, African American students and progressive white students at the University of Virginia (UVA) were demanding the full inclusion of the Black experience. In February, the UVA students' demanded that president Edgar Shannon "fully integrate African American students into campus life, eliminate, application fees for low-income students, and establish a Black Studies program by the fall of 1970."[335] To bolster their claim on the last demand, George Taylor, an African American undergraduate student in the sociology department, drafted and submitted a proposal for Black Studies in March. In providing a rationale for the program's creation, Taylor wrote, "The University of Virginia, one of the south's [sic] most prestigious institutions, is in a peculiarly strategic position to make a contribution of great inherent and symbolic value. Internationally, the unfortunate reputation enjoyed by

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[334] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 52; "Editorial," *Lanetimes* (February 21, 1974).

[335] Claudrena N. Harold, "'Of the Wings of Atalanta": The Struggle for African American Studies at the University of Virginia, 1969-1995," in the *Journal of African American Studies* 16, 2012: 44.

the University of Virginia stemming from earlier relationships with minority groups makes it all the more appropriate that this institution initiate a full program in Afro-American culture. We also note that the growing interest among the white students and faculty makes it highly desirable that the program be inaugurated without delay."[336] Guided by the proposal and under the direction of Armstead L. Robinson, the Black Studies program was instituted in the fall of 1970.[337]

The Black Studies program's creation did not just shape the educational landscape at the University of Virginia. Its impact rippled across town, too. Amid protests by teachers and students during the late 1960s, Lane High School started to incorporate the Black experience into the American history curriculum. However, the half-hearted attempts fell well short in satisfying student demand for full inclusion of the Black experience. However, in 1971, LHS instituted a Black Studies elective course. Anthony Sherman became the course's first teacher. Sherman was one of the first African American students to attend UVA and enroll in Black Studies courses. After graduating from UVA with a bachelor's degree, Sherman stayed in Charlottesville and enrolled in UVA's law school. So, during the 1971-1972 school year, Sherman contended with both his first year of law school and first year of high school teaching. The Black Studies course was not the only way African American students aimed to center their experience within the school's curriculum and physical space. Alongside the rise of the Black

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[336] Paul M. Gaston Papers Pertaining to Black Students for Freedom, Accession #12966-a, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va; Ad Hoc Committee of the Black Students for Freedom and Members of the Black Academic Community, "Proposal for an Afro-American Studies Program," 1969, 4.

[337] Harold, "The Struggle for African American Studies at the University of Virginia," 43.

Studies course, Lane High School also hosted Black Culture Week during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

This chapter examines how, and in what ways, Lane High School centered the Black experience. First, it examines the Black Studies course's teachers and their curriculum and pedagogy. Second, it explores how Black Culture week changed over time. Finally, it highlights how white students and white administrators responded and, at times, resisted these efforts to center Blackness. Overall, I argue that the establishment of a Black Studies course carved out a space for African American students to not only have their perspective and presence acknowledged within a desegregated space, but it also created a context leading to a greater representation of Black teachers at Lane. At the same time, the course's elective status undermined the potential to cultivate the consciousness of the student body as a whole.

Origins of Black Studies at Lane High School

During the 1969 school year, Lane High School purchased a video lecture series by Dr. Edgar A. Toppin, a professor of Black history at Virginia State University. Throughout the school year, Lane's U.S. History teachers showed one lecture per week of "Americans from Africa: A History" to their junior students. "Americans from Africa: A History," was developed by Dr. Toppin during the mid-1960s. Before arriving at Virginia State in 1964, he earned a bachelors and masters degree in history from Howard University and a doctoral degree from Northwestern University. He taught at Alabama State University, the University of Akron, North Carolina College, and Western Reserve University. He was "an author or co-author of more than forty articles and reviews and of three books: *Pioneers and Patriots; A Mark Well Made;* and *The Unfinished March*. His

wife was a native Virginia and they settled in Chesterfield County, Virginia. At the time of his creating the curriculum, Toppin's three kids were in the 2nd, 7th, and 10th grade.[338]

Lane High School was not the only school who utilized Dr. Toppin's "Americans from Africa: A History." The lessons were recorded in Richmond, Virginia, and then beamed into classrooms throughout Virginia. The curriculum's development was supported by a grant from the Old Dominion Foundation. Overall, the course aimed "to tell the neglected story of persons who constitute one-ninth of the population of the United States today" and to develop "better understanding and harmony among students by increasing their awareness of the part that all Americans have played in the making of this nation." The past and present were inextricably linked based on Dr. Toppin's framing for the course. "By emphasizing the historical role of the American Negro, generally omitted from schoolbooks, the series hopes to contribute to easing the tensions and crises of the present." Although Dr. Toppin never referenced specific events or tensions in particular; however, there were several at the time. Race riots had occurred throughout the 1960s in Los Angeles, Detroit, and Newark. Soon, the country would be dealing with the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. By weaving the African American experience into U.S. History courses, Dr. Toppin believed students would be better equipped to understand contemporary issues and potentially mitigate future racial violence.[339]

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[338] Edgar Allan Toppin, *Americans from Africa: A History—Teacher's Manual, TV Lesson Guides* (Richmond: Central Virginia Educational Television Corporation, 1968), i.

[339] Toppin, *Americans from Africa: A History—Teacher's Manual,* i.

In a letter to the classroom teachers using the curriculum, Dr. Toppin shared his philosophy for the course. He stressed that the curriculum "strives for inclusiveness, not separateness." Rather than framing his curriculum as a Black Nationalist project, Dr. Toppin saw it as a means for providing students with multiple perspectives. He claims, "One of the great strengths of the United States lies in the fact that many persons of many different colors, national origins, and creeds combined their diverse tents in the building of our nation. Yet, surprisingly few persons are well-informed of the contributions of a significant segment of the population, those whose ancestors came here from Africa. This series tries to correct that deficiency by showing the role played by persons of African descent in the development of America."[340] In other words, the course centered the perspective of African Americans. However, Dr. Toppin always placed African Americans with a larger context, which included white Americans. "Emphasis throughout will be on the major forces and developments that shaped the national destiny and the lives of black and white Americans. Events involving groups and individuals will therefore be taken up not in isolation, but in the total context of the historical period of which they are an indivisible part," wrote Dr. Toppin.[341]

Dr. Toppin's course was both comprehensive and contemporary. He covered a wide range of topics beginning with "African Beginnings" to "New Militancy and Black Power." Despite providing a breadth of topics, Dr. Toppin's course offered a rather limited depth on the range of African and African American experiences. In general, he crafted a narrative focusing on great African American man. The curriculum spotlighted the lives and work of Frederick Douglas, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois,

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[340] Toppin, *Americans from Africa: A History—Teacher's Manual,* ii.
[341] Toppin, *Americans from Africa: A History—Teacher's Manual,* ii.

Marcus Garvey, and Martin Luther King, Jr.[342] Each lesson included an outline narrative and a bibliography for teacher reference. The outlines were brief; however, the bibliography provided at least six texts for teachers to reference. At the end of the teacher's manual, he provided several additional reference texts. In particular, he cited John Hope Franklin's *From Slavery to Freedom; A History of Negro Americans* as a helpful text due to the historiographical essay in the book.[343] Despite providing leads on supplemental resources for teachers, there is little evidence to suggest that Lane's teachers read or referenced the available resources.

While the texts included and referenced within the teachers' guide for the curriculum are noteworthy, there are a few surprising omissions. While W.E.B. Bu Bois and his book *The Souls of Black Folk* is discussed, Dr. Toppin does not include or reference Du Bois's *Black Reconstruction*.[344] Drawing upon *Souls,* he discusses Du Bois's treatment of Booker T. Washington. Dr. Toppin writes that Du Bois "urged Washington to permit the free airing of diverse views rather than give white America the impression that all blacks agreed with the Atlanta Compromise and the Tuskegee plan of education." While highlighting Du Bois's takedown of Washington's conception of industrial education and the Washington's Atlanta Compromise speech are important, the lack of omission *Black Reconstruction* is striking. Not only did the text critically engage with historiographical racism perpetrated by the Dunning School,[345] but it also provides a

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[342] Toppin, *Americans from Africa: A History—Teacher's Manual,* iii-vi.

[343] Toppin, *Americans from Africa: A History—Teacher's Manual,* 28.

[344] Toppin, 14. W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Dover Thrift, 1904/1993); W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America* (New York: Free Press, 1935/1998).

[345] For more on the Dunning School of Reconstruction historiography, see John David Smith and J. Vincent Lowery, ed., *The Dunning School: Historians, Race, and the Meaning of Reconstruction* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2013).

foundation for understanding the origins of the Jim Crow South. However, compared to Black women's marginalization in the curriculum, the omission of one seminal text seems less important. These curricular limitations, however, pale in comparison to the course's pedagogical limitations.

Due to the course's pedagogical limitations, Dr. Toppin's course was bound for failure at Lane High School from the outset. The impersonal pedagogical delivery could not be overcome. In a sense, the Lane students received what they demanded. They wanted the African American experience included within their U.S. History course. However, the "Americans from Africa" course revealed the limitations of merely including the African American experience. Without a teacher possessing the curricular and pedagogical knowledge to engage with students, including the African American experience might actually have a negative influence on students. With the course being delivered via the television, it was easy for students to view the additive element of the course as superfluous. Furthermore, since we don't have any surviving record of how teachers felt about the course, its difficult to know how they reacted. Any response that was less than enthusiastic would have doomed the course.

Adding Toppin's course to the American history course fell well short of students' demands. Not only did this reform leave out students in other grades, but students also "complained that the teachers did not know enough about black history" and failed to adequately discuss the material presented during the lecture. Teachers had been provided additional materials on African American history during both the 1968-1969 and 1969-1970 school years. Few teachers made an effort to use and incorporate the materials into their courses, though. Two main reasons help explain the teachers failure to

revise the curriculum. First, they were not given any formal guidance on integrating the materials within the current curriculum. Second, they were not mandated to use the materials. And the materials on hand—including books by James Baldwin, Martin Luther King, Arna Bontemps, Langston Hughes, and Richard Wright—were only available in limited quantities. Work by Malcolm X and Elridge Cleaver were not present at all because the district worried they "would get a reaction from whites if they went too far."[346]

To supplement what occurred in the classrooms, educational programming occurred beyond the school. On September 20, 1970, the *Lanetimes* reported on an event at Mt. Zion Church. Gospel songs during the event included "Go Down Moses," "O Happy Day," and "Lift Every Voice and Sing," Larry Fortune organized the event. "Larry Fortune, project coordinator and a student at Lane, after challenging his minister in a class discussion on Black power and realizing the black church was in the past and can be in the present a black power, received permission to prepare a black awareness symposium along with other members of his youth class, all students at Lane." The event included a reading of Frederick Douglas's "Theme" and a reading of Martin Luther King, Jr speech "I Believe" accompanied by a rendition of "We Shall Overcome." Students also read poetry from Langston Hughes including "Black Like Me" and "Black Recitation." Presentations also included information on Black contributions to art, music, medicine, and education. The presentation on education focused on "Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, W.E.B. Du Bois" and "other less famous educators were also

[346] Anna Holden, *The Bus Stops Here: A Study of School Desegregation in Three Cities* (New York: Agathon Press Inc., 1974), 90-91.

included.' Scheryl Williams, who spent the summer of 1970 in Africa, answered questions about her trip.[347]

The educational programming that occurred beyond the school walls remained supplemental. Community members continued to push for curriculum reform in the schools. When it became clear that beaming Dr. Toppin's course was falling short of student demands, the local chapter of the Virginia Council on Human Relations (VCHR) started organizing for reform. In 1970, the VCHR facilitated a series of conversations amongst Lane teachers and students about a range of topics including the school's curriculum. On October 20, at First Baptist Church, Lane students met to discuss a list of suggestions generated as a result of the conversations. The suggestions included: "1. Credit for independent study outside of the classroom, 2. Student evaluation of teachers, 3. Credit for community work (social and political activities), 4. A Black Studies Program, 5. Divided study halls allowing students time to study quietly, discuss pertinent topics, or relax in a lounge area, and 6. Use of qualified people in the community for resource and teaching."[348] The Black Studies was to encompass the study of literature, music, art and history.

VCHR held another meeting, in January 1971, specifically about adding a Black Studies elective course. African American students at Lane, predominantly juniors and seniors met to discuss the course. Dr. Joe Washington, a professor of Afro-American studies at UVA, also attended the meeting. Dr. Washington served in an authority on

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[347] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 48; "Black Students Present Program on Black Culture at Local Church," *Lanetimes* (September 22, 1970).

[348] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 48; "Va. Council on Human Relations Probes Education," *Lanetimes* (October 1, 1970).

topic. Students expressed displeasure with the current situation where a single lesson per week is beamed into the classroom via the television. "Sylvia Blakey added that the lack of exchange between the T.V. Instructor and the students as well as the inability of the classroom teacher to add to the lesson (due to a lack of knowledge on the subject) is a great fault" noted the *Lanetimes*. During the meeting, students also asked about the potential of having an American History textbook where the Black History was included "as a natural part of American History." Other students asked about the possibility of an elective Black culture course constituted of literature, dance, and music. Finally, the students discussed finding Black teachers for the course and financial issues associated with creating these courses.

In the summer of 1971, the Charlottesville City Schools decided to add a Black Studies course. When the *Lanetimes* announced the course, they also offered a range of student options. One student (who asked to have his or her name withheld) observed, "It's the one course that students have been pushing for." Nancy Allen contended, "I think it will improve race relationships because it will develop more understanding between the races." Michael Lewis noted, "I don't think too many people are taking it and that more people of different races need to take it." Bernadette Whitsett was hopeful about the course's impact on the school, "I feel it's a step in the right direction in improving race relations." Susan Chiles asserted, "It's a good idea, and every school should have one." And Clarence Wells claimed, "The course within itself is a really good course and to make it, you've got to really work hard."[349]

[349] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 48; "Sherman Teaches First Black Studies Course," *Lanetimes* (September 23, 1971).

Black Studies Elective Course

The protests and meetings sponsored by the VHCR eventually yielded curricular changes at Lane. During the 1971-1972 school year, Lane offered the Black Studies elective course. The school's yearbook described the class as "a course enveloping the black man's history, culture, and literature." Sherman's course aimed to "develop an appreciation of blackness." Sherman drew upon two main texts for the course: John Hope Franklin's *From Slavery to Freedom*[350] and William Katz's *Eyewitness: The Negro in American History*.[351] To teach the course, he used "visual aids, individual research, and group discussions." In describing the course's reception, the yearbook declares, "For many years a controversial issue, Black Studies has been highly praised and unanimously accepted as a worthwhile."[352] Despite agreeing to the student demands including the Black Studies course, Dr. Rushton also implemented several other reforms. Dr. Rushton requested to have a police officer, in street clothes, stationed in LHS's school hallways and to have uniformed police officers patrol the school's campus throughout the day. The Charlottesville City Police met both requests. Dr. Rushton also requested background from LHS teachers on the students involved in the boycott including their "grades, cooperativeness, and attitudes toward school, disciplinary history, and behavior in

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[350] John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans, 3rd Edition* (New York: Knopf, 1967).

[351] William Loren Katz, *Eyewitnesses: The Negro in American History* (New York: Pittman Publishing, 1968). Katz's textbook was accompanied by a teachers guide. The guide was described by Katz as "a basic handbook for schools and libraries—up to date bibliographic and audio-visual information, a core reference library, and a complete plan for integrating American history curriculums.

[352] Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, Lane High School, *The Link*, 1972, 210-211.

class."[353] This surveillance would only expand to include more African American students over time. And this would continue even as the Charlottesville City Schools closed Lane High School and built Charlottesville High School north of the city. So, while African American students received a course that centered their experience, the school district sought to contain any activism that might arise from the course.

Sherman, during the first year, drew upon two main course texts. He used John Hope Franklin's third edition of *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans*. The revised edition marked the twentieth anniversary of the book's first edition. In the preface to the third edition, Franklin wrote, "I feel constrained to add that even the revolutionary developments of the last decade should not obscure the fact that this is essentially a history and not a contemporary tract. Therefore, these developments have been valuable for the historians not only in themselves but also in the new perspectives they provide as one looks at past, even remote events. These new perspectives are reflected in some of the revisions of the earlier parts of the book."[354] Franklin's book offered a critical and comprehensive account of the African American experience beginning with Africa and ending with the Civil Rights Movement. It spends three chapters tracing life in Africa before moving onto the slavery trade. On Virginia, Franklin spotlights topics such as: slavery, slave codes, runaway slaves, Black schools, the slave trade, slave prices, slave revolts, slaves in factories, freed Blacks, Black delegates to the constitutional convention, colonization societies, Black office holders,

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[353] Anna Holden, *The Bus Stops Here: A Study of School Desegregation in Three Cities* (New York: Agathon Press Inc., 1974), 88-89.

[354] John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), iii.

election laws that hurt Black, election riots, Black colleges, and Virginia Union college.[355]

To supplement the secondary literature provided within the pages of Franklin's book, Sherman also drew upon William Loren Katz's *Eyewitness: The Negro in American History*. The book offered an array of primary source materials. Katz's research for the book started as a high school student in the early 1940s. Katz writes, "This book began to take shape many years before the Negro revolution of the 1960s. Although it began in my high school days during World War II, this growing interest took on a deeper meaning when in 1952 when I began teaching secondary school American history." Of the materials he was exposed to as a student, Katz observed, "School texts distorted the Negro's part in our history, picturing him as contented under slavery and bewildered by freedom."[356] On the one hand, he aims to offer a corrective narrative. On the other hand, he attempts "to tell this fascinating American story in unadorned prose, avoiding moral preaching or special pleading."[357]

Upon graduation from high school, Katz earned a bachelor's degree in history from Syracuse University and a master's degree in secondary education from New York University. Beginning in 1952, Katz taught in the New York City Public Schools and in a "well-known racially integrated school system of Greenburgh District in Hartsdale, New York." During his career in education, he continued conducting original research in archival collections to create his curricular materials. Katz conducted research during the summer at the National Archives, the Library of Congress, Howard University's

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[355] Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom*, index xli.

[356] William Loren Katz, *Eyewitness: The Negro in American History* (New York: Pittman Publishing Corporation, 1968), vii.

[357] Katz, *Eyewitness*, ix.

Moorland-Springarn Collection, and the Schomburg branch of the New York Public Library. The New York State Education Department and New World Foundation provided grant funding to support Katz's research. In addition to his career in the classroom, Katz "served as a consultant to the New York State Department of Education and to President Kennedy's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development."[358]

Katz's *Eyewitness* included nineteen chapters. Each chapter started with a brief overview of the topic followed by several eyewitness accounts (primary sources). The book commences with "The Opening of New Worlds" or the first contact between Europeans, Native Americans, and Africans. Katz writes, "For all who came to these shores, America was a land of freedom, hope, and opportunity. For all—except the Negro. He came in chains and for hundreds of years had to fight just to be free. With few friends, and against almost hopeless odds, black men and women struggled to stay alive, and to share in the American dream of human dignity and justice for all."[359] In addition to the *Eyewitness* textbook, Katz also wrote an accompanying teacher guide. In guide's preface, Katz writes, "The distortion of the Negro's past has always had a purpose. The assertion that the Negro has no history worth mentioning is basic to the theory that he has no humanity worth defending. Deliberate misinformation has been used to justify slavery and discrimination."[360] Katz utilized an integrationist approach to centering the African American experience in American History. Rather than offering a different chronological and topical framework, Katz drew upon the prevailing frameworks to provide a "full

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[358] William Loren Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968), 1; http://williamlkatz.com/bio/

[359] Katz, *Eyewitness*, 3.

[360] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 6.

scale integration of Negro contributions into the existing American history course of study."[361]

In chapter one, Katz provides teachers with the philosophy underpinning his approach. When he started teaching, his principal only acknowledged the African American experience during Negro History Week each February. The single lesson approach, according to Katz, possessed several defects. First, the interruption of the "regular" curriculum and focus on African Americans in a single week gave the impression to all students that their contributions to American history were small and superficial.[362] Second, this approach "segregated the Negro again, honoring him in grand isolation."[363] In contrast, Katz's approach was "to not focus on Negro leaders alone" and to make "the teaching of American Negro history a lesson-by-lesson operation." To support teachers, Katz provided "significant information, fundamental research materials, audio-visual aids, and some suggestions about basic methodology."[364] Katz understood that the teacher's approach mattered just as much as the curriculum and pedagogy. He asserted, "If a teacher feels that teaching about the Negro is unnecessary or harmful, or if he simply resents using the word 'Negro' in his class, his efforts will meet little success. At the same time, an educator must realize that more positive attitudes on his part will not win over a hostile class, interest each student, or lower the dropout rate."[365] In other words, teachers must be comfortable engaging the African American experience but comfort and a positive affect will not be enough to be successful. Based on his teaching

[361] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 9.
[362] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 16.
[363] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 16.
[364] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 16.
[365] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 16.

experience and conversations with other educators, Katz offers several other pieces of advice for teachers hoping to integrate his material within their courses.

Katz told teachers to anticipate resistance from all students. Since all students have been awash in white supremacy throughout their lives, they will not easily abandoned their preconceived notions. He contends, "Textbooks and mass media have hitherto conveyed (very effectively, too) a degrading picture of the Negro's past. The student, Negro or white, will not easily abandon his view of Africa as a land of jungles and savages."[366] Katz also cautions teachers against offering a sensationalized account of racial oppression. He asserts, "It is not necessary for an eighth grade class to learn the worst horrors of the slave trade or the details of slave-breeding in ante-bellum Virginia. Vivid accounts of lynchings do not, as intended, arouse sympathy for the victims but rather bring about revulsion morbid interest on the part of the student listener."[367] Instead, he believes students should be taught about the mundane and ongoing abuse and riots that African Americans subject to throughout American history. He also exhorts teachers to provide a more robust and nuanced narrative about the African American experience. He claims, "At the same time a teacher presents the story of the Negro's oppression, he should also tell how the Negro resisted that oppression.' Highlighting African American's agency corrects the narrative of the "happy slave" and other myth-making pushed forth by other curriculum materials. Katz also pushes teachers to think about which African Americans are being centered within the course narrative. He notes, "If

[366] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 16-17.
[367] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 17.

students learn only about outstanding Negros they will be mystified by the problems of today's black ghettos" and "Our heroes should not obscure our common people."[368]

Katz also addresses the issue of language around race and racism. He advocates for racially conscious approach as opposed to colorblindness. He asserts, "Although our texts frequently fail to mention the national or racial background of many who have contributed to America, this neglect should not continue. Questions of race and racism have played a significant part in American life and have influenced our teaching methods and materials."[369] The need to address race and racism, according to Katz, stems from a need to prepare students for citizenship. "In training our students for good citizenship," Katz observes, "we must emphasize both the negative role racism has played in our history and the contributions made by America's many minorities."[370]Finally, Katz makes the case for all students learning about the African American experience. He claims, "White people need to know the part the Negro has played in the development of America and the making of its institutions. Since the Negro's self-image is so much a result of white America's views of him and his capacities, it is basic that whites be exposed to the major historical truths about the Negro in Africa and America."[371] In making the case for studying the African American experience, Katz makes references W.E.B. Du Bois concept of "double-consciousness."[372]

In addition to providing teachers with overarching principles for integrating his book into the curricula, he also provides an annotated bibliography for teachers to bolster their own understanding. For the basic teacher reference library, Katz lists over thirty

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[368] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 17-18.
[369] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 18-19.
[370] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 19.
[371] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 19.
[372] W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*

titles including: John Hope Franklin's *From Slavery to Freedom*, Rayford W. Logan's *The Negro in the United States,* August Meier and Elliot M. Rudwick's *From Plantation to Ghetto,* and Carter G. Woodson's *The Story of the Negro Retold* and *Negro Makers of History*.[373] The resources are followed by a list of "Specific Teaching Goals." Regarding teaching goals related to understanding the Civil Rights Movement, Katz wants teachers to focus on two specific corrective content goals. First, he calls for students to understand that "the civil rights drive began long before the 1960s." In other words, he advocates for a more simplified approach of what historian Jacquelyn Dowd Hall calls "the long Civil Rights Movement."[374] Second, he pushes for students to understand that "the fight for equal rights is a reform movement aimed at the democratization of American life and the completion of America's promise of freedom for all."[375]

Franklin's *From Slavery to Freedom* and Katz's *Eyewitnesss* combined to provide a critical perspective on American history. Students in this course were exposed to a history that had been hidden. And, given the presence of these texts in the school yearbook, the school's administration and, more than likely, the division's administration was aware of these text's inclusion in the course. Sherman's course focused on the African American experience from a historical perspective for most of the course. However, both the course texts tackled a relatively recent phenomenon—the Civil Rights Revolution.

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[373] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 21-29.

[374] See Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past."

[375] Katz, *Teachers' Guide to American Negro History*, 30.

Teaching the Civil Rights Revolution

Katz and Franklin both spend a chapter on the Civil Rights Movement. Katz refers to it as "America's Civil Rights Revolution," while Franklin refers to it as the "Negro Revolution."[376] The final chapter covers the Civil Rights Movement. In particular, Katz spotlights the *Brown* decision, the Montgomery Bus Boycott, and the March on Washington.[377] Katz's introduction to this chapter cites W.E.B. Du Bois and notes that on the day he died, "hundreds of thousands of Americans were moving toward Washington, D.C to voice their protest against all color-lines in the United States."[378] Those protesters, Katz asserts, "were taking part in a long historic process, deeply embedded in their nation's history. And they were contributing to the fulfillment of America's commitment to equal justice for all."[379]

The eyewitness accounts for the Civil Rights Revolution include the NAACP's response to the *Brown* decision and recollections from the Little Rock students. The student recollections are derived from a broadcast segment by Mrs. Jorunn Ricketts, a Norwegian correspondent. Three white female students, one white male, one African American male, and one African American female were interviewed.[380] In response to a question from Mrs. Ricketts about how the troops ended up at Central High School, Ernest Green, the African American young man, responds, "It is because our government—our state government—went against the federal law…Our country is set up so that we have forty-eight states and no one state has the ability to overrule our nation's government. I thought that was what our country was built around. I mean, that is why

[376] Katz, *Eyewitness*, xix.
[377] Katz, *Eyewitness*, xix.
[378] Katz, *Eyewitness*, 474.
[379] Katz, *Eyewitness*, 474.
[380] Katz, *Eyewitness*, 496.

we fight. We fought in World War II together—the fellows that I know died in World War II, they died in the Korean War. I mean, why should my friends get out there and die for a cause called 'democracy' when I can't exercise my rights—tell me that."[381]

Katz includes a short passage from this interview. The Central High School students conducted several interviews during the school year. This selection, titled "Voices from Central High School," is significant for a few different reasons. First, a Norwegian correspondent conducted the interview. The book could have included any number of interviews with American journalists and correspondents. Selecting a foreign correspondent reveals how civil rights struggles such as school desegregation drew interest from international observers. Second, this interview focuses on the views of high school students just a decade removed from high school students who would have been exposed to this text. In other words, this interview centers the perspective of high school students from different racial groups at Central High. It is not hard to imagine the resonance such a source would have for high school students attending a desegregated high school such as Lane.

Franklin also addresses the crisis at Central High School. In the wake of the *Brown* decision, Franklin writes, "Taking their cue from the call for massive resistance by the Virginia Senator, Harry F. Byrd, all of the eleven states of the old Confederacy enacted interposition, nullification, or protest resolution against the Supreme Court decision in the school desegregation cases."[382] After spotlighting the role played by one of Virginia's senators and most prominent politicians, Franklin turns to Little Rock, Arkansas. "Not until President Eisenhower sent federal troops in response to the

[381] Katz, *Eyewitness*, 496.
[382] Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom*, 619.

governor's defiance of the court order did the Negro children gain admission to the school. The weeks and months of intimidation and harassment of the children on the part of the white students and their parents suggested how bitter and harsh the resistance would be." Such a passage would hit very close to home for the teachers and students sitting in a classroom and a building that had closed for a year in response to the *Brown* decision.[383]

The Fall of Black Studies at Lane

The Black Studies course continued to use the same curriculum resources. However, a different teacher taught it during each year of course's existence. After being taught by Sherman, Stanley Ryan, Diane Price, Lena Banks, and Celia Parrot taught the course in subsequent years.[384] Sherman taught two sections of the course—one during fifth period and the other during sixth period. In total, there were 37 students enrolled in the two class periods. After Anthony Sherman left Lane, Stanley Ryan took over teaching the Black Studies course. Ryan, originally from Brooklyn, New York, graduated from South Carolina State and was pursuing his masters degree at the University of Virginia. Ryan contended that Black Studies would be "effective" under his watch because he aimed "to cover various aspects of Black culture such as religion, music, the arts, folktales, and myths."[385]After teaching the Black Studies course and English courses for a year at Lane, Ryan left Lane and Charlottesville to teach freshman composition at the State University of New York at Albany. In January 1974, he returned to Lane to meet

[383] Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom*, 619-620.

[384] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 52; Judy Nye, "Hello Mrs. Banks," *Lanetimes* (January 17, 1974).

[385] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 49; "'Lane…A Better Place to Be' Says One of Lanes New Teachers" *Lanetimes* (September 28, 1972).

with Lane students, teachers, and administrators. He taught a lesson to Mrs. Banks's Black Studies class during his visit too.[386]

In April 1973, Clarice Jones penned a letter to the editor about the Black Studies course. Jones wrote, "I think that most of the students of Lane High School are letting a great opportunity of learning about Black history and culture slip through their fingers by not signing up for the magnificent Black History Course here at Lane. This year we have a good instructor (Mr. Ryan) and more books and materials than we've had in previous years. After fighting so long for Black Studies at Lane less than 25 people are enrolled in the class. Black students need this course more than the average white person because it teaches us so much about ourselves that will better enable us to really achieve a boarder sense of Black awareness."[387]

Jones cited several reasons for the decline in enrollment. "I've heard various reasons from Black students as to why they haven't enrolled in the class. Some include no room on the schedule and 'it's too hard'. To them I'd like to say there is no subject more relevant to your success in life as Black Studies should be. Most Black people go about life not really knowing anything about their past. How can you have any kind of self-identity if you don't know about or understand your history and culture? The phrase 'it's too hard' really upsets me even more because Black Studies is no harder than English, government or any other courses we have to take. We as a race are in no position

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[386] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 52; "Mr. Ryan Returns," *Lanetimes* (January 17, 1974).

[387] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 52; Clarice Jones, "Letter to the Editor," *Lanetimes* (April 19, 1973).

to pass by a course like this with a lazy and apathetic attitude."[388] Jones concluded by reminding students of the stakes. "Last year there were two classes of Black Studies, this year there is only one. After fighting for this very worthwhile class let's not let it be cancelled due to a lack of interest. This is a great opportunity to gain a knowledge of ourselves and our glorious heritage. Let's extend our sense of Black pride and Black awareness by taking a truly relevant course next year."[389]

Centering Blackness Beyond the Classroom

Alongside the Black Studies elective course, Lane High School also instituted themed weeks that centered the African American experience. For example, LHS hosted Black Awareness Week in 1970. The purpose of the week, according to African American student Scheryl Williams, was "make black and white students aware of black culture and heritage and to show the importance of black studies in the regular curriculum." Joyce Held helped Williams with publicity. Bobby Mitchell organized class conversations about the contributions of black men. Evelyn Boyd and Julia Reeves discussed literature exposure. During the week, there was an assembly featuring poetry, music, and speeches. James C. Green was a guest speaker. Green was an eighth and ninth grade teacher at Frederick Douglas High School. At Frederick Douglas, he conducted similar awareness programming and supervised the FD Club. The FD Club focused on the "remembering and understanding" of Frederick Douglas Green, a graduate student at Antioch University in Washington, D.C., discussed the importance of having Black

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[388] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 52; Clarice Jones, "Letter to the Editor," *Lanetimes* (April 19, 1973).

[389] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 51; Clarice Jones, "Letter to the Editor," *Lanetimes* (April 19, 1973).

Studies in the high school curriculum. Green was invited to Lane, in part, as a spokesman to describe "black frustration" at Lane. Green argued, "Revolution of a people is impossible unless people know of their land. Struggle is carried out by a series of programs like this at Lane and revolution is carried out by a series of struggles."[390] Throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s, Lane High School hosted these themed weeks

The Black Studies elective course provided a formalized ongoing exposure to the African American experience. However, the course was limited to less a hundred students. The themed weeks had the potential to reach more students albeit within a rather limited amount of time. Lane students had differing opinions about these weeks. And those opinions often fell along racial lines. African American student Clarence Wells contended, "I feel that we should not have just one week once a year to talk about Black History, but the that the history of the Black race should be something we learn about everyday." Wells then addressed the idea that Black History lack enough history to warrant study. "If the people who around saying that the black man has no history would just take the time to read, they would find out something a lot different. Everyone would be learning about all kinds of people, not just one week a year, but everyday. If we are going to be together in peace we must learn about the people we will be dealing with everyday."[391] In contrast, white students such as Keith Gordon felt that a week was

[390] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 51; Clarence Wells and Sarah Garman, "Black Culture Activities Hit Lane," *Lanetimes* (February 17, 1972).

[391] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 50; Clarence Wells, "Black Culture Week," *Lanetimes* (February 17, 1972).

enough. "It is during this week that the interest of the entire school can be focused on the proud history and future goals of the Black American."[392]

The establishment of the Black Studies elective course and theme weeks occurred against ongoing tension between students. In a *Lanetimes* article, white student Jay Ashby addressed racial tensions at Lane. He placed the blame on both sides. African Americans "are suspicious of whites who try to be friendly, because they've been 'solved' so many times by those same whites who talk behind their backs (Blacks must realize that sometimes when one is confused or angry, one will say something he doesn't mean, right?)." He also believed "Blacks are so caught up in trying to be Black that they consider any of their own people, that get chummy with whites to be Toms." Finally, he complains about militant Blacks who act like the "Black KKK."[393] On the other side, he cited a lack of understanding from the white perspective. He mentions ignorance as one the biggest about the Black experience as one obstacle. However, the biggest obstacle in bringing together whites and blacks is "that whites cannot understand why Blacks blame them for the racist past. I guess Blacks don't see any improvement so they feel bitter and angry; which does nothing but breed it among the whites. (What a problem we have!).[394] Ashby ends on, what he seems to believe, a positive note. He lists a number of things in common including the desire for freedom and equality alongside the observation that all students "want friends, want peace, want love, despise the devil, worship the same God,

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[392] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 50; Keith Gordon, "Counter-Point," *Lanetimes* (February 17, 1972).

[393] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 50; Jay Ashby, "Prejudice Afflicts Both Races," *Lanetimes* (February 17, 1972).

[394] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 50; Jay Ashby, "Prejudice Afflicts Both Races," *Lanetimes* (February 17, 1972).

go to the same school, and we're all humans. Then, he contends, "The only place we're different is in our minds. We can only change that if we want to. Each us must go halfway and meet each other in the middle. But like I said, only if we want to."[395]

Stevie Morton, an African American student, responded to Ashby in an editorial published three weeks later. "All the black kids are asking for from the white kids at this school and across the country is simply respect and understanding," Morton observed, "If you respect me and my blackness and I respect you and your whiteness, then Lane would be a better place to come during the day for both you and me," Morton concluded by noting the incongruence between the demands of white students and African American students at Lane. "Black people in general want freedom. Freedom is essential to life. Freedom is essential to the development of the human being. If we don't want freedom, we can never expect justice and equality; only after we have it, do justice and equality become a reality."[396] Morton seems to be implying that white students and, in general, whites in the United States already possess freedom. African Americans were still struggling for freedom.

A few months after Morton's editorial, conflict erupted between students beyond the paper. In March 1972, Lane held a Black Culture assembly. During the assembly, approximately 50 to 100 white students walked out. As a result, "The Black students felt insulted, and they wanted something done to the students who had walked out. So Wednesday before first lunch most of the Black students went outside, then to the

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[395] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 50;Jay Ashby, "Prejudice Afflicts Both Races," *Lanetimes* (February 17, 1972).

[396] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 50; Stevie Morton, "Blackness-Whiteness," *Lanetimes* (March 9, 1972).

auditorium for the rest of the afternoon." In response, Principal Heugal convened an advisory group composed of fifteen black students and fifteen white students to discuss a possible solution. No solution was agreed upon by the meeting's end.[397] The next day, African American students continued to demand a response from Principal Heugel. "Instead of going to class, the Black students went to the auditorium and stayed there while some students talked with Mr. Huegel. About 2:30 the students in the auditorium left school." On Friday, Heugel decided to close school for all students. Heugel described the move as a "cooling off period." On the incident, the *Lanetimes* contended "The principal at Lane, along with other school officials, were under a great deal of pressure. Many students regarded their actions as being unfair and totally disregarded their authority."[398]

Eventually, the Charlottesville City School board handled the conflict. On Saturday, March 11, 1972, the board rendered their decision. "The decision was not to punish the White students or the Blacks." In other words, the board said that both sides are were at fault. The *Lanetimes* asserted, "The decision made was expected and many people feel that it was for the best. In the recognition of Black History Week, we all must wonder if the people in America will ever be able to accept it."[399] In the aftermath of the decision, a committee was formed at Lane. The committee, the Evaluation of Observing Special Occasions and Assemblies, offered a report in the May 11th edition of *Lanetimes*.

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[397] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 50; "Black History Week Makes Lane History," *Lanetimes* (March 23, 1972).

[398] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 50; "Black History Week Makes Lane History," *Lanetimes* (March 23, 1972).

[399] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 50; "Black History Week Makes Lane History," *Lanetimes* (March 23, 1972).

The report included feelings from students: "(1) Negro History Week provides an opportunity tot focus attention on the achievements of the Black by reflection on their cultural and ethnic contributions; by developing responsiveness and knowledge about that part of American culture which is uniquely Black; and by expanding communication among the races for the purposes of achieving understanding and promoting mutual respect as human beings; (2) Black students are given an opportunity to present a program of their own (3) White students need an awareness that their Black peers have a unique heritage and that Blacks have made many contributions to American society (4) Misconceptions about races are lessened by educational activities (5) This obserservance helps to restore the balance of history and to counteract the stifling of the past. (6) Special emphasis on Black heritage is needed until cultural integration is achieved (7) The benefits of observing Negro History Week are difficult to define because each individuals brings to the observance a different set of values."[400]

Students expressed strong opinions about the programming for Black History Week. "The poll indicated very few negative attitudes toward 'Lift Every Voice and Sing" as the Negro Anthem. Strong objections were expressed, however, to the stage introduction and the identification of this song as 'The Black National Anthem,' and, in that context, to the request to stand and sing."[401] In other words, students had little issue with having the song represented; however, they did not feel obligated to fully respect the song and its meaning within the context of the United States. The committee's report

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[400] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 50; "Committee Views Racial Troubles at Lane," *Lanetimes* (May 11, 1972).

[401] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 50; "Committee Views Racial Troubles at Lane," *Lanetimes* (May 11, 1972).

included several recommendations, too. For the Black History Week to be a benefit to the school: (1) Individual classes in all subject area should integrate Black accomplishments throughout the year rather than have a concentration on just one week. (2) Programs and observances should be non-inflammatory in production, if positive reactions are expected. (3) Radical ideas should be avoided in large group assemblies unless there has been adequate preparation to insure an appreciation of these concepts (4) Uncomplimentary epithets and abrasive language elicit fiery reactions and should be avoided (5) The culture of Blacks rather than protest of abuse should be the area of concentration. (6) Materials which promote harmony should be selected."[402]

Subsequent themed weeks and celebrations were informed by these recommendations and opinions. For example, Ms. Diane Price and Mrs. Lena Banks, alongside students organized, Black Culture Week in 1974. The week took place from February 11-15. The theme was "We came, We saw, We Conquer." They planned to have speakers with open attendance on Monday, panel discussions for all students on Tuesday and Wednesday, and a show to be held in two parts on Thursday and Friday.[403] Students heard from a range of speakers and took part in panels about topics near and far. On Tuesday, students discussed whether school integration was a success or failure and whether Black Culture Week was a helpful event or hindrance. Jane Frier, Mamie Estes, Cindy Williams, Regina Brown, Kathy Smith, Leslie Crickenberger, Margaret Vaughn, and Selma Waffle participated on a panel. On Wednesday, students discussed

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[402] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 50; "Committee Views Racial Troubles at Lane," *Lanetimes* (May 11, 1972).

[403] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 52; "Culture Week on its Way," *Lanetimes* (February 7, 1974).

"communication problems between the races at Lane." The students who participated in that discussion included Mark Scott, Pam Scott, Julia Turner, Rennie Johnson, Dot Shelton, Bernard Whitsett, and Thomas Dickerson with Rene Johnson serving as the discussion moderator."[404] An assembly capped the week off. It included skits, a fashion show, and a dance program modeled on "Soul Train." The assembly concluded with students singing the Black National Anthem "Lift Every Voice and Sing."[405]

After Black Culture Week concluded, an editorial offered an assessment of the week. Overall, the editorial felt the week was successful. "Everything seemed to go smoothly with the exception of a Rap Session or two. During these sessions the students spoke freely and many points of view were heard, but sometimes things got a little out of hand and off subject. There was too much bickering about things like who was sitting next to who and who ate with who, etc. creating friction when there was no point to it."[406] The editorial, after noting some of the challenges, moved to highlighting the positions and larger significance of the week's events. In particular, the editorial discussed why there's a need for the week at all. "The speakers, panels and productions gave students a unique opportunity to learn about what was left out of their history courses. As enjoyable as it is, Black Culture Week should be necessary. It should be part of all American and Virginia history courses. Black culture is a part of every American's culture. The general attitude seems to be Black students telling about their private history, and white students

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[404] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 52; David Holiday, "Black Culture Week a Success: Many Different Events Held," *Lanetimes* (February 21, 1974).

[405] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 52; David Holiday, "Black Culture Week a Success: Final Assembly," *Lanetimes* (February 21, 1974).

[406] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 52; "Editorial," *Lanetimes* (February 21, 1974).

looking at it as something removed from their own history. But the whole mess is *American* history, and it all happened at the same time. If people could take some of their stubborn racial pride and stick it to their national pride, things might straighten out."[407]

Conclusion

Throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s, African American teachers and students made significant and ongoing attempts to center the Black experience within the walls of Lane High School. Without a critical mass of African American teachers, African American students led the push for the inclusion of the Black experience through the school's curriculum and pedagogy. While Dr. Toppin's course may have left much to be desired from a pedagogical standpoint, it represented a strong first step toward reforming the school's curriculum. Students, supported by teachers and community members, kept pushing the school's teachers and administrators to create a Black Studies course elective. As a result, the newly created Black Studies program at the University of Virginia, the city possessed the expertise and people to make the Black Studies course a reality at Lane.

As the curriculum and, and more importantly, pedagogy improved with Anthony Sherman at its helm, the course's existence carved out an important Black space in an otherwise predominantly white space. When subsequent teachers took over for Sherman, they had a strong foundation from which to teach and expand the course depending on their own interests. Teacher turnover proved to be an obstacle for maintaining the course's quality, however. In each year of its existence, a different teacher taught the course. Since most of the teachers were also pursuing graduate study at the University of

[407] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, VA, volume 52; "Editorial," *Lanetimes* (February 21, 1974).

Virginia, there was little chance for continuity. Consequently, none of the teachers ever really developed a following amongst the student body. With only tepid support from the school's administration and the division's administration, the course had little chance of survival when Lane closed in the spring of 1974.

When Charlottesville High School opened in the fall, Black Studies was absent in the course catalog. With Lane High School's closure, the Charlottesville City School board viewed the transition as an opportunity to overhaul the school's curriculum and pedagogy. Lane students were aware of the preparations occurring at Charlottesville High School under the supervision of Principal Huegal. Sherry Crannis, a student on the Lane High School Student Review Board, wrote, "Charlottesville High will thus be three schools in one school. Within all this is bound to be something to please everyone. The school will have the facilities to carry out these plans. You will no longer be cramped into too small [a] room or a stuffy classroom, when the front lawn could serve as a classroom. The average students [sic] will spend his time all over the building, not just in one school."[408] In particular, she believed the new model would help keep students from dropping out. "With this new school, hopefully the dropout rate should drop. Along with individual instruction, where the student would be a person and not a number, there is something for everyone—not just pot luck. Actually the first few years will be experimental. Few schools have adopted the system which we are about to undertake."[409]

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[408] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 52; Sherry Crannis "CHS: Three Schools in One," *Lanetimes* (January 17, 1974).

[409] Lanetimes, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va, volume 52; Sherry Crannis "CHS: Three Schools in One," *Lanetimes* (January 17, 1974).

Leaving Lane behind and starting anew at Charlottesville had great potential. However, many of the same issues would continue to plague the city's new high school.

EPILOGUE

"DINOSAUR BONES IN THE CLOSET"

"For Florence—1984

She moved among us, quiet and contained,
Always bearing herself with natural grace
As one who has accepted a duty
And acknowledged its fitness and her own
Dedication to the highest of callings—
To teach, to lead, and to inspire.
Her voice soft and gentle
As the murmur of quiet water
Spoke hope to the disheartened,
Sympathy to the despairing,
Encouragement to the timid and slow.
So unobtrusively, so modestly she moved
Among us, so graciously, so serenely
Discharging her duties, neither complaining
Of the drudgery and the load, nor
Gloating at accomplishment, promotion,
And honor; one might suppose
Her going would hardly be noticed
If one were naive enough to believe
The rose could be complete without love."

-Poem written by the English Department at Charlottesville High School to honor Florence Coleman Bryant's career in the Charlottesville City Schools, 1984.[410]

As this dissertation has revealed, the story of African American teachers' and students' involvement in the long Civil Rights Movement did not begin or end with the "Charlottesville Twelve." Indeed, since Lane High School's closure and Charlottesville High School's opening in 1974, African American's persistence and white resistance has endured. During an oral history interview in January 2018, Berdell Fleming reflected on her many years living, learning, teaching, and serving in Charlottesville. At one point during the interview, she offered her observations on the white supremacist rallies in the city on August 11 and 12, 2017. Fleming was not surprised at all by the rallies. She observed, "We've had many problems here" and referred to phrase about Charlottesville uttered by her mother, Gladys McCoy. Gladys McCoy, a teacher at Burley High School and Lane High School, used to say that Charlottesville has "big dinosaur bones in the closet and one day they're going to step out and have flesh on them."[411] Those dinosaur bones have taken on flesh in Charlottesville on a few different occasions since the opening of Charlottesville High School.

Although Charlottesville has a historical plaque commemorating the Charlottesville Twelve, it does not have one for the events of March 4 and 5, 1984. On Monday, March 5, Charlottesville High School (CHS) closed for the day. Neither a holiday nor snow were to blame. Instead, an article in the *Knighttimes*, school's student newspaper, caused the closure. The article, "Grading Black-White Relations: 17 Years

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[410] Florence C. Bryant, *Memoirs of a Country Girl* (New York: Vantage Press, 1988) 182.

[411] Oral history interview with Berdell Fleming by Derrick Alridge and Chenyu Wang (January 29, 2018), Curry School of Education, Charlottesville, VA.

After Integration," included several racist quotes from anonymous white students. A white sophomore student claimed that the school's African Americans "hang around the hall. They just come to get heat. They just mess around…come to school 'cause they have nothing else to do…they just come to smoke herb and all that stuff." Another white student quoted in the article claimed that African American students "like to start fights." Whether or not the school newspaper's advisor actually read the article, it was approved for publication. A day after the article was published, students, teachers, and administrators arrived to the school and found racist epithets spray-painted on the parking lot surface. Fights broke out between students throughout the morning. After bookcases were overturned in the library and several students refused to vacate the school buses in front of the school, administrators called the police. Although the police did not arrest anyone, the administrators decided by 11 a.m. to close school for the day. Teachers and administrators stayed at school in the afternoon to discuss the situation and decide how to handle it.[412]

The following day, teachers and administrators met with students in an extended first period. The previous day's incident was discussed. In evaluating the first period conversations, David Garrett, CHS's principal claimed, "They [the students] were still quite upset. There were some harsh words in some of the classes." While the majority of the 1400 student body attended their first period, 150 students—who refused to attend the morning sessions—went to the school's gym with various adults from the school and community to discuss racism at CHS. Garrett said the focal point of the gym discussion

[412] "Charlottesville High Reopens as Racial Tension Eases," *The Washington Post*, March 7, 1984, accessed June 4, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1984/03/07/charlottesville-high-reopens-as-racial-tension-eases/d32f7564-c5ed-43d7-8b8a-470a4e52fafd/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.48a6384711b4

was "handling racial problems without violence." Alicia Lugo, the Charlottesville City School Board chairman, told the local media that school officials planned to create a faculty and student review board to avoid future incidents. The responses by CHS's administrators and the school board may have quelled tensions in the short term, but the article and its response manifested deeper and longstanding issues related to the history of African American secondary education in the Charlottesville City Schools.[413]

Florence Coleman Bryant, a former Jefferson High School and Jackson P. Burley High School teacher, stood in the middle of the controversy. After spending several decades in the classroom, Bryant became the vice principal at Charlottesville High School in 1979.[414] In reflecting on the situation years later, Bryant writes, "I must admit that I was not proud of my reactions during the height of racial disturbance at Charlottesville High. More than once I, who had a reputation of remaining cool, calm, and collected under all circumstances, became emotional and strident in my attempt to make some sense of the sudden explosive situation. I had never been directly confronted with a similar situation. I had gone through the trying period of school desegregation with my children, but I gave them my support in their efforts to cope with their hostile environment primarily at home."[415] Bryant witnessed firsthand the changes and continuities in high school education in Charlottesville as a teacher, parent, and administrator. However, her position as an administrator placed her in a difficult position

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[413] "Charlottesville High Reopens as Racial Tension Eases," *The Washington Post*, March 7, 1984, accessed June 4, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1984/03/07/charlottesville-high-reopens-as-racial-tension-eases/d32f7564-c5ed-43d7-8b8a-470a4e52fafd/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.48a6384711b4

[414] Bryant, *Memoirs of a Country Girl*, 166.

[415] Bryant, *Memoirs of a Country Girl*, 178-179.

from which to respond to navigate and respond to the situation at Charlottesville High School.

Overall, Bryant's response to the situation reflected her multiple identities within the school and the community. She writes, "I felt mostly angry with myself because I failed to detect the degree of pent-up frustrations the students harbored by not having their needs adequately met at Charlottesville High. I felt caught between my position as an administrator, who needed to defend the integrity of the school's program, and my position as a black person, who needed to defend the legitimacy of the black students' perceptions of racism and inequality at Charlottesville High. I felt totally ineffectual on both counts."[416] While Bryant took personal responsibility for the situation, the Charlottesville City Schools placed her in a situation where she would be caught between those two worlds. Bryant did not seek out the vice-principal position. The Charlottesville City Schools sought her out. During school desegregation across the county, the number of African American administrators plummeted. During the 1970s and 1980s, though, school districts were seeking out a select number of African Americans to serve as administrators.

Bryant aimed to do everything in her power to reach all students at Charlottesville High School. She observes, "I knew that the school board and the school administration had continuously sought ways to raise motivational levels of the students and to encourage all students to develop their potentials to the fullest. Many special programs had been implemented, especially to raise the achievement levels of underachievers, but obviously the success in that regard had not been fully attained. On the other hand, I was equally sure that, because racism was so deeply ingrained in the fabric of the American

[416] Bryant, *Memoirs of a Country Girl*, 179.

society, Charlottesville High School could not possibly have been immune."[417] In retrospect, Bryant realized both the limits of her capacity to shape change and the enduring nature of racism in the United States. Becoming the vice-principal and developing programs for Charlottesville High School could help students who underachieved. However, Bryant was unable to anticipate when and how the dinosaur bones in Charlottesville's closet would take on flesh.

Due to several factors, including the race riot, Bryant decided to retire at the end of the 1984 school year. "Education in the United States was at somewhat of a crossroad," Bryant remembers, "Educators and educational institutions were responding to a report, published in 1983 by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, entitled 'A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform." The report had given a scathing critique of the state of education in the country. In addition, the Virginia State Department of Education had stepped up its enforcement of state-mandated Standards of Quality; new certification standards for teachers and stiffer graduation requirements for evaluating educational personnel were being urged from all quarters.[418] From the first day she started at Jefferson High School until her last day at Charlottesville High School, Bryant observed the full contours of change in American public schooling during the twentieth century.

When she started her career at the Jefferson School, she had all African American colleagues and taught only African American students. At segregated Jefferson High School, she possessed fewer tangible resources from the Charlottesville City Schools. The lack of resources, though, came with a great deal of autonomy. And Bryant, like her

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[417] Bryant, *Memoirs of a Country Girl*, 179.
[418] Bryant, *Memoirs of a Country Girl*, 182-183.

colleagues at Jefferson and Burley High School, leveraged that autonomy to fight for and foster educational equity in unequal educational spaces. When school desegregation occurred at full tilt in the mid-1960s, the white architects of African American education provided a similar space for white and African American students. Similar did not mean inequitable, though. And it also meant that white elites would do everything in their power to disrupt African American life within and beyond the classroom.

Remembering and engaging with the dinosaur bones in the closet with determine whether Charlottesville and the Charlottesville City Schools will make progress towards educational equity in the future. Trying to forget them will only ensure their preservation.

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