

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document: COUNTERING THE MASTER NARRATIVE:  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE  
ALTERNATIVE BLACK CURRICULUM IN  
SOCIAL STUDIES, 1890-1940

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and Leadership

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the development of the alternative black curriculum in social studies from 1890-1940. W.E.B. Du Bois and Carter G. Woodson worked in collaboration with women educators Nannie H. Burroughs and Anna Julia Cooper to create an alternative black curriculum that would support the intellectual growth of black children. There is a growing body of work, initially articulated by male scholars, that demonstrates the basic principles of the alternative black curriculum, a curriculum that reinterprets dominant narratives in US and world history about the African and African-American experience. My study illustrates how this curriculum was in many ways supplemented and even furthered by an ongoing dialogue with the pedagogical work of African-American women school founders, administrators, librarians, and teachers. Embracing both a critical race theory and integrated gender framework, an analysis of the alternative black

curriculum will deepen and strengthen our understanding of the diverse contributors to social studies. Utilizing archival materials from the collection of Nannie Helen Burroughs in the Library of Congress, I document the ways in which women co-created an alternative black curriculum that challenged traditional narratives. I conducted a textual reading of the pageant, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, authored by Nannie H. Burroughs, in order to establish how black women contributed to the development of the alternative black curriculum. I also compared *When Truth Gets A Hearing* to W.E.B. Du Bois's pageant, *The Star of Ethiopia*. In addition, I developed a case study of the social studies curriculum for National Training School for Women and Girls (NTS), a school Nannie H. Burroughs established with the explicit purpose of developing and nurturing African-American girls. The intent of my case study is to document how the alternative black curriculum in social studies was implemented in a school setting, with the hope that it might serve as a blueprint that teachers of social studies can use to restructure the current social studies curriculum to include a more comprehensive understanding of black history.

Countering the Master Narrative: The Development of the Alternative Black  
Curriculum in Social Studies, 1890-1940

By

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I thank the archivists at the Library of Congress for being patient during the three summers I spent researching at the Library of Congress. My colleagues at A.

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## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	V
Table of Contents.....	Ix
List of Figures .....	X
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Narrative, Practice, Understanding: The Use of History in the Classroom .....	24
Chapter 3: Foundations and Understandings: The Architects of the Alternative Black Curriculum in Social Studies.....	50
Chapter 4: Examining the Alternative Black Curriculum in Social Studies: A Textual Reading of <i>When Truth Gets A Hearing</i> .....	84
Chapter 5: Operationalizing the Alternative Black Curriculum in Social Studies: A Case Study of the Social Studies Curriculum of the National Training School for Women and Girls .....	116
Conclusion .....	150
Appendix A: <i>When Truth Gets A Hearing</i> .....	159
Bibliography .....	215

## List of Figures

### Figures

1.1	A Tribute to Negro Airmen	145
1.2	Breaking Down Racial Prejudice	147
1.3	He Shall Come With Victory	148
1.4	Pageant Players, National Training School for Women and Girls	159

## Introduction

Researchers are often silent about the topic of race in the field of social studies. However, in the recent work of social studies scholars, such as Terrie Epstein, there has been an increasing focus on how the social construct of race has influenced the narrative that teachers are providing in the social studies classroom.<sup>1</sup> Through an examination of teachers' practices this newer research also focuses on how the dominant narrative affects students' experiences in the social studies classrooms. In this dissertation I will study early African American scholars who challenged the dominant Eurocentric historical narrative with a different narrative, an alternative black curriculum.

Throughout the remainder of this dissertation I will identify this counter-narrative as an "alternative black curriculum." The alternative black curriculum comprises both the content and pedagogy these educators used to implement the curriculum. In creating this work I will solidify "race" as an essential construct for creating knowledge in the social studies field. In the novel, *Invisible Man*, the nameless protagonist states:

Even my hibernations can be overdone, come to think of it. Perhaps that's my greatest social crime; I've overstayed my hibernation, since there's a possibility that even an invisible man has a socially responsible role to play.<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of my dissertation is to examine the development of an alternative black curriculum in schools from 1890-1940. By uncovering the

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<sup>1</sup> Terrie Epstein, *Interpreting National History: Race, Identity, and Pedagogy in Classrooms and Communities*. (New York: Routledge, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (New York: Random House, 1952), 579.

development of an alternative black curriculum in social studies I will attempt to generate a portrait of how African American educators, parents, activists, and historians created a space where the identity of African American students was nurtured in the face of racism.

First, I will consider my personal background, followed by a presentation of the conceptual framework. Next, as a backdrop to my dissertation, I will review how the scholarship of Carter G. Woodson and W.E.B. Du Bois challenged the dominant historical narrative of American history. The narrative generated by white male scholars tended to ignore the complexities of the African American experience in the United States. Woodson and Du Bois produced and promoted a richer narrative that challenged the limited scholarship of their respective peers during the Progressive era. Subsequently, I will examine how Woodson and Du Bois worked in collaboration with women educators, such as Nannie Helen Burroughs and Anna Julia Cooper, to create an alternative black curriculum in social studies which supported the intellectual growth of African American children. I will also consider how the use of historical artifacts served as a vehicle for transmitting the alternative black curriculum in school settings. For example, I will compare two historical pageants: *When Truth Gets A Hearing* by Nannie Helen Burroughs and *The Star of Ethiopia* by W.E.B. Du Bois. These pageants illustrated how educators used alternative curricula to challenge African American portrayals in United States and world history. Finally, I will present a historical case study of the National Training School for Women and Girls (NTS) funded by Nannie Helen Burroughs in order to analyze how a visionary school leader attempted to operationalize the alternative black curriculum in a school serving

African American girls. In doing so, I hope to create a narrative that sheds light on how African American girls developed a sense of identity and strength.

My research questions include the following:

- 1.) What is the master narrative in United States History and world history? How does the master narrative affect student identity in social studies?
- 2.) How did African American scholars and educators craft a response to the dominant narrative during the period 1890-1940?
- 3.) What was the role of historical black pageants in the development of the alternative black curriculum?
- 4.) How did Nannie Helen Burroughs attempt to operationalize the alternative black curriculum in her school?

### Personal Background

My knowledge of black history developed from an early age. My father, influenced by a community organizing tradition and Black Nationalism, conveyed to my sister and me the achievements of our family. In childhood I learned that my paternal grandfather, Donald G. Murray, served as the plaintiff in the case *Murray v. Pearson* (1936) and was the first African American person to integrate the University of Maryland School Of Law. My paternal great-grandfather, William W. Walker, served as a minister at the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in Baltimore. Another who served as a preacher at the Madison Avenue church was Hiram Rhodes Revels, one of two African Americans to serve in the United States Senate during Reconstruction.<sup>3</sup> Through each family story, my sister and I gained a sense of pride

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<sup>3</sup> William H. Britt, "Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church: Retrieving the Past, (1842-1997), (unpublished manuscript, 1997), 5.

in our own historical experience. Additionally, my mother designed a living space that was an affirmation of our self-image. I grew up surrounded by paintings of African American women weaving baskets, a representation of the Gullah-Geechee culture of South Carolina, and by photographs of the black community in Jacksonville, Florida taken by my great-uncle, Uncle Ellie Weems and my grandfather George H. Rice. My lived experience instilled pride in my African American heritage at an early age.

In elementary school I attended Bunker Hill, a predominantly African American public school in Washington D.C. Bunker Hill was an outstanding school where teachers nurtured my knowledge of African American history through assemblies, book reports, and comprehensive lessons on the black experience. For example, my gym teacher, Mr. Lewis, loved and respected the artist-activist, Paul Robeson. Our celebration of Mr. Robeson, a prominent African American whose legacy was tarnished during the McCarthy Era, took place in the backdrop of Reagan Era Cold War politics. My school worked in partnership with my home to nurture my growing love for history.

However, my experiences in middle school and high school were far different. The middle school I attended was racially mixed, while the high school I attended was predominantly white. In these new settings my experience with the narrative of social studies and history was one of invisibility. With the exception of discussions of slavery, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., my teachers were silent on the role of people of color in history. As a student of color who loved history, I felt disassociated from the content of my classes and at times felt angry and

disempowered because teachers presented distorted facts about African American history and culture.

In late adolescence I experienced a renaissance of my love for the history of people of color. One unique aspect of growing up as a member of Generation X was hip-hop and the knowledge generated by Public Enemy, Poor Righteous Teachers, Queen Latifah, De La Soul, and other hip-hop groups whose music had a distinctly Afrocentric flavor.<sup>4</sup> The music of the late 1990s prompted me to begin researching a past that had been muted during my high school years. Coupled with my major in government and politics with its focus on Latin-America and Africa, the gap between knowledge learned at school and home narrowed. For example, during my senior year at the University of Maryland I conducted my thesis research on the Civil Rights Movement. During the course of my research, I learned that the role played by women such as Ella Baker, Diane Nash, and Fannie Lou Hamer, was far more significant than I had previously learned in secondary education. As I gleaned this knowledge, I kept wondering why the complexities of the black experience had been ignored in my middle and high school years.

As I entered into my career as a social studies teacher, issues of narrative became central to my craft. In my first two years of teaching, as I struggled to manage my classroom, I adhered very closely to the curriculum provided to me by Montgomery County Public Schools in Rockville, Maryland. Overwhelmed by daily demands, I was unable to concentrate on the challenge of implementing a more multicultural curriculum. However, in my third year of teaching, I volunteered for the

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<sup>4</sup> Generation X is considered the generation born after the baby boomers (1945-1960) that grew up in the late 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s.

organization Teaching for Change.<sup>5</sup> My work with Teaching for Change gave me the policy experience to begin to rethink the narrative of social studies that I worked with in my own classroom. Ultimately, I served as a co-editor for the resource guide, *Putting the **Movement** Back Into Civil Rights Teaching*.<sup>6</sup> As co-editor I seriously reflected on the narrative I created in my own classroom. My co-editors and I engaged in deep, passionate discussions about the Civil Rights Movement. As a result of these dialogues my interest blossomed into how narrative affects the academic development of students in social studies. As I field tested lessons for the book, I discovered that students responded with excitement and curiosity when I presented a narrative focused on the accomplishments of ordinary citizens, young people, and women, in addition to the more traditional focus on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

### Conceptual Framework

Critical Race Theory (CRT) and an integrated framework on race and gender will provide me with a conceptual framework to shape my methodology. CRT emerged from the legal field in the early 1970s.<sup>7</sup> Critical race theorists such as Derrick Bell, Richard Delgado, and Kimberlee Crenshaw, articulated a specific set of principles to guide scholars in analyzing how minorities experience the legal system in the United States. CRT contains the following characteristics:

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<sup>5</sup> Teaching for Change is a non-profit organization promoting social and economic justice by offering multicultural resources such as books, videos and posters. Additional information about the organization is located at: [www.teachingforchange.org](http://www.teachingforchange.org).

<sup>6</sup> Deborah Menkart, Alana D. Murray, and Jenice L. View, eds., *Putting the **Movement** Back Into Civil Rights Teaching: A Resource Guide for Classrooms and Communities* (Washington, D.C: Teaching for Change, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> Gloria Ladson -Billings, "New Directions in Multicultural Education: Complexities, Boundaries, and Critical Race Theory," in *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*, eds., James A. Banks and Cherry A. McGee Banks (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 50-63.

- 1.) Scholarship focuses on the proposition that “racism is normal, not aberrant in American society,”<sup>8</sup>
- 2.) Scholarship focuses on the creation of “counter-narratives” and
- 3.) Scholarship focuses on the concept of “interest convergence.”

Derrick Bell argued that interest convergence occurs when societal demands for change by minority groups align with the interests of elites.<sup>9</sup>

Gloria Ladson-Billings believed that CRT is a powerful theoretical tool for explaining inequalities in education. She argued, “If we look at the way that public education is currently configured, it is possible to see that CRT can be a powerful experience for the sustained inquiry that people of color experience.”<sup>10</sup> Ladson-Billings posited that a CRT perspective is useful in framing research questions in social studies and addresses the silences about race and racism in the curriculum. For example, in examining how students approach understanding primary source documents, social studies education researchers tend to ignore or minimize the element of race. The CRT perspective would allow the same researcher to reframe the question with a focus on race. A CRT researcher would ask, How might a student’s race affect the knowledge and the schema he brings to the document? By employing the CRT perspective in his or her analysis, a researcher acknowledges the depth that race and racism have on the American psyche. The challenge of

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<sup>8</sup> Ladson Billings, *New Directions in Multicultural Education*, 58.

<sup>9</sup> Derrick Bell, “*Brown v. Board of Education* and the interest convergence dilemma,” *Harvard Law Review* 93: (Jan. 1980): 518-533.

<sup>10</sup> Gloria Ladson Billings, “Just what is Critical Race Theory and what is it doing in a nice field like education?” *Qualitative Studies in Education* 11 (1998):7-24.

employing a critical race perspective is that it can limit one's questions to race, without considering the impact of intersecting variables such as class and gender.

As I am interested in studying the experience of African American women using a theoretical perspective that combines critical race theory and feminism, I turned to the work of Evelyn Nakano Glenn, who developed an *integrated framework* to study the lives of women of color during the period of Reconstruction.<sup>11</sup> Nakano Glenn stated:

Within this integrated framework, race and gender share three key features as analytic concepts: (1) they are relational concepts whose construction involves (2) representation and material relations and (3) in which power is a constitutive element.<sup>12</sup>

Nakano Glenn's work provided a framework for me to analyze the work of Nannie Helen Burroughs with an eye to how the relational constructs of gender and race affected her leadership. In addition, this integrated framework allowed me to analyze my data in terms of how her leadership drove curricular decisions in her school.

### Research on African American Educational History

Educational historians created a body of knowledge that provides a portrait of schools during the period of Jim Crow segregation. Since the publication of James D. Anderson's *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* in 1988, there has been an explosion of works on African Americans and their schooling. I have selected those educational histories that address the intersections between segregated schools,

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<sup>11</sup> Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 12.

<sup>12</sup> Nakano Glenn, *Unequal Freedom*, 13.

the discipline of social studies, and black educators. These works are fundamental to understanding the nature of institutions that were responsible for educating African American children.

James D. Anderson described how African Americans created educational institutions during Reconstruction. Relying on Marxist theory, Anderson argued that the white planter class sought to create an educational system in the South that produced a permanent black underclass. Anderson discussed the role of social studies in the formation of this underclass:

Thomas Jesse Jones, an instructor of social studies at Hampton Institute and later director of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, described the purpose and function of social studies in the Hampton curriculum. Jones explained that Armstrong and his co-workers gave “a very important place” to such subjects as “political economy, civil government, moral science and general history.” These subjects were aimed primarily at teaching Hampton’s students the “right” ideas of citizenship, the duties of laborers, and the history of race development. History for instance was designed as a study of the “evolution of races” and was aimed at giving pupils a new notion of race development.<sup>13</sup>

Anderson argued that the Northern white philanthropists envisioned a curriculum far different from the later more emancipatory vision of social studies generated by Du Bois and Woodson. Anderson’s work sought to provide context for how the system of black education was constantly being contested by the Northern philanthropists, southern education reformers, black educators and the black

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<sup>13</sup> James Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 51.

community. Anderson's work is central to the history of black education because it provides an important context for the factors that influenced teaching and learning in the Jim Crow era.

Vanessa Siddle Walker's case study of the Caswell County training school in North Carolina is another key resource. She conducted a historical ethnography of the school in the hopes of rebutting the argument that African American students had received an inferior education in segregated schools. She described how the principal, Henry Dillard, worked to create a school culture that provided multiple opportunities for students to participate in both formal and informal learning activities.<sup>14</sup> Siddle Walker also detailed the rigor of the school curriculum, the parents' fight for a new school to be built, the strengths of classroom instruction, and the support of the entire community.<sup>15</sup> In a comprehensive manner, Siddle Walker articulated the "caring" environment evident in segregated schools.

In addition to her work on Caswell County School, Siddle Walker contributed significantly to the literature on teachers in the segregated South. In the article, "African American Teaching in the South: 1940-1960," Siddle Walker documented how African American teachers acquired professional development during segregation.<sup>16</sup> She collected archival data, professional newsletters and interviews from teachers conducted during segregation. Her study provides a glimpse into the ways that segregation influenced how black teachers learned to improve their teaching practices.

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<sup>14</sup> Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African-American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 102-106.

<sup>15</sup> Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential*, 52.

<sup>16</sup> Vanessa Siddle Walker, "African-American Teaching in the South: 1940-1960," *American Educational Research Journal* 38 (2001): 751-779.

More recently, Adam Fairclough added to the literature by conducting extensive research on black teachers in both rural and urban communities in the South during segregation.<sup>17</sup> He sought to create a detailed picture of the complexities black teachers encountered as they navigated their craft in the face of intense racism. Fairclough examined the schools that educated African American teachers, the differences between teaching in rural and urban environments for African American teachers and how African American teachers organized during the Civil Rights Movement. Critics of Fairclough's study focused on the work of teaching from a "top-down" historical perspective instead of looking at how teachers intimately interacted with the communities they taught in.<sup>18</sup>

Wilma King authored a historical narrative about black childhood from the Middle Passage to the Civil Rights Movement.<sup>19</sup> By shifting the narrative from an adult perspective to a child's perspective, King has provided a unique contribution to the literature. In this book, King included vignettes about the challenges of growing up in a racist environment. The effect of racism on the opportunities for African American children is evident. More importantly, by writing about the gendered experience of African American girls, King sheds light on how the intersection of race and gender impacts childhood. King's historical work on African American girls was one of the few treatments by a historian that delineated between the experience of

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<sup>17</sup> Adam Fairclough, *A Class of Their Own: Black Teachers in the Segregated South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

<sup>18</sup> Jon N. Halle, review of *A Class of Their Own: Black Teachers in the Segregated South*, by Adam Fairclough, in *History of Education Quarterly* 48 (March, 2008): 152-156.

<sup>19</sup> Wilma King, *African-American Childhoods: Historical Perspectives From Slavery to Civil Rights* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

black girlhood and black womanhood. My study hopes to further the historical scholarship on African American girls and their development in school settings.

Derrick P. Aldridge created an intellectual and educational history of W.E.B. Du Bois's educational philosophy and contributions to the field of education.<sup>20</sup> In its form, Aldridge's book is an educational history that explores the impact of Du Bois's ideas on black student achievement. Aldridge used case studies of African American leaders to demonstrate how Progressive Era educators engaged in a dialogue about how to teach black children. Although uneven at times, Aldridge shaped a history of black intellectual ideas which I intend to mirror in my dissertation. However, my dissertation will seek to be explicit about how this dialogue specifically affected the fields of history and social studies education.

The work of education historians is critical to providing a multi-layered landscape of varieties of black education during the segregation period. However, few studies focus on the impact of the social studies curriculum on students who attended these schools. In addition, existing studies tend to focus on public schools rather than historically black private schools. By examining historically black private school settings we can see how school founders such as Nannie Helen Burroughs attempted to extend a sense of freedom in instruction to her students and staff. More specifically, I will explore how the National Training School for Women and Girls used social studies as a vehicle for providing an education which sought to uplift black girls.

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<sup>20</sup> Derrick P. Aldridge, *The Educational Thought of W.E.B. Du Bois: An Intellectual History* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2006).

## Historical Methods

Historical research does not fit neatly into categories defined in the field of education. Referring to a meeting of prominent historians, Ruben Donato and Marvin Lazerson stated:

The discussions raised a central challenge to being a historian of education: The dilemma of having to talk simultaneously to educational professionals and practitioners, educational researchers, and historians.<sup>21</sup>

In writing this dissertation I am also creating an interdisciplinary methodology which endeavors to address multiple audiences: historians, education historians, social studies researchers, curriculum developers, and teachers.

Historical research falls broadly into the category of qualitative research. According to John Creswell, qualitative research has particular assumptions and concerns. He argued that qualitative research contains recurring features. Creswell also argued that qualitative researchers embrace ideas of multiple realities, attempt to come as close as possible to the participants being studied and that their work is value-laden.<sup>22</sup>

I used historical research to construct the development of the alternative black curriculum from 1890-1940. To describe the alternative black curriculum, a comparative analysis of key artifacts was used and I considered key texts by W.E.B. Du Bois and Nannie Helen Burroughs. Finally, I used case study methodology to

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<sup>21</sup> Ruben Donato and Marvin Lazerson, "New Directions in American Educational History: Problems and Prospects," *Educational Researcher* 29 (Fall 2000): 4-15.

<sup>22</sup> John Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Four Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2003), 16-18.

analyze the social studies curriculum at the National Training School for Women and Girls.

### Historical Research

Historical Research is a qualitative research method that occupies a unique role in education. The educational historian Carl Kaestle stated that, “Historians often observe their discipline is both a science and art.”<sup>23</sup> Although ethnographies and case studies contain documents, archival records and source materials, rarely do researchers in the education field conduct studies that derive their documents solely from the archives. Educational historians, however, use original records to construct a narrative that is able to illuminate and explain the past.

Historians over the past one hundred years have debated about how the epistemologies of constructivism and objectivism align with their field. Peter Novick explored epistemological debates within the field of history that have occurred since history was founded as a discipline. Novick wrote, “At the center of the professional historical venture are the idea and the ideal of objectivity.”<sup>24</sup> As African American, Chicano, and Native American scholars entered the field in larger numbers they challenged the notion that scholars of color could not be objective about their historical experiences.<sup>25</sup> Although historians have not completely abandoned notions of “objectivity” they are more cognizant of how their own positionality could affect the outcome of their research.

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<sup>23</sup> Carl F. Kaestle, “Recent Methodological Developments in the History of American Education,” in *Complementary Methods for Research in Education*, ed., Richard M. Jaeger (Washington, D.C.: American Education Research Association, 1988), 61-74.

<sup>24</sup> Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The “Objectivity” Question and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1.

<sup>25</sup> Eric Foner, *The New American History, Revised and Expanded Edition* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1990).

What cannot be disputed is that historical research relies heavily on the accuracy of the explanation and the interpretation of the historian. When collecting data, historians use documents and artifacts to create a narrative. While social scientists tend to seek a hypothesis to test, historians tend to think hard about the most effective way to capture a particular event. The most difficult challenge for the educational historian is creating a narrative despite the fragmentary nature of information that often remains in oppressed communities. Attesting to the intricate nature of creating narratives, Marc Bloch posited:

Explorers of the past are never quite free. The past is their tyrant. It forbids them to know anything which it has not itself, consciously or otherwise, yielded to them.”<sup>26</sup>

In my search for documents to tell the story of early black educators, I was challenged to construct a narrative from limited sources. I examined historical pageants to construct the contours of the alternative black curriculum and to study how black educators challenged the dominant narrative in social studies. To illustrate how Nannie Helen Burroughs attempted to integrate alternative narratives into the pedagogy of her school, I used a case study approach.

### Textual Reading

I used a textual reading to construct a narrative as embodied in the historical pageants of Nannie Helen Burroughs and W.E.B. Du Bois. In a close reading of these texts, I examined how they constructed pageants about black history. I examined the texts for details such as biblical references, references to current events and historical ideas permeating the texts. Nannie Helen Burroughs’ pageant, *When*

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<sup>26</sup> Marc Bloch, *The Historians* *Historian’s* *Historian’s* *Craft* (New York: Vintage Books, 1953), 59.

*Truth Gets A Hearing*, is the focal text used in my analysis. *When Truth Gets A Hearing* is housed at the Nannie Helen Burroughs collection at the Library of Congress. The pageant written by W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Star of Ethiopia*, is at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst but is also publicly available in the edited collections of his work.<sup>27</sup>

In comparing the two pageants I looked for commonalities and contrasts in constructing the alternative black curriculum. The strength of using the pageants as a source is that I challenged certain methodological assumptions that have often troubled historians about schools. Drawing from the work of Bernard Bailyn, Lawrence Cremin pushed educational historians to be more inclusive of forms of education beyond the confines of the schoolhouse doors. He argued that historians needed to include non-formal types of education such as museums, libraries, theatre, and other public and private spaces that provided learning. Accordingly, this dissertation includes non-formal modes of education such as musical pageants and exhibitions schools utilized to educate outside of the classroom.<sup>28</sup> By focusing on historical pageants, I demonstrate how black educators used pageants to delve into ideas and challenge narratives in multiple settings, including schools. I illuminate how pageants permitted black educators to test controversial ideas that might have garnered more attention if they taken place in a classroom setting.

### Case Study

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<sup>27</sup> Herbert Aptheker, *Creative Writings by W.E.B. Du Bois: a pageant, poems, short stories and playlets* (Milwood, NJ: Kraus International Publishers, 1985).

<sup>28</sup> Bernard Bailyn, *Education in the Forming of American Society* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1960); and Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Wonderful World of Ellwood Patterson Cubberley: An Essay on the Historiography of American Education* (New York: Teachers College Bureau of Publications, 1965). Cremin's trilogy on the American educational experience exemplifies this expansion of views on what "counts" as educational history.

I used a case study method to outline how Nannie Helen Burroughs and her staff created pedagogy for the alternative black curriculum. I selected case study as a method to analyze the social studies curriculum at the National Training School because it aligned with a more pragmatic world view of how data could be collected. According to Robert Yin, “compared to other methods, the strength of the case study method is its ability to examine in-depth, a ‘case’ within its real-life context.”<sup>29</sup> Moreover, with a case study method one can make direct observations of a particular situation.<sup>30</sup> Finally, in a strong case study one can rely on multiple sources of evidence, making the case study method ideally situated for data collection in schools. The Nannie Helen Burroughs collection housed in the Library of Congress contains substantial data including student records and files, examples of final exams, Appreciation Day programs, master schedules, faculty minutes, and teacher lesson plans. The strength of the case study approach allows me to narrow my study to a historical space and time where a visionary woman worked to create a school with the explicit purpose of nurturing African American girls’ identities. Critics of the case study method challenge its lack of generalizability; however, it remains an effective method to capture the multi-layered nature of how one school functions over time.<sup>31</sup>

#### Sources and Modes of Analysis

Historical research is on-going and inductive. During the past three summers I conducted research in the Nannie Helen Burroughs collection at the Library of

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<sup>29</sup> Robert K. Yin, “Case Study Methods,” in *Handbook of Complementary Methods in Educational Research*, eds., Joseph Green, Gregory Camilli, and Patricia B. Elmore (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006), 111-122.

<sup>30</sup> Yin, *Case Study Method*, 111.

<sup>31</sup> Paul D. Green and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning and Design* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall: 2001), 149.

Congress. I examined lesson plans, schedules, student work and documents. Primary sources are essential to the work of historians. Analyzing primary sources required me to be critical of various aspects of the documents including date, content, and authorship. Furthermore, situating the documents in the appropriate historical context or era shapes our understanding of their relevance. Marc Bloch argued:

For even those texts and or archeological documents which seem the clearest and most accommodating will only speak when properly questioned.<sup>32</sup>

In addition to validating her authorship, I situated any documents that I used within the context of the historical era. For example, Nannie Helen Burroughs, Carter G. Woodson, and W.E.B. Du Bois were heavily influenced by the ideals of the Progressive Era.<sup>33</sup> The Progressive Era social reformers believed strongly in working with societal institutions in order to create “orderly” change and remove politics from schools.<sup>34</sup> I considered how these black leaders confronted the harsh racism that typified the black experience during the Progressive Era.<sup>35</sup> Situating the documents within the correct historical era allowed me to develop a richer analysis of the texts in my data set.

The preliminary data fell into two categories. The first category included documents related to the intellectual ideas that ground the creation of the alternative black curriculum. The second category concerned how these ideas extended to the

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<sup>32</sup> Bloch, *The Historians Craft*, 64.

<sup>33</sup> Derrick P. Aldridge, *The Educational Thought of W.E.B. Du Bois: An Intellectual History* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2008), 35.

<sup>34</sup> Aldridge, *The Educational Thought of W.E.B. Du Bois*, 36.

<sup>35</sup> Leon Litwack, *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow* (New York: Vintage Books: 1998), 7.

implementation of a social studies curriculum developed at the National Training School for Women and Girls.

To situate these primary sources, I read key pieces by Carter G. Woodson and W.E.B. Du Bois. I also conducted a comparison of *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, located within the Nannie Helen Burroughs collection, with a pageant, *The Star of Ethiopia*, written by W.E.B Du Bois, during the same era. I focused on pageants in particular because the genre of the pageants embraced both the arts and history. By comparing multiple sources, I determined, with clarity, how pageants were used to create a vehicle to transmit the alternative black curriculum.

In the second part of my study I used the case study method to examine how the social studies curriculum was developed at NTS. I organized the documents in chronological order from the 1920s to the 1940s to assess patterns of change over time in the curriculum.

### Validity Check

Although historians do not traditionally use the term “validity check,” it is a useful construct for posing questions about the art and science of history. In historical studies, the threat of encountering conflicting evidence is real. Divergent source information can threaten the developing narrative. For example, in the preliminary work on Nannie Helen Burroughs I discovered evidence that she began to infuse Black History Month narratives in her school in the early 1920s. However, there is a possibility that in future work I might find evidence that Burroughs began her work during an earlier period of NTS development. As an ethical researcher it would be irresponsible for me to ignore conflicting source information. By using

multiple sources of data, I effectively corroborated the possibility of divergent evidence in my study –a technique called triangulation in more traditional social science methods.

The second threat to the validity of my study was the challenge of authenticating the authorship of several primary source documents. A careful historical researcher will endeavor to establish the authorship of multiple documents that appear in the archives. I analyzed the role of historical pageants in the development of the alternative black curriculum. In the case of *The Star of Ethiopia* by W.E.B. Du Bois, authenticating whether or not Du Bois wrote the play has been carried out by previous careful historians, including his biographer, David Levering Lewis, and the keeper of his papers, Herbert Aptheker.<sup>36</sup> *The Star of Ethiopia* was a large scale production which received a significant amount of publicity from a variety of newspapers. In addition, Du Bois mentioned this work while editor of the NAACP's *The Crisis*. A test for my work was to confirm the authorship of the lesser known work, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*. I was challenged to find sources to corroborate Burroughs's claims of authorship of her pageant. The pageant was performed in smaller school settings and garnered less media attention. I did, however, find evidence that *When Truth Gets A Hearing* was performed in fundraising settings. The pageant was performed in a 1929 meeting of the Association for Negro Life and History.<sup>37</sup> Likewise, in the *1929 Annual* of the National Training

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<sup>36</sup> Herbert Aptheker, *Creative Writings by W.E.B. Du Bois: a pageant, poems, short stories and playlets* (Milwood, NJ: Kraus International Publishers, 1985).

<sup>37</sup> "Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History Held in Washington D.C., October 27-31, 1929," *Journal of Negro History* 15 (January 1930):1-13.

School for Women and Girls there is mention of the pageant being performed at a school in Richmond, Virginia.<sup>38</sup>

The handling of incomplete data proved to be another challenge to my study. In my preliminary research on the Burroughs collection, there was clear evidence of the social studies curriculum at NTS from the 1920s and the 1940s. However, there was little data available from the 1930s. One of the challenges of the historian is to determine when they are able to make a generalization in history. Carl Kaestle argued that in order to prove particular generalizations historians must compare their data to other historians.<sup>39</sup> With regards to the 1930s, the Depression Era, I could feel comfortable stating that the lack of printed materials most likely occurred due to the general economic downturn schools faced.

In chapter one, I contend that employing an analysis using race as a construct is necessary to develop a more complete history of the social studies field and that it is critical to consider the contributions of black educators to the field. I examine how African American educators shaped the discipline of social studies. In particular, I argue that black educators created an alternative black curriculum which defied central ideas embedded in history classrooms across the United States.

In chapter two, I examine the role of narrative in United States history and world history, and in particular, how African American history was integrated into teacher training programs, school curricula and textbooks. Additionally, I explore how the master narrative impacted student identity in the classroom. This narrative's

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<sup>38</sup> Nannie H. Burroughs, *Annual 1929*, Box 312, Papers of Nannie Helen Burroughs, Library of Congress.

<sup>39</sup> Kaestle, Carl. "Standards of Historical Research: How Do We Know When We Know?" *History of Education Quarterly* 32 (Fall 1992): 361-366.

principles were reflected in textbooks, pageants, and lessons developed by African American educators.

In chapter three, I make the argument that Progressive Era black educators, such as Nannie Helen Burroughs, W.E.B. Du Bois, Anna Julia Cooper, and Carter G. Woodson, began to shape an alternative narrative of US history and world history. I also explore how black women educators navigated racist and sexist contexts to emerge as co-collaborators in the development of the alternative black curriculum.

In chapter four, I compare two historical pageants with the intent of exploring how the ideas of black scholars manifested themselves in the form of historical pageants. I conduct a textual reading of the pageant, *When Truth Gets A Hearing* written by Nannie Helen Burroughs and compare it to W.E.B. Du Bois' pageant, *The Star of Ethiopia*, resulting in the construction of the principles of the alternative black curriculum.

In chapter five, I develop a case study of the social studies curriculum for NTS. I examine lesson plans, school schedules, speeches, and faculty minutes with the purpose of dissecting Nannie Helen Burroughs's vision for infusing black history into the social studies curriculum. I analyze how Nannie Helen Burroughs worked with her classroom teachers to manage the process of rethinking the social studies curriculum to include a more comprehensive understanding of black history. I examine how the alternative black curriculum changed over time at NTS and consider how curriculum and pedagogy served to strengthen the students attending NTS.

In the final chapter, I investigate the meaning of the alternative black curriculum in relationship to the growing multicultural context of the nation's public

schools. I explore the implications of the alternative black curriculum on how scholars envision the construct of race in social studies research and in debates over the achievement gap between African American and white students.

## Chapter Two

### Narrative, Practice, Understanding: The Use of History in the Classroom

Each year in classrooms across the nation, teachers shape a narrative about the “history” of the United States. Despite the significant geographical, political and social differences that characterize the United States, the “history,” recounting the stories of noted figures, such as Christopher Columbus, George Washington, Susan B. Anthony, and Martin Luther King, remains remarkably consistent across the country. This surprisingly simple narrative, however, masks a larger debate over what knowledge should comprise the history of the United States. Indeed, United States history is often the subject of a cultural battle waged in schools, at public historical sites, and by the media.<sup>40</sup> The epistemological battle over United States history is engaged in by a variety of players: historians, education researchers, classroom teachers, and politicians. These interest groups understand that at the center of the debate are these essential questions: How do we define ourselves as a society? Whose individual voices matter? What should we value as American people? What is the role of race and racism in the United States?

Battles occur because of the impact this narrative has on how students learn the role they should play in our American democracy. For example, white students learn that their ancestors had an active role in creating the key political documents that shaped our democracy; whereas Native American students learn about the loss of culture their ancestors experienced. As a result, the narrative profoundly impacts how

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<sup>40</sup> Jonathan Zimmerman, *Whose America? Culture Wars in the Public Schools* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

students experience social studies in the United States. This chapter considers the construction of the dominant narrative in the United States history classroom, the impact of that dominant narrative on students' identities and the creation of alternative approaches to the construction of history in the social studies classroom.

### Narrative in the American Classroom

Academic historians often attempt to shape the narrative that underlies how the history of the United States is taught in America's social studies classrooms. While historians often adopt an "objective" stance in their analysis of the history of the United States, the types of histories they generated reflected prevailing societal norms. In considering the impact of the narrative in the social studies classroom, I chose to focus on three thematic periods to examine how historians crafted a certain narrative and the implications for the narrative in the classroom. The period of early colonial American history, the period of Reconstruction, and the Civil Rights Movement in the United States are representative examples of how historical research profoundly shaped and inoculated the values of America's school children. This section considers (a) three typical narratives; and (b) how these narratives reflect basic historical understandings.

### Typical Narratives in the American Classroom

#### 1. Typical Narrative: Early Colonial Period

Typical renderings of the early colonial period of United States history emphasized the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus and the early settlements of Plymouth, Massachusetts and Jamestown, Virginia. These discoveries are presented as progress in world history. The narrative of the colonial period

concludes with an analysis of the events that led to the American Revolution. At the end of the colonial period was a triumph of Anglo-Saxon beliefs and ideals with the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The uniqueness of the American Revolution, with the conclusion that Americans initiated the first revolution of the modern age, is emphasized. This narrative illuminated the assumption that a select group of wise, knowledgeable “Founding Fathers” created a Constitution whose principles endure today. These leaders included Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, James Madison, and John Adams.<sup>41</sup>

The narrative tends to de-emphasize the horrors of the Middle Passage, and that the practice of slavery during the early colonial period was closely associated with the economy. Native Americans were treated as rivals of English settlers regarding the vast land meant for Europeans to settle. The highly civilized nature of the Native American is not highlighted.

## 2. Typical Narrative: Reconstruction

The typical narrative of Reconstruction changed tremendously in light of the Civil Rights Movement. Historians termed the period directly after the Civil War (1865-1877) as “Reconstruction.” The causes and effects of Reconstruction were heatedly disputed. During the first decades of the twentieth century historians, influenced heavily by William A. Dunning of Columbia University, wrote the story of Reconstruction as a failure emphasizing the political inadequacy of the Radical Reconstruction legislative bodies comprised of African American politicians and

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<sup>41</sup> Jesus Garcia, Donna M. Ogle, and C. Frederick Risinger, eds., *Creating America: Beginnings through Reconstruction* (Geneva, CH: Houghton-Mifflin, 2008).

Northern white Republicans.<sup>42</sup> According to this narrative, by the end of the Reconstruction period whites had restored their legitimate place in the Southern hierarchy.<sup>43</sup> Embedded within this narrative was the assumption that political rights given newly freed African American males threatened the purity of white women.<sup>44</sup> Historians also emphasized the importance of the 1877 Hayes-Tilden Compromise which effectively ended the political reconstruction period in the South. Written at the beginning of the twentieth century, historians did not analyze with any depth the reign of terror perpetuated by whites to seize back power.<sup>45</sup> Historians ignored key primary sources in order to generate this account. From the period after the Civil War until the 1950s, this story was conveyed to America's students.

### 3. Typical Narrative: The Civil Rights Movement

Teachers of post-World War II US History present about the American Civil Rights Movement. Historians date the Civil Rights Movement beginning with the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which occurred in 1954. Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks starred as the central characters in this narrative. Rosa Parks is portrayed as a tired seamstress who did not give up her seat in the back of the bus.<sup>46</sup> Martin Luther King is characterized as the young, charismatic leader who organized the city of Montgomery, Alabama.

Martin Luther King then emerged as the leader of the entire movement with the apex of his leadership occurring with the "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln

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<sup>42</sup> Novick, *That Noble Dream*, 61.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Litwack, *Trouble in Mind*, 7.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., xiii.

<sup>46</sup> Kohl, Herb, *She Would Not Be Moved: How We Tell The Story of Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott* (New York: The New Press, 2006.)

Memorial. In the traditional narrative of the Civil Rights Movement, the role of the federal government is prominent. The leadership of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Lyndon Baines Johnson led to significant changes in government policy as typified by the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.<sup>47</sup> By 1968, after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the introduction of the more confrontational leadership style of the Black Nationalists, including Black Panther Party members, the non-violent gains of the Civil Rights Movement began to fray.<sup>48</sup> One of the central authors of the King-centric narrative is the historian Taylor Branch, who wrote the award winning book, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-63*.

#### Defining the Master Narrative

In each one of these small vignettes about United States history, a sense of the larger themes emerge. The dominant narrative of United States history constructed by predominantly white male historians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shared commonalities. So, what is the master narrative?

Bruce VanSledright argued that historians generated a narrative of American history. He posited:

They are predominantly concerned with the military, economic process from British colonization along the Atlantic coast to war for independence from Britain; from early government formation through challenges to the fragility of that government to industrialization; and onto the world wars and of globalized capitalism from the late part of

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<sup>47</sup> Charles Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 413.

<sup>48</sup> Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom*, 420.

that century into the next. The story is primarily populated with champions of politics (presidents especially), business (entrepreneurs and CEOs and their technological advancements, and military campaigns (generals). The cast is decidedly Eurocentric, with preferences leading toward an anchoring in the accomplishments of Anglo-Saxon men.<sup>49</sup>

Historians at the beginning of the twentieth century constructed a narrative which sought to create a national identity for the multitude of cultural and ethnic groups. The political elite in the United States attempted to shape a shared “collective identity” through public institutions such as school.<sup>50</sup> As Michael Olneck argued, “attempting to win the immigrant to American ways” was one of the chief goals of the Americanization movement.<sup>51</sup> The master narrative “was critical to the shaping and development of the “melting pot” American identity.<sup>52</sup>

Writers of the master narrative sought to provide a justification for institutional racism. Historians promulgated African Americans’ invisibility through the use of the master narrative.<sup>53</sup> The critical contributions of African American ideas and labor in the development of the United States were rendered silent. The heinous acts of physical violence and economic subjugation by Whites were simply minimized in the master narrative. The constant attacks on black women disappeared

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<sup>49</sup> Bruce VanSledright, “Narratives of Nation-State, Historical Knowledge, and School History Education,” *Review of Educational Research* 32 (February 2008):113.

<sup>50</sup> Michael Olneck, “Americanization and the Education of Immigrants, 1900-1925: An Analysis of Symbolic Action,” *American Journal of Education* 97 (August 1989): 399.

<sup>51</sup> Olneck, “Americanization and the Education of Immigrants,” 399.

<sup>52</sup> Olneck, “Americanization and the Education of Immigrants,” 416.

<sup>53</sup> James A. Banks, “African-American Scholarship and the Evolution of Multicultural Education,” *The Journal of Negro Education* 61 (Summer 1992): 273-286.

from the pages of history.<sup>54</sup> If African Americans were addressed at all, the discussion was limited to the role they played in threatening the stability of the developing nation-state.

As a result of this narrative, students learn that history is defined by heroes far removed from their own everyday lives. The crucial aspect of the dominant narrative is its silence regarding the complexities of United States history. Often, in the dominant narrative, women, African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanic Americans appear as secondary figures in the vast narrative of progress and nation-building. The silence reflected in this dominant narrative can be traced to the discipline of history.

Peter Novick argued that as the profession of history developed, scholars sought to create “objectivity” in the knowledge that they produced.<sup>55</sup> According to Novick, by striving for objectivity, historians distorted the complexities of the primary sources they confronted. In an attempt to earn legitimacy from their colleagues, historians generated knowledge that reinforced societal norms. For example, Novick stated:

In the early decades of the twentieth century the most professionally accomplished work on Reconstruction hailed by the profession as the most “objective,” the most “balanced” the most fair-was viciously racist.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Danielle L. McGuire, “‘It was like All of Us Had Been Raped’: Sexual Violence, Community Mobilization, and the African-American Freedom Struggle,” *The Journal of American History* 91 (December 2004): 908.

<sup>55</sup> Novick, *That Noble Dream*, 14.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

White historians minimized counter-perspectives by both black and female historians, arguing that minority historians lacked legitimate claims to “objectivity” because of their personal connection to the material. Historians such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Lorenzo Green, and Carter G. Woodson created narratives that ran counter to white historians and until the revolution in knowledge, beginning in the 1960s, the research produced by these historians was summarily ignored.<sup>57</sup> Their work was typically relegated to less prestigious journals, such as the *Journal of Negro History*, founded in 1916, as an alternative publication for African American historians who could not get published in traditional scholarly journals.

#### Crafting the Narratives: The Textbook, the Training, and the Curriculum

The dominant narrative was conveyed to US children through a variety of channels. Non-formal education was an important means of communicating history. Thus, students also experienced the dominant narrative in museums and heritage sites like Mt. Vernon and Monticello. Finally, students learned about history through the retelling of family stories. However, the school represented the most crucial site where students learned history.

How is narrative conveyed in the classroom? Three key practices combine to create narratives in the classroom: the textbook, teacher training programs, and the curriculum.

1. The Textbook

Just as the English teacher conveys the canon of American literature texts, the history teacher conveys a canon unique to their discipline: the history textbook. The

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 82.

textbook represents the most critical and common tool teachers use to transmit the dominant narrative. The textbook, however, is a problematic receptacle to convey a basic narrative of the history of the United States.

Initially, most historians and education researchers agreed that the textbook is almost devoid of any “real history”-or perhaps, more accurately “academic” history- in any sense. For example, Bruce VanSledright argued that:

Rhetorical hedges, interpretive discussion, evidence trials, and concerns about conflicting archival sources so common to historical scholarship are typically shorn from the books.<sup>58</sup>

Thus, the knowledge conveyed in the textbook is empty of the real and intense debates over methodological and ideological approaches that characterized academic history.<sup>59</sup>

Beyond its failure to include elements of academic discourse, the textbook is centered on key counter-narratives. By emphasizing the role of English settlements in the early colonial period, Gary Nash argued that most textbook writers minimized the “tri-racial” relationships between Native Americans; white European settlers and African Americans.<sup>60</sup> Through overlooking interdependent relationships that between the early settlers, textbook authors created a false idea that whites were able to conquer a new land without the assistance of other racial groups. In fact, Nash argued that most textbook writers, starting in the 1800s, conveyed the story of the

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<sup>58</sup> VanSledright, “Narratives of Nation-States,” 115.

<sup>59</sup> Diane Ravitch, *The Great School Wars: A History of the New York Public Schools* (Baltimore MD: John Hopkins Press, 1974).

<sup>60</sup> Gary B. Nash, “The Convergence Paradigm” in Studying Early American History,” in *Knowing, Teaching, and Learning: National and International Perspectives*, eds., Peter B. Sexias, Sam Wineburg and Peter Stearns (New York: The New York University Press, 2000.), 103-120.

deep conflict between Native Americans and whites. Most textbooks also transmitted the idea that Africans and Indians were savages.<sup>61</sup>

Frances Fitzgerald, in her classic study of textbooks, *America Revised*, posited that what was most striking about African American roles in textbooks was their invisibility in United States history. She stated:

In the nineteen-thirties, the most progressive of social histories, the Rugg books, identified “the Negro” as a “social problem”; Rugg, as one might expect, counseled tolerance and an appreciation of the contributions made by such men as Booker T. Washington and Paul Robeson. The Rugg books were exceptional in this respect; few books published then or earlier noted the existence of blacks in contemporary America and still fewer recorded the name of an individual.<sup>62</sup>

The very institutionalized nature of racism is an ignored element in most of the recounting of the Reconstruction period.<sup>63</sup> The narrative of Reconstruction is an example of how the counter-narrative was ignored by deleting key facts. In fact, depictions of African Americans were so harsh that in 1939, the NAACP convened a committee which published a critique of school textbooks called, *Anti-Negro Propaganda in School*.<sup>64</sup>

The discussion of Reconstruction reflects, however, the ability of historians to create a counter-narrative. The current curriculum reflects the work of W.E.B. Du

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<sup>61</sup> Nash, “The Convergence Paradigm,” 115.

<sup>62</sup> Frances Fitzgerald, *America Revised: History Schoolbooks in the Twentieth Century* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979), 83.

<sup>63</sup> James Loewen. *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (New York: Touchstone, 1995).

<sup>64</sup> Anthony Brown, “Counter-memory and Race: An Examination of African-American Scholars’ Challenges in Early Twentieth Century K-12 Historical Discourses,” *The Journal of Negro Education* 79 (Winter 2010): 55-63.

Bois in *Black Reconstruction*, which developed a narrative that emphasized the role of black agency after the Civil War. Other historians, such as Charles and Mary Beard in *The Rise of American Civilization* (1930), focused on the intricate class dynamics which characterized the Reconstruction period.<sup>65</sup>

In more recent textbooks, the counter-narrative of the Civil Rights Movement is muted by the dominant narrative. For example, Rosa Parks, at the time, an active member of the local chapter of the NAACP and former student of the Highlander Folk School, is reduced to the role of being “tired.”<sup>66</sup> By focusing on the leadership of Martin Luther King Jr., the multitude of leaders in organizations such as CORE, NAACP, and SNCC are minimized. In traditional renderings of the Civil Rights Movement, women’s roles, like that of Ella Baker’s, were completely removed from the narrative. Charles Payne argued in a recent history of the Civil Rights Movement, *I’ve Got the Light of Freedom*, that textbook writers reduced the bravery of ordinary people, ultimately a disempowering narrative.

## 2. Teacher Training

Teachers translate the dominant narrative to students. One of the chief ways the dominant narrative is conveyed is through training teaching programs, with instructors often failing to instill critical counter-narratives. Linda Levstik, argued that:

Indeed, the ways in which knowledge is created, transmitted, distorted, politicized, and used for specific purposes is rarely made evident in

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<sup>65</sup> Novick, *That Noble Dream*, 89.

W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880*. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1935), 667.

<sup>66</sup> Payne, *I’ve Got the Light of Freedom*, 413.

teacher training programs. Without such challenges to the status quo, prospective teachers may uncritically accept existing curriculum content as well as the social arrangements reflected in and supported by the content.<sup>67</sup>

Rarely in teacher training programs are students required to critique the dominant narrative as they learn about the United States history content required to teach in the public schools. Unless they are history majors, student teachers rarely gain insight into the decisions historians make in constructing their work. Indeed, when faced with the challenge of creating daily lessons, teachers often return to the dominant narrative as a source of comfort in the face of the unrelenting grind of teaching in a public school system. Linda Levstik continued:

Regardless of their background, their gender, or the recency of their families' immigration to the United States, students, teachers, and teacher candidates consistently used the pronouns "we" and "our" in talking about the events related to the settlement and the creation of the United States.<sup>68</sup>

Encapsulated in this example is the teacher's desire to perpetuate the dominant narrative produced by historians. Teachers occupied a unique role in the dialogue concerning the content of the social studies classroom. Often, they have the power to shape the stories for US students. However, very rarely do the majority

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<sup>67</sup> Linda Levstik, "Articulating the Silences: Teachers' and Adolescents' Conceptions of Historical Significance," in *Knowing, Teaching and Learning History: National and International Perspectives*, eds., Peter Sexias, Peter Stearns, and Sam Wineburg (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 285.

<sup>68</sup> Levstik, *Articulating the Silences*, 288.

teachers of United States history and social studies courses deviate from the path of the dominant narrative provided by historians.

Historically, the teaching force has been predominantly white and female, which could have explained the predominance of the master narrative in the social studies classroom. However, during the period of segregation, there was a concentration of African American teachers in the South. Despite having a strong African American teaching population in the profession, the dominant narrative was still being conveyed. In the early 1900s, the historian Carter G. Woodson questioned the intentions of many black educators in accurately teaching African American history.<sup>69</sup> However, pioneering black educators, such as Reid T. Jackson and Ambrose Caliver, viewed teacher training as important to changing the dominant narrative. Reid T. Jackson recognized the importance of black teachers learning their history. When we examine the research on the history of African American teacher training in the United States the need for a multicultural education experience was always acknowledged as important.<sup>70</sup>

Ambrose Caliver argued that in order to successfully reform programs of teacher education, schools needed to develop a philosophy of “Negro education.” Caliver believed that fundamental to the Negro philosophy of education was a more scientific approach to education. Caliver described what he meant by a scientific approach when he wrote:

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<sup>69</sup> Carter G. Woodson, *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (Trenton, NJ: African World Press, first edition Associated Publishers in 1933, tenth edition, 1990.)

<sup>70</sup> Ambrose Caliver, “The Negro and a Philosophy of Negro Education,” *The Journal of Negro Education*, (Oct.1933): 432-447.

A science in which abstraction and contemplation have a place as well as objectivity and exact measurement. A science which does not ignore social cultures and forces, but which finds in them fruitful fields of operation. When science is thus conceived, knowledge will be considered as potential power for use in the solution of social problems and as guides to conduct.<sup>71</sup>

Reflected in Caliver's commentary is the necessity for teachers to understand that cultural contexts influence the lives of their students. Inherent in each of these scholars' beliefs about African Americans was the idea that African American teacher candidates needed to acquire a strong sense of black history. In creating the ideal curriculum, Jackson proposed that the Negro teacher colleges add a black history course. He stated: An entirely new course, "Education of the Negro in United States," makes its appearance in the curriculum. Its justification is based on the fact that Negro teachers know very little about the historical background and the present status of the education of the Negro in the United States.<sup>72</sup>

Jackson believed that greater self-knowledge was crucial in the development of teachers who might instill a sense of culture and pride in black students. In modern day literature of culturally-relevant pedagogy and multicultural education we see how Caliver's and Reid's beliefs are echoed in an understanding that black history plays an essential role in educating African American youth.<sup>73</sup> Caliver also believed that in order to create a more well-rounded African American teacher, a focus on the history of African American education was also critical. Caliver wrote,

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 441.

<sup>72</sup> Reid E. Jackson, "A Proposed Revision of a Two-Year Curriculum for Training Elementary Teachers in Negro Colleges," *Journal of Negro Education* 5 (Oct.1936): 601-611.

<sup>73</sup> Geneva Gay, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research and Practice* (NY: Teachers College Press, 2000).

“it is lamentable how little most Negro high school student graduates and many college graduates know about their own race.”<sup>74</sup> Each of these reformers argued that it was the responsibility of the African American teacher to learn their own history in order to work well with their students. Caliver’s and Reid’s desire for a more critical approach to teacher training recognized that black teachers were also complicit in conveying the dominant narrative to their students.

In *The Mis-Education of the Negro (1933)*, Woodson questioned the intentions of many educated African Americans and their continual support of dominant narratives of the role of African Americans in history. Although white teachers were more likely to support the narrative, black educators also participated in transmitting the dominant narrative.

### 3. The Curriculum

The final factor that significantly encouraged the conveyance of the dominant narrative of the history of the United States was the pressure on teachers to teach curricula mandated by state and local governments. One of the most contentious debates over what narrative should be taught occurred in the battle over historical standards in the early 1990s.<sup>75</sup> This debate differed from earlier debates in social studies, which primarily centered on history or social studies should be taught in schools. The “standards” movement assumed that providing a national framework for schools would create similar teaching conditions across the United States.

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<sup>74</sup> Caliver, “The Negro and a Philosophy of Negro Education,” 444.

<sup>75</sup> Gary Nash, Charlotte Crabtree, and Ross K. Dunn., *History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 156.

Conservative and liberal historians fought a contentious ideological battle over the specific content of the history frameworks.<sup>76</sup>

Gary Nash, Ross Dunn, and Charlotte Crabtree began to develop a multi-stakeholder process to write the new standards in the summer of 1991.<sup>77</sup> The committee, a cross-section of teachers and researchers, wrote standards that attempted to embrace multiple narratives about United States and world history. After the standards were released, there was immediate backlash from conservatives, led by Lynne Cheney.<sup>78</sup> Accusing the new national standards of distorting history, conservative critics demanded that key elements of the dominant narrative be included. For example, the new standards reflected greater inclusiveness of multicultural history, a development that inflamed social conservatives. Crabtree, Dunn, and Nash contended in *History on Trial*:

As critics denounced standards as a left-wing plot to “degrade” the achievements and highlight the flaws of the white males who ran the country for the first two centuries, teachers and other citizens who ordered and read the books began contacting the NCHS [National Center for History in the Schools] to ask what all the fuss was about.<sup>79</sup>

The debate over standards represented the contentious nature of narrative within the history and history education fields. As recently as 2010, debates about history standards resurfaced in the state of Texas. On May 22, 2010, the Texas State

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<sup>76</sup> Nash et al, *History on Trial*, 4.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.,149.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 189.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 200.

Education Board approved history and social studies standards that explicitly sought to re-affirm elements of an extreme form of the “master” narrative. One of the board members claimed that Texas state standards should reflect that the United States was a “Christian” land.<sup>80</sup> The battle over standards in history and social studies reflects the critical role narrative plays in social studies, continually appearing and re-appearing in academic settings.

As implementers of knowledge construction, teachers are confronted with top-down mandates, as well as pressures from students and parents. The atmosphere of negotiation is a constant presence in the lives of classroom teachers. In that milieu, the dominant narrative in the United States history classroom becomes continually reified.

#### Research on the Impact on Student Identity in the Social Studies Classroom

If the dominant narrative has had an impact on students from different backgrounds, then what is the impact of the narrative on the identity of the average student in a social studies classroom? In the last twenty years of research, scholars have grappled with the implications of how the dominant narrative of social studies has been taught and received by students. In addition, education researchers interrogated how students of color experienced social studies in the classroom.

In analyzing the literature on how students’ identities impact the social studies classroom, it is essential to note that African American scholars continually recognized that the exclusion of black history was detrimental to the success of African American students. Black scholars and teacher leaders in the Progressive Era

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<sup>80</sup> “Texas board approves social standards that perceived liberal bias,” *Washington Post*, May 22, 2010, Online Edition.

created black pageants and Black History Month celebrations in segregated schools to help build the confidence of African American students. In 1926 Carter G. Woodson established Negro History Week which eventually became Black History Month. Black social scientists measure the impact of this type of historical narrative on the identities of students. Rodney Roth measured the impact of a curriculum geared toward the study of African American history in schools. He found that African American students experienced growth in self-concept and self-sufficiency when they were exposed to a curriculum that emphasized the role of black people.<sup>81</sup> Roth argued, “This indicates, to the author, that Negro students who are provided black studies not only have positive racial pride but that the pride is developed without a ‘hate whitey’ phenomenon.”<sup>82</sup> Roth’s study clearly demonstrated that the more a student’s experiences were validated, the more positive his or her experience was within the school setting. Writing in the late 1960s Roth was also sensitive to the potential of the heightened discord during the tumultuous era.

Despite this early literature, however, the construct of “race” disappeared from how researchers in the education field constructed and applied knowledge. In the majority of research in the field, “student” had become synonymous with “white.” As researchers neglected to identify race, however unintentionally, such research rendered a critical part of minority students’ identities invisible. The theoretical contributions of multicultural education and critical pedagogy have allowed scholars to question the analytical frameworks they were bringing to their study of children of

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<sup>81</sup> Roth, Rodney, “The Effects of “Black Studies” on Negro Fifth Grade Students,” *Journal of Negro Education* (1967): 453-439.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 435.

color. These frameworks enabled researchers to consider the experience of students of color in the classroom.

Researchers in Europe and Canada, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, offered a more complex analysis of how students' identities intersect in the social studies classroom. Peter Seixas' study of how multicultural students in an urban, Canadian high school constructed historical knowledge effectively captured how students negotiated their identities with the demands of school history. Using semi-structured interviews and interviews with family members, Seixas found that students brought profoundly more schema to the social studies classroom than previously thought. For students, "Historical meaning making is an ongoing process for young people and family histories are important components of the process."<sup>83</sup> Seixas also found there was a disjoint between school history and the history that students learned at home.<sup>84</sup> As a result of students' families not being honored at school, students felt alienated.<sup>85</sup> Seixas posited that family history shaped the student's underlying approach to historical content. Ultimately, Seixas' research demonstrated that students' familial background was critical to shaping their identity. In Canada and in the United States, one essential component of familial identity is a student's racial and ethnic identity. Seixas' study is significant because it considers how racial and ethnic identity can complicate how students receive the dominant narrative that pervades classrooms.

Peter Lee and Rosalyn Ashby's work about the progression in historical understanding for 7-14 year olds in England provides an interesting dimension to the

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<sup>83</sup> Peter Seixas, "Historical Understanding Among Adolescents in a Multicultural Setting," *Curriculum Inquiry* 23 (Autumn 1993): 301-327.

<sup>84</sup> Seixas, "Historical Understanding Among Adolescents," 302.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 302.

discussion about student identity in the social studies classroom. Lee and Ashby analyzed the shift in the British national curriculum, which began to focus instruction in social studies classrooms from the content of history, to the skills a historian utilized to construct knowledge. In their study, Lee and Ashby administered a paper pencil test to 320 children between the ages of 7-14. This methodological approach included an analysis of how students performed on tasks related to understanding historical evidence, accounts, and causes.<sup>86</sup> Their final results demonstrate that there are multiple dimensions to how students' ideas grow over time. However, what is significant about this study is that it presents learning about history as more complicated than a simple narrative of a story. Lee and Ashby believed when teachers taught students to learn about how to sort through evidence, analyze primary source documents, and ask questions about sources, the focus on skills allowed students to create their own interpretations of the dominant narrative.

As researchers became more cognizant of the complex factors that shape a student's academic identity, the focus on race became more explicit. Writing in the period from 2000-2008, a group of scholars began to add a more refined critique about how factors like race affect a students' experiences in the social studies classroom. Although relatively few, these studies offer interesting insights into how students experience race in US history classrooms.

Terrie Epstein's work, spanning from 2000 to *Interpreting National History: Race, Identity and Pedagogy* (2008), is seminal in understanding how students' racial identity affects their understanding of US history. Her key contributions to the social

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<sup>86</sup> Peter Lee and Rosalyn Ashby, "Progression in Historical Understanding Among Students Ages 7-14," in *Knowing, Teaching and Learning History: National and International Perspectives*, eds., Peter Sexias, Peter Stearns, and Sam Wineburg (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 122.

studies literature is how black and white students bring different interpretive frameworks to US History. Epstein analyzed picture cards of key historical figures, created questionnaires, conducted nation narration tasks, observed classrooms, attended school and community events, and conducted interviews. Her multi-layered approach to collecting data allowed Epstein to effectively capture the elusive element of racial identity.

Epstein identified how black and white students experienced the social studies classroom in profoundly different ways. White students generally accepted the dominant narrative in most US history classes.<sup>87</sup> Their parents also tended to view the history of the United States in a positive light and if there was a stain in American history, it was American racism centered in the Southern part of the United States.<sup>88</sup> According to Epstein, black students interpreted the events of United States history differently. African Americans viewed black leaders with pride and freedom struggles as more important than nation-building.<sup>89</sup>

Black parents perceived the school warily and felt that teachers did not accurately present the accomplishments of African American people.<sup>90</sup> At home, black parents provided African American adolescents with information about the history of their local community, such as the Million Man March, the Black Panthers, and Malcolm X.<sup>91</sup> Epstein's work corroborated the work of Seixas in that black families in their home environment were critical in shaping African Americans beliefs about history. Finally, Epstein through ethnographic research was able to gain

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<sup>87</sup> Epstein, *Interpreting National History*, 63.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

access to alternative sites of black history — civic speeches given in the community: the Black History Month Assembly and access to the student produced newspaper, *the Amistad*.<sup>92</sup> The comprehensive nature of Epstein’s work exemplified how the school’s dominant narrative forced the black community to create and shape an alternative that supported and affirmed their students’ identities. If there is a common thread in her research it is that the social studies classroom is an alien place for students of color.

Patricia Espiritu Halagao’s work expanded discourses on how identity affects students of different backgrounds through her examination of Filipinos. Halagao’s work critiqued the black and white binary that inadequately captured the experience of multiple minorities in the United States. Patricia Halagao wrote a curriculum entitled *Pinoy Teach*. Halagao stated, “*Pinoy Teach* is my insider’s attempt to write our people’s perspective on social studies.”<sup>93</sup> She then trained a group of college students to teach this curriculum to seventh grade students in the local community.<sup>94</sup> Her analysis of the data centered on the college students’ growth and transformation. She found that students learned new insights about Filipino history and better understood the impact of imperialism on Filipino students.<sup>95</sup> She found that the college students enjoyed bonding with the seventh grade Filipino students.<sup>96</sup> Inherent in this study is the power of the curriculum to serve as a tool to transform the experience of minorities in school. Although we have limited information about the

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Patricia Espiritu Halagao, “Holding Up The Mirror: The Complexity of Seeing Your Ethnic Self in History,” *Theory in Research in Social Education* 32 (Fall 2004): 459-463.

<sup>94</sup> Halagao, “Holding Up the Mirror,” 464.

<sup>95</sup> Halagao, “Holding Up the Mirror,” 469.

<sup>96</sup> Halagao, “Holding Up the Mirror,” 468.

impact of the implementation on the seventh graders Halagao demonstrated the power of curriculum to shape K-12 students identities in meaningful ways. At the root of history is its power to transform people through stories. Halagao's research also illustrated how stories could transform the identity of college students. Finally, her work emphasized how interrupting the dominant narrative had a powerful impact on students.

In another study, Tyrone Howard found the instructional choices that a teacher makes changed how students experienced the social studies classroom. Howard used semi-structured interviews and classroom observations to study how children engaged in the classroom when the teacher challenged the dominant narrative. Howard also made a theoretical challenge to the field, imploring researchers to actively employ a consistent frame of race to shape research questions in their studies.<sup>97</sup> Through his research he illuminated how teachers in the classroom actively sought to re-shape the US history classroom by focusing more directly on how race shaped contemporary US historical events.<sup>98</sup> He found that as the teacher changed the narrative, the students' understanding of United States history also changed. Reflecting on what he learned, one of the students in the study stated:

I just don't understand how all of these years we talked about the founding fathers, the thirteen colonies, and westward expansion, but not until this class did I realize that there were Mexicans and Indians who lived across the west, and that they just had their land taken away. Some were slaves, some were killed. And this was

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<sup>97</sup> Tyrone Howard, "Does Race Really Matter?": Secondary Students' Construction of Racial Dialogue in the Social Studies," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 32 (Fall 2004): 484-502.

<sup>98</sup> Howard, "Does Race Really Matter," 491.

their land! Now we call them [Mexican] “illegal”, but how can that be when their land was taken from them? That’s racist! Why don’t none of these teachers teach about their side of history? <sup>99</sup>

The student’s response clearly underlined the power of teachers to create a site where the student challenged the dominant narrative produced by historians. By changing this narrative, the teacher allowed students to interrogate their own identities.

Scholars such as Jane Bolgatz incorporated ideas about historical thinking reflected in the work of Peter Lee and Rosalyn Ashby. Bolgatz premised her study on the idea that using primary source documents, a discipline rich approach, would produce a more complex discussion with students about how race is constructed. She used documents from the Montgomery Bus Boycott to provoke discussion with her students.<sup>100</sup> She found that the fourth and fifth grade students whom she studied were able to have animated discussions about the boycott as a result of their use of primary sources.<sup>101</sup>

Robert Bain explained how using a discipline rich approach could assist students in unpacking the hidden authority of textbooks. In his study, Bain sought to transform students’ ritualized interactions with the textbook.<sup>102</sup> Using the bubonic plague as a focus, he taught students to analyze a range of primary sources. In addition, he taught students to write letters to textbook authors questioning choices

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Jane Bolgatz, “Using Primary Sources with Fourth Grade Students: Talking About Racism While Preparing for State-Level Tests,” in *Measuring History: Cases of State Level Testing Across the United States*, ed. S.G. Grant (Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing, 2006), 133-156.

<sup>101</sup> Bolgatz, “Using Primary Sources,” 153.

<sup>102</sup> Robert Bain, “Rounding Up the Usual Suspects: Facing the Authority Hidden in the History Classroom,” *Teacher College Record* 108 (Oct. 2006): 2080-2114.

the textbook authors made in creating their narratives. According to Bain, as a result of his instruction, “students came to see these texts and objects as distinctive.”<sup>103</sup> In addition, students learned to become critical colleagues of the textbook writers.<sup>104</sup>

I use Bolgatz’s and Bain’s work as representative examples of how increasing students historical thinking skills better prepares them to identify the multiple narratives that amplify historical debate. The new focus on disciplinary debates led by scholarly researchers such as Sam Wineburg, is a shift for social studies educators interested in student identity.<sup>105</sup> Students have the opportunity to learn that instead of one dominant narrative shaping history, there are a series of multiple interpretations that can create a richer understanding of our history. By focusing on the skills of the historian, students might feel less defensive about their own racial identity.

Despite the growing amount of research conducted in classroom settings regarding race, it is important to recognize that significant gaps remain in the literature. Very few studies isolate the effect of the social studies curriculum on the experience of girls and boys in schools. In this study, I explored how the girls at the National Training School for Women and Girls experienced social studies through

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<sup>103</sup> Bain, “Rounding Up the Usual Suspects,” 2090.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 2104-2106.

<sup>105</sup> Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2001).

examination of the extant records of Nannie Helen Burroughs. In addition, this study explored the effect of racial identity in the social studies classroom from a historical perspective. This historical perspective will add to the literature by documenting ways that the construct of race has been present in students' access narratives to social studies.

### Chapter Three

## Foundations and Understandings: The Architects of the Alternative Black Curriculum in Social Studies

Recently, Pero Gaglo Dagbovie, Anthony Brown and Jeffrey Aaron Snyder argued that there needs to be increased attention to the construction of an alternative historical narrative in the field of social studies.<sup>106</sup> These scholars posited that during the period from 1890 to 1940, African American scholars created divergent discourses in social studies, with Carter G. Woodson's sustained promotion of black history receiving the most attention. These works also illustrate how male scholars figure more prominently than female scholars as developers of the alternative black curriculum. I argue that black women educational reformers served in a co-equal relationship with males in the development of a new social studies narrative. W.E.B. Du Bois' expansive philosophy of black history and Nannie H. Burroughs visionary application of the principles of the alternative black curriculum are among the examples of educators who produced the frameworks, texts, courses, historical pageants, speeches and curriculum materials used in community, church and school settings to nurture the development of African American children.

This chapter considers two-interrelated concepts that led to the development of the alternative black curriculum. First, the chapter considers the emergence of the

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<sup>106</sup> In each of these texts authors used terms such as "historical memory" or the "black history narrative" to describe the narrative that I refer to as the alternative black curriculum in social studies. Pero Gaglo Dagbovie, "Making Black History Practical and Popular: Carter G. Woodson, the Proto Black Studies Movement, and the Struggle for Black Liberation," *The Western of Journal of Black Studies* 28 (2004): 372-382. Anthony Brown, "Counter-memory and Race: An Examination of African-American Scholars' Challenges in Early Twentieth Century K-12 Historical Discourse," *The Journal of Negro Education* 79 (Winter 2010): 55-63. Jeffrey Aaron Snyder, "Race, Nation and Education: Black History During Jim Crow"(PhD diss., New York University, 2011).

alternative black curriculum as defined by the differing visions of Carter G. Woodson and W.E.B. Du Bois. Both Woodson and Du Bois developed foundational concepts that centered the work of the alternative black curriculum and created key texts that embodied the work of the curriculum. Their differing visions shaped how these men collaborated with black women educators.

Secondly, the chapter analyzes how African American women built “dialogical spaces” allowing them to participate actively in the work of constructing the alternative black curriculum.<sup>107</sup> There is a growing body of work that documents how the basic principles of the alternative black curriculum (first publicly articulated by male scholars) was supplemented and even furthered by an ongoing dialogue with the pedagogical work of African American women school founders, administrators, librarians, and teachers.<sup>108</sup> While male scholars such as Woodson and Du Bois authored books which outlined principles of the alternative curriculum, women worked within a much more limited realm. Most of the textual work done by women was in curriculum materials to support students’ learning. These curriculum materials included lesson plans, historical pageants, assemblies, projects, and assessments. The fragmentary nature of the primary sources that remain testifies to the difficult position of women educators.

In the early twentieth century, black women attempted to carve out “dialogical spaces” between the fields of history and education. I define “dialogical spaces” as limited spaces where women could think, act and be acknowledged for their academic

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<sup>107</sup> I created the phrasing “dialogical spaces” to emphasize how dialogue between and amongst women created new understandings about the social studies.

<sup>108</sup> Katherine Capshaw Smith, *Children’s Literature of the Harlem Renaissance* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004).

production. These spaces allowed women to challenge male sexism. In these spaces, women tried to break free from the confines that limited their policy discussion to local or state educational contexts. This pedagogical work married the principles of the revisionist curriculum to the everyday realities of the classroom. Usually, “dialogical” spaces were confined to areas involving the education of black children. The K-12 private or public school environment served as sites where black women could serve as co-equals to men. There were a couple of reasons for this phenomenon. First, black intellectuals such as W.E.B. Du Bois found the drudging demands of working with younger students unappealing to them.<sup>109</sup> Although Carter G. Woodson taught in high school for four years, he abandoned that work for the more policy oriented work of the Association of Negro Life and History.<sup>110</sup> Secondly, because of the blatant sexism faced by black women, fewer occupational options were available. Aspiring to the middle class, black girls often chose the classroom teacher as a career path. So, despite working in demanding jobs as classroom teachers or administrators, black women used the site of school to generate opportunities to dialogue, reflect and grow from their experiences.<sup>111</sup> Challenged by the confines of patriarchy, black women had to construct physical spaces where their work was honored, as well as create intellectual spaces where they could dialogue with other women education reformers about their vision of social studies narratives for black children.

### The Social Studies Canon and African American Responses

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<sup>109</sup> David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois, 1868-1919, Biography of A Race* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1993).

<sup>110</sup> Dagbovie, “Making Black History Practical and Popular,” 374.

<sup>111</sup> Julie Ellyn Des Jardins, “Reclaiming the Past and Present: Women, Gender and the Construction of Historical Memory in America, 1880-1940,” (PhD diss., Brown University, 2000), 270.

The field of social studies developed in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Debates over formal curriculum often reflected competing ideological conceptions over the proper role of social studies in a democracy. Initially, in 1893, the National Education Association (NEA) created a standardized curriculum to be taught in the nation's high schools. The Committee of Ten, chaired by Charles Eliot of Harvard University, and led by a subcommittee composed of leaders such as Charles Kendall Adams, Woodrow Wilson, and James Harvey, drafted a social studies curriculum that profoundly shaped the social studies field.<sup>112</sup> In their final recommendations, they suggested a course of study that included a heavy focus on American history, Greek and Roman history, French history, and English history. In 1896, the American Historical Association (AHA) commissioned a group of historians to survey history instruction in the nation's public schools. Embracing social science methods, these historians conducted a comprehensive analysis of how history was being taught in school.<sup>113</sup> In 1916, another group of prominent educators, influenced by the educational philosophy of John Dewey, sought to refine the ideas suggested by the initial Committee of Ten. The group proposed a curriculum, which stressed an ideological commitment to civics and democracy.<sup>114</sup> In each of the committees' recommendations, the history sequences placed a heavy value on the accomplishments of Europe.

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<sup>112</sup>David Jenness, *Making Sense of Social Studies* (New York, Macmillan Publishing Company, 1990), 67. Ronald W. Evans, *The Social Studies Wars: What Should We Teach the Children?* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2004).

Thomas Fallace, "Did the Social Studies Really Replace History in American Schools?" *Teachers College Record* 110 (October 2008): 2246.

<sup>113</sup>Chara Bohan, "Early Vanguard of Progressive Education: The Committee of Ten, The Committee of Seven and Social Education," *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction* 19 (Fall 2003): 73-94.

<sup>114</sup>Jenness, *Making Sense of Social Studies*, 73.

Although progressive in their embrace of how history should be broadened to include more social history and other types of history, the reformers limited the types of narratives they embraced. Both curricula stressed the narrative of Europe's—and by extension, the United States'—domination over the “inferior” races of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Moreover, each curriculum stressed a traditional narrative of the United States, emphasizing the founding of our country by a group of intelligent white men. This approach reified the racism that was prevalent in American society.<sup>115</sup>

Working within a similar Progressive Era political context as their white colleagues, African American historians and educators created a revisionist social studies curriculum. In generating this curriculum, African American scholars created alternatives to the more formal meetings conducted by national organizations. Organizations such as the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, (founded in 1915), and the National Association of Colored Women, (founded in 1896), served as forums to discuss how to generate more accurate portrayals of African American history.

From 1890-1940, African American scholars created curricula that suggested new narratives for how world history and United States history should be taught. W.E.B. Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson, Anna Julia Cooper, and Nannie Helen Burroughs were among many prominent intellectuals who generated new epistemologies about African Americans' contributions to history. As they created frameworks for understanding the African American experience, common elements emerged.

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<sup>115</sup> Epstein, *Interpreting National History*, 93.

## Foundational Texts in African American History

In considering my research questions on how African American scholars created a response to dominant narratives in history, the works of W.E.B. Du Bois and Carter G. Woodson must be considered. The 1930s can be considered a watershed moment in the history of African American scholarship. The publications of *Black Reconstruction* (1935) and *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (1933) introduced fundamental frameworks that improved scholarly understandings of black people and challenged traditional historiography. Furthermore Woodson and Jesse E. Moorland also founded the *Journal of Negro History* as a venue for the publication of black history, often excluded from mainstream historical journals such as the *Journal of American History* from the Organization of American Historians. Both Woodson and Du Bois generated new epistemological frameworks about the experience of African Americans in the United States.

In 1933, Carter G. Woodson published *The Mis-Education of Negro*. This book analyzed how to repair a fragile education system that developed in the South after the end of the Civil War. Woodson argued that African Americans received an impoverished education in the newly established schools in the South because of the lack of economic resources provided by white school boards. Woodson further believed that the education students were receiving was at best, incomplete and at worst, dehumanizing.

Woodson argued that the discipline of history was especially critical to the development and empowerment of African American children. He believed that in order to combat educational racism, fundamental changes needed to occur in how

literature, math, science and history were taught. Woodson also advocated for more engaging instruction to motivate students.<sup>116</sup>

In his analysis of the structural deficits of African American education, Woodson constructed a conceptual framework of an alternative black curriculum. In the chapter entitled, “The New Program,” Woodson articulates his vision of the purposes of history:

The leading facts of history of the world should be studied by all, but what advantage is it to the Negro student of history to devote all of his time to courses bearing on such despots as Alexander the Great, Caesar, and Napoleon, or to the record of those natives whose outstanding achievement has been rapine, plunder and murder for world power? Why not study the African background from the point of view of anthropology and history, and then take up sociology as it concerns the Negro peasant or proletarian who is suffering from sufficient ills to supply laboratory work for the most advanced students of the social order.<sup>117</sup>

In the *Mis-Education of the Negro*, Woodson articulated a series of principles that would become the framework for the alternative black curriculum. A critical component to this idea was that to be educated, African Americans needed to create a framework that directly challenged European hegemonic discourse. The basic principles of the alternative black curriculum articulated in *The Mis-Education of the Negro* include:

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<sup>116</sup> Carter G. Woodson, *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, 1-8.

<sup>117</sup> Woodson, *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, 150.

(a) a counter-response that stressed the importance of African civilizations such as Abyssinia, Nubia, Kush, Mali and Ghana.<sup>118</sup>

(b) a counter-response that stressed the importance of African American contributions, such as the value of slave labor in building the key infrastructure of the early United States.<sup>119</sup>

(c) a recognition for the role Africans and African Americans have played in shaping the political culture of the United States. African American educators of Woodson's time argued that the voices of Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and other key black leaders should be studied along with the "Founding Fathers."<sup>120</sup>

(d) a defense of black labor. For example, scholars wanted to acknowledge the tradition of entrepreneurship in the black community.<sup>121</sup>

(e) a Pan-African vision which linked African American struggles with the struggles of people of color from other parts of the world. For example, African American activists stressed the role of the Haitian Revolution in shaping a black identity in the Western Hemisphere.

(f) an inclusion of stories of resistance and rebellion to slavery.<sup>122</sup>

(g) a discussion about the impact of race and racism.<sup>123</sup>

(h) an inclusion of white allies in the struggle against racism.

The principles articulated by Woodson were echoed in the scholarship being produced by other black academics in the early twentieth century.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>118</sup>Ibid., 19.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>122</sup> Brown, "Counter-memory and Race," 62.

<sup>123</sup> Jeffrey Aaron Snyder, *Race, Nation and Education*, 86.

W.E.B. Du Bois played a significant role in the creation of the alternative black curriculum by crafting a response to white historical scholars in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, while crafting an approach to black history in the United States, he also included an international dimension to his scholarship. Du Bois created a significant body of scholarly work before authoring *Black Reconstruction*. His earlier works included his doctoral dissertation at Harvard, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade in the United States, 1638-1870* (1896); *The Souls of Black Folks* (1903); *John Brown*; (1909); *The Quest for the Silver Fleece* (1911); and *The Negro* (1915). *Black Reconstruction* became such an important text because it rebutted one of the key historical schools of thought at the turn of the twentieth century, The Dunning School of Reconstruction. In addition, Du Bois created a method of analysis which demonstrated how scholars of color could question intellectual myths and misconceptions about people of color.

The subversive nature of *Black Reconstruction* emerges immediately in the first chapter of the book as Du Bois discusses the history of African Americans in the United States. Chapter One, entitled “The Black Worker,” places African Americans as central actors in the sweep of history. One of the key ideas of the alternative black curriculum is the belief that African Americans should be placed at the center of their own history. Throughout the remainder of the book, Du Bois uses an objective collection of data which mirrors the methodological approach of white historians.

Whereas Woodson attempted to create a history for the masses, Du Bois targeted a very specific and elite audience of white historians. Another example of

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<sup>124</sup> These scholars included W.E.B. Du Bois, Rayford Logan, Charles Wesley, Lorenzo Green, and Anna Julia Cooper.

Du Bois' re-examination of the Reconstruction period occurred in his discussion of the growth of public schools in the South. Du Bois persuasively argued that the growth of public schools was the "crowning achievement" of the Reconstruction period.<sup>125</sup> Once again, Du Bois characterized African Americans as possessing agency in history, which was unusual for history written during that period.

Beyond issues of content, scholars of the alternative black curriculum addressed epistemological concerns. Du Bois's last chapter offered a stinging critique of the historiography of Reconstruction. In the chapter entitled, "The Propaganda of History," Du Bois argued that the work of John Burgess and William Dunning was incorrect and riddled with misconceptions.<sup>126</sup> Du Bois critiqued the methodology of the Reconstruction historians because their primary sources did not include the range of primary sources authored by and about African Americans that were available to them.<sup>127</sup> While Woodson was interested in lambasting key figures in the black community, Du Bois pointed his arguments towards white historians. This type of rhetorical uncovering of misinformation is central to the alternative black curriculum. So while white scholars collaborated in largely segregated environments, black scholars were creating their own curriculum which invoked a profoundly different understanding of major events in US and world history.<sup>128</sup>

Much like Woodson, Du Bois directly attacked the commonly taught narratives in the nations' social studies classrooms. Du Bois posited that in high school classes, African Americans, during the period of Reconstruction, were framed

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<sup>125</sup> Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 667.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 718.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> Jenness, *Making Sense of Social Studies*, 67.

in one of four ways. Du Bois argued that African Americans were portrayed as “ignorant,” “lazy,” “dishonest,” or “extravagant.”<sup>129</sup> In addition, Du Bois believed that most teachers portrayed African Americans as “responsible for bad government during the Reconstruction period.”<sup>130</sup> Furthermore, Du Bois attacked the role of textbooks in the social studies classroom. He stated:

Grounded in such elementary and high school teaching, an American youth attending college today would learn from current textbooks of history that the Constitution recognized slavery; that the chance of getting rid of slavery by peaceful methods was ruined by the Abolitionists; that after the period of Andrew Jackson, the two sections of the United States “had become fully conscious of their conflicting interests. Two irreconcilable forms of civilization...in the North, the democratic...in the South, a more stationary and aristocratic civilization.”<sup>131</sup>

Du Bois recognized and understood the power of stories a feature that critical race theory today also affirms. He understood intimately that the story being told by teachers in the K-12 environment influenced students about the role African Americans played in United States History.

Differing Visions: Carter G. Woodson, W.E.B. Du Bois and Their Role in the Development of an Alternative Black Curriculum

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<sup>129</sup> Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 712.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 713.

In addition to their historical research, Woodson and Du Bois both developed ideas about how educators could develop a response to the dominant historical narrative. Carter G. Woodson and W.E.B. Du Bois envisioned the alternative black curriculum differently. Woodson viewed history as a discipline, which explained his emphasis on the development of textbooks and academic journals. This focus on challenging the dominant narrative drove Woodson to constantly search for collaborations with women educators who could implement his vision in public and private schools.

In Du Bois' approach to creating texts for the alternative black curriculum, he focused on the nexus between history, the arts, and literature. W.E.B. Du Bois was very interested in the educational supports that would nurture the development and self-esteem of black children. With this conception of the black child at the heart of his work, he viewed history as critical to nurturing a politically active child who would continue with their parents to struggle against racism.<sup>132</sup>

Carter G. Woodson, a former secondary school teacher and the only immediate descendant of enslaved parents to receive a PhD, was extremely interested in "popularizing" black history.<sup>133</sup> As is widely noted, Woodson created "Negro History Week" in 1926.<sup>134</sup> He also published the *Negro History Bulletin*, a magazine, geared to teachers with the explicit purpose of providing accurate

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<sup>132</sup> Smith, *Children's Literature of the Harlem Renaissance*, 26.

<sup>133</sup> Dagbovie, "Making Black History Practical and Popular," 372-382.

<sup>134</sup> Pero Gaglo Dagbovie, "Black Women, Carter G. Woodson, and The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1915-1950," *The Journal of African American History* 88 (2003): 26.

historical materials for classroom use.<sup>135</sup> As LaGarrett King, Ryan Crowley, and Anthony Brown observed:

*The Negro History Bulletin* included pages dedicated to current events, poetry, biographical sketches of important black historical figures, primary source documents, plays written by teachers and community members, Negro History Week activities, African knowledge, “Book of the Month” sections and children’s pages.<sup>136</sup>

The April 1939 edition of *The Negro History Bulletin* typified the content that appeared in the publication. For example, it included the painters: Richard Lonsdale Brown, James A. Porter, Aaron Douglas, William H. Johnson, and Palmer Hayden. Further, it had included short biographies of the painters as well as images created by each artist. The “Questions of the Month” column, though brief, gets to the heart of the work of the alternative black curriculum. The edition also included a recommendation to read the book, *To Make a Poet Black*. The editors included questions such as:

- 1.) Trace the place held by the Negro in art from Africa to America.
- 2.) Name at least ten Negro artists.
- 3.) Pay special attention to ‘Persons and Achievements’ to be remembered in March.

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<sup>135</sup> LaGarrett J. King, Ryan Crowley, and Anthony L. Brown, “The Forgotten Legacy of Carter G. Woodson: Contributions to Multicultural Social Studies and African-American History,” *The Social Studies* 101 (2010): 211-215.

<sup>136</sup> King et al., “The Forgotten Legacy,” 212.

- 4.) Contrast the work of Edmonia Lewis with that of Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller.<sup>137</sup>

These prescriptive columns urged the instructor to provide structure for students to use the information in *The Negro History Bulletin* for everyday classroom use.

In addition to *The Negro History Bulletin*, Woodson also co-wrote textbooks which explicitly challenged discourses in United States and world history. Woodson's textbooks included *The Negro in Our History* (1922), *The Negro-Makers in History* (1922), and *The Story of the Negro Re-told* (1935). In fact, Nannie Helen Burroughs used *The Negro in Our History* in implementing her black history curriculum at NTS.<sup>138</sup> In his textbooks, Carter G. Woodson attempted to rebut scientific racism, correctly address issues of slavery and resistance and include images and photographs of African Americans.<sup>139</sup>

Although Carter G. Woodson did not write a historical pageant himself, the Association of Negro Life and History anthologized pageants written by black educators. The Association published *Plays and Pageants from the Life of the Negro* (1930) and *Negro History in Thirteen Plays* (1935). Typically, the authors of these texts were women school teachers in various communities around the country.<sup>140</sup> His collaborations with black school teachers in developing new narratives in historical research typified Woodson's working relationships with black women educators.

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<sup>137</sup> Carter G. Woodson, "The Negro History Bulletin," April 1939.

<sup>138</sup> Traki Taylor, "'Womanhood Glorified': Nannie Helen Burroughs and the National Training School for Woman and Girls, Inc., 1909-1961," *The Journal of African-American History* 87 (Summer 2002): 398.

<sup>139</sup> King et al., "The Forgotten Legacy of Carter G. Woodson," 212.

<sup>140</sup> Smith, *Children's Literature of the Harlem Renaissance*, 61.

Saving his strictly historical work for male collaboration, Carter G. Woodson did not collaborate with women in the traditional academic sense. Throughout the 1910s and the early 1920s, Woodson worked with a small group of primarily male colleagues. His group of trusted scholarly colleagues tended to produce articles which utilized a scientific approach to history.<sup>141</sup> There is a lack of evidence that Woodson worked with female colleagues in a similar fashion. Beginning with the establishment of Negro History Week in 1926, however, Woodson began to realize how critical black women educators were to the success of the educational reform movement.

Carter G. Woodson thus collaborated quite a bit with women in the applied educational field. Pero Gaglo Dagbovie wrote:

After Woodson founded “Negro History Week” in 1926, black female teachers, club women, librarians, and social activists played essential roles in popularizing the study of Negro history. Without the practical work of women, Woodson’s efforts at popularizing African and African American history would not have been nearly as successful. Black women set up activities in schools, such as book displays and pageants; they worked hard to advertise Negro History week celebrations, and they established branches, clubs, and study groups across the country.<sup>142</sup>

In addition to helping with Negro History Week, black women organized clubs that served as sites for discussion and debates about black history. Although black women did not participate extensively in the more scholarly academic debates,

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<sup>141</sup> Des Jardins, *Reclaiming the Past and Present*, 270.

<sup>142</sup> Dagbovie, “Black Women, Carter G. Woodson, and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History,” 30.

their work provided the realistic environment in which the alternative black curriculum was being implemented. *The Negro Bulletin* illuminates the actual practice of teachers. In an issue of *The Negro Bulletin* black women educators, “joined contemporary political debates; they exchanged teaching methods; and they suggested ways to best incorporate black history into their individual classrooms and their school’s curricula.”<sup>143</sup> In addition, *The Negro Bulletin* allowed black women educators to have a space to articulate their larger vision for educating African American children.<sup>144</sup>

Woodson also sustained long-term friendships with black women leaders. Mary McLeod Bethune served as the president of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History from 1936-1952. During her tenure, she nurtured the development of the *The Negro Bulletin*. McLeod Bethune also presented scholarly speeches to the larger body of the ASLNH.<sup>145</sup> Nannie H. Burroughs worked consistently with Carter G. Woodson. He thought so highly of Burroughs that he sent his niece to the National Training School for Women and Girls.<sup>146</sup> Woodson also afforded Burroughs the space to express her ideas about African and African American history. In 1924, Nannie H. Burroughs presented a paper to the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History that extolled virtues of African American ancestry.<sup>147</sup> In 1929, the students from NTS also presented the pageant, *When Truth*

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 35

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 30

<sup>146</sup> Traki Taylor, “Womanhood Glorified,” 398.

<sup>147</sup> Dagbovie, “Black Women, Carter G. Woodson, and Association for the Study of Negro Life and History,” 30.

*Gets A Hearing* at the annual meeting of ASNLH.<sup>148</sup> In Woodson and Burroughs' collaboration, we see a deep and reciprocal professional relationship which developed over time.

W.E.B. Du Bois and *The Brownies' Book*

W.E.B. Du Bois viewed the pedagogy of teaching African American children in an expansive fashion. In 1911 he wrote the historical pageant, *The Star of Ethiopia* which sought to popularize black history.<sup>149</sup> In the 1916 edition of *The Crisis*, Du Bois theorized about the *connections* between art and black history when he stated:

It seemed to me that it might be possible to get people interested in this development of Negro drama to teach on the one hand the colored people themselves the meaning of their history and their rich, emotional life through a new theatre, and on the other, to reveal the Negro to the white world as a human feeling thing.<sup>150</sup>

In the early editions of *The Crisis*, Du Bois wrote a column entitled, "The Children's Number," which provided young readers poetry, games, photographs, and updates on current events.<sup>151</sup> This interest in working with young people to disseminate African American history and culture led to the creation of *The Brownies' Book* (TBB). Du Bois collaborated with Jessie Redmon Fauset, co-editor of *The Crisis*, to create TBB, which was the first literary magazine directed toward

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>149</sup> James V. Hatch and Ted Shine, eds., *Black Theatre USA: Plays by African-Americans* (New York: The Free Press, 1974), 87.

<sup>150</sup> Hatch and Shine, *Black Theatre USA*, 87.

<sup>151</sup> Courtney Vaughn-Roberson and Brenda Hill, "The Brownies' Book and Ebony Jr.!: Literature as a Mirror of the Afro-American Experience," *The Journal of Negro Education* 58 (Autumn, 1989): 494-510.

African American children.<sup>152</sup> Written in response to the Red Summer of 1919, the editors of the TBB sought to use history and literature to inspire young readers into political action.<sup>153</sup> Much more expansive than *The Negro History Bulletin*, TBB used art and literature to inspire “The Children of the Sun” as the editors affectionately referred to their young readers.<sup>154</sup> *The Brownies’ Book* was published from 1920-1921, failing after one year because the magazine was too expensive to produce.<sup>155</sup>

The goals of TBB as articulated by the editors in the first of edition of the magazine were:

- 1.) To make colored children realize that being “colored” is a normal, beautiful, thing.
- 2.) To make them familiar with the history and achievements of the Negro Race.
- 3.) To make them know that other colored children have grown into beautiful, useful and famous persons.
- 4.) To teach them a delicate code of honor and action in their relations to white children.
- 5.) To turn their little hurts and resentments into emulation, ambition, and love of their homes and companions.
- 6.) To point out the best amusements and joys and worthwhile things of life.
- 7.) To inspire them to prepare for definite occupations and duties with the broad spirit of sacrifice.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Vaughn-Roberson and Hill, “The Brownies’ Book,” 495.

<sup>153</sup> Smith, *Children’s Literature of the Harlem Renaissance*, 61.

<sup>154</sup> Vaughn-Roberson and Hill, “The Brownies’ Book,” 495.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 495.

<sup>156</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois, “The True Brownies,” *The Crisis*, (1919), 285-286.

In addition, the TBB hoped to counteract negative stereotypes of African American children in literary magazines and textbooks.<sup>157</sup> TBB featured children of the “Talented Tenth,” possibly a reason it never became as popular as the *Negro History Bulletin*, which was targeted more towards the classroom teacher. The creative flourishing of the Harlem Renaissance heavily influenced the content of *The Brownies’ Book*. Viola Harris argued:

The essence of the Harlem Renaissance pervaded the pages of *The Brownies’ Book*. As participants in the movement, Du Bois and Fauset attempted to imbue children with the spirit and substance of the Harlem Renaissance. Arguably, *The Brownies’ Book* signaled the creation of an emergent or oppositional tradition imbued with the New Negro philosophy in children’s literature.

The content of TBB included short stories, vivid photographs of life in the African American community, and featured columns such as *The Judge* and *As the Crow Flies*. Both Du Bois and Woodson used the developing field of photography to connect visual images of African American vibrancy and pride. Photography and artists’ works became extremely important in providing students with visual images of a strong black identity.

Written by W.E.B. Du Bois, *As the Crow Flies*, sought to teach his young readers about current events in United States and the world. For example, in the third column of the “As the Crow Flies”, Du Bois writes in child-friendly language about the financial cost of World War I, starving children in Poland, Serbia, and Russia, the increased rights of the people of India under the British empire, and the prohibition of

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<sup>157</sup> Vaughn-Roberson and Hill, “The Brownies’ Book,” 495.

alcohol in Norway.<sup>158</sup> The wide ranging topics in this section attempted to teach children the complexities of world politics. In addition to writing about this variety of topics, Du Bois advocated for the newly emergent political rights of women and reflected on African American participation in World Wars.<sup>159</sup> By providing students with an overview of key events in world history, Du Bois sought to encourage black children to be change agents in their communities.

The working relationships between W.E.B. Du Bois and women were markedly different than those of Woodson. Woodson worked with women educators far more frequently than Du Bois because of the Association of Negro Life and History's constant promotion of black history. W.E.B. Du Bois, on the other hand, advanced a more pro-feminist agenda in his academic writings and essays.<sup>160</sup> In his writings he emphasized the political rights of women and exulted the critical role women played in rebuilding the black community at the end of the Civil War. However, promoting the rights of women did not necessarily mean recognizing them as fellow academics. Joy James theorized:

Quoting Anna Julia Cooper's now-famous, "When and where I enter" sentence in "Damnation of Women," Du Bois fails to mention her by name, prefacing his remarks with the proprietary phrase: "As one of our women writes." Du Bois' selective questions curtail Cooper's full argument; the

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<sup>158</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois, "As the Crow Flies" *The Brownies' Book*, 1920, V2.

<sup>159</sup> Viola J. Harris, "Race Consciousness, Refinement, and Radicalism: Socialization in The Brownies' Book," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 14 (1989): 195.

<sup>160</sup> Joy James, *Transcending the Talented Tenth: Black Leaders and American Intellectuals* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 43.

passage preceding the quote more accurately reflects the critical mandate for black leadership echoing throughout *A Voice from the South*.<sup>161</sup>

The obscuring of women's work is typified in Du Bois' collaboration with Jessie Redmon Fauset. W.E.B. Du Bois often took public credit for the creation and the conception of TBB, whereas it was actually Fauset who had taken a very active role in conceptualizing the approach and pedagogy of TBB.

Jessie Redmon Fauset served as a collaborator in the development of the alternative black curriculum. A former librarian, she is often described as a "literary" midwife in the blossoming of the Harlem Renaissance.<sup>162</sup> She encouraged the poetry of young black writers such as Langston Hughes whose first published poem, "A Negro Speaks Rivers," appeared in *The Crisis*.<sup>163</sup> Although her work tended to exemplify upper middle class black mores, Fauset represented a different type of elite black activist woman. Deeply enmeshed in the literary scene of New York, she allied herself philosophically with "The New Negro" movement which permeated the black community in the 1920s. With her immersion in the art scene, she authored four books: *There is Confusion* (1932), *Plum Bun* (1929), *The Chinaberry Tree* (1931), and *Comedy: American Style* (1933), contributing significantly to the literature of that period.<sup>164</sup>

As the literary editor of *The Crisis*, Fauset collaborated with Du Bois and shared in the development of the alternative black curriculum. From 1919 to 1926,

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<sup>161</sup> Joy James, *Transcending the Talented Tenth*, 44.

<sup>162</sup> Abby Arthur Johnson, "Literary Midwife: Jessie Redmon Fauset and the Harlem Renaissance," *Phylon* (1978): 145.

<sup>163</sup> Carolyn Wedin Sylvander, *Jessie Redmon Fauset, Black American Writer* (Troy, NY: The Whitson Publishing Company, 1981), 116.

<sup>164</sup> Johnson "Literary Midwife," 143.

she served as the co- editor of *The Crisis*. As co-editor of *The Crisis* and TBB, Fauset advocated for the use of biography to extend children’s understanding of black history. Abby Arthur Johnson described Fauset’s commitment to biography when she stated:

While literary editor, Fauset also contributed informative essays to *The Crisis*. She especially favored biographical sketches of blacks prominent in her day and in the past. Among others, she wrote about Jose Don Patrocino, who fought for the “abolition of slavery in Brazil”; Robert Brown Elliott, who represented a South Carolina district in the forty-second and forty-third Congresses of the United States; and Henry Ossawa Turner, prominent artist. She found Bert Williams an appealing subject because he, as a comedian, “symbolized that deep, ineluctable strain of melancholy, which no Negro in a mixed civilization ever lacks.”<sup>165</sup>

She felt that the use of biography would uplift and inspire African American children to achieve great accomplishments in their larger community. Fauset also shared Du Bois’ belief that African American children needed to be aware and involved in struggles for freedom across the Caribbean, Latin-America, and Africa.

So, while Carter G. Woodson shaped children’s historical memories using a factual narrative, W.E.B. Du Bois fashioned a historical narrative that was heavily influenced by his passion and love for the arts.

### The Women Architects of the Alternative Black Curriculum in Social Studies

Black scholars in the late nineteenth and earlier twentieth struggled for a forum to contribute to the public discourse. Excluded from major academic journals

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<sup>165</sup> Johnson, “Literary Midwife,” 147.

and positions, black scholars' research did not receive wide-spread public recognition or acknowledgement. Each scholar responded differently to the challenge of exclusion. Carter G. Woodson founded the Association of Negro Life and History, affording himself an autonomous organization to focus on the promotion of black history. W.E.B. Du Bois worked for historically black colleges and the N.A.A.C.P. However, Du Bois struggled throughout his career to establish a stable scholarly community in which to conduct his work. Although black men's work never received the proper recognition from academia, black women's academic production was even more obscured. Black women's efforts to promote history in the areas of race preservation, commemoration, education, and grassroots mobilization did not receive the same attention as their male colleagues.

Black women reformers built "communities within communities." In order for their work to be taken seriously black women founded their own schools and clubs, providing them with the opportunity to dialogue about new narratives in the social studies. Although black women did not physically build these spaces themselves, they often actively fundraised to generate funds for the schools, community centers, and churches. In addition to these physical spaces, black women created "dialogical" spaces where they could actively generate ideas to construct the alternative black curriculum in social studies.

#### A. School as a Built Space

Increasingly, scholars focused on how black women used their work in schools to generate sites for intellectual work in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. At the end of Reconstruction educated black women were tasked

with a special responsibility, to uplift the black community. Historian Angel David Nieves posited:

Racial uplift became an acceptable forum for African American women's activism at the end of the nineteenth century only after women had endured for years the dual biases of racial and gender discrimination, both from within the black community and from without. Since the founding of early literary and mutual aid societies in the 1830s, black women reformers had long been concerned with the issue of "racial uplift," involving as it did a sense of duty and obligation to the race. African American women's educational reform efforts were a primary force in creating a Black Nationalist forum.<sup>166</sup>

The idea of "racial uplift" of the black community took on many different forms. For example, in Tuskegee, Alabama Margaret Murray Washington [wife of Booker T. Washington] organized the Tuskegee Women's Club. The Tuskegee Women's Club built the town's first night school. As the curriculum developed in the night school over time, the teaching of a Negro history became important. Cynthia Neverdon-Morton found:

In spite of financial conditions, the Women's Club continued to support the night school. The curriculum was broadened to include additional academic subjects, including Negro History. In fact, because the history course proved

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<sup>166</sup> Angel David Nieves, "'We Are Too Busy Making History...to Write History': African-American Women, Construction of Nation, and the Built Environment in the New South, 1892-1968," in *We Shall Independent Be: African-American Place Making and The Struggle to Claim Space in the United States*, eds., Angel David Nieves and Leslie M. Alexander (Boulder, CO: The University Press of Colorado, 2008), 305.

to be so beneficial, the women encouraged the teaching of it in day and night schools throughout the county.<sup>167</sup>

Black women school reformers intentionally created opportunities for adolescent girls to build their self-esteem and identity. In Virginia, educators founded a girl's club which explicitly sought to teach girls refinement and class.<sup>168</sup>

The “nation-building” work taking place at the time was centralized in the school space. Black women education reformers realized quite clearly that they could bring their knowledge and expertise to construct built environments for learning. Nieves argued, “For African Americans, the built environment provided them with the opportunity to physically “celebrate or perpetuate the memory of particular events, ideals, individuals, or groups or persons.”<sup>169</sup>

#### B. Imagined Communities: Building Intellectual “Dialogical” Spaces

In areas such as the law and medicine, black women were often relegated to the sidelines. However, in the field of education black women were treated as experts on issues related to the education of black children. The “dialogical spaces” which developed between these black educators created the foundations of the alternative black curriculum. Unlike the site of the school which represented physical, tangible spaces, black women created intellectual “dialogical” communal spaces to generate new epistemologies about social studies for black children. On issues related to the education of black children, black women teachers and administrators exerted quite a bit of control. In these school and community spaces, women generated scholarly

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<sup>167</sup> Cynthia Neverdon-Morton, “Self-Help Programs as Educative Activities of Black Women in the South, 1895-1925: Focus on Four Key Areas,” *Journal of Negro Education* 51 (1982): 207-221.

<sup>168</sup> Neverdon-Morton, “Self-Help Program as Educative Activities,” 207.

<sup>169</sup> Nieves, “We Are Too Busy Making History,” 307.

and academic work that directly influenced discourses about historical memory in the black community. It was through the synthesis of the academic work of the male historians and the application of the pedagogy from the black female educators that the work of the alternative black curriculum became real for children.

In the early period of the development of the alternative black curriculum, Anna Julia Cooper served as a link between the scholarship of black males and the work being done by African American women. Anna Julia Cooper was at the forefront of elite black women leaders who shaped a response to virulent racism in the post-*Plessy* period. Cooper was most best known for her book on the views on the nature of black womanhood, *A Voice from the South*. Unlike their male counterparts, black women leaders recognized that a vital part of the alternative black curriculum in social studies was the necessity of uplifting black girls. These female scholars recognized that by including narratives in history that ignited people's consciousness about the contributions of black women in history, the status of girls in a male dominated society would improve. In the *Voice of the South*, for example, Cooper exhorted her readers:

Let our girls feel that we expect something more than that they merely look pretty and appear well in society. Teach them that there is a race with special needs which they and only they can help; that the world needs and is already asking for their trained, efficient forces. Finally, if there is an ambitious girl with pluck and brain to take the higher education, encourage her to make the most of it.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Anna Julia Cooper, *A Voice From The South* (Xenia, Ohio: The Aldine Printing House, 1892), 78-79.

Anna Julia Cooper was the principal of the M street high school in Washington, DC from 1902-1906 and she was also the fourth African American women in the US to receive her doctorate.<sup>171</sup> It was in her role as a teacher in the M Street high school where she mentored a young Nannie H. Burroughs.<sup>172</sup>

Cooper wrote her dissertation at the Universite de Paris at the Sorbonne on, “The Attitude of France on the Question of Slavery between 1789 and 1898.”<sup>173</sup> Included in her discussion was a reference to the events of the Haitian Revolution. Through an examination of the events of the Haitian Revolution, Cooper produced a narrative of a Diaspora which reflected African Americans’ continual fascination with the story of Haiti. Cooper, building on the earlier scholarship of W.E.B. Du Bois’ work on Haiti, focused her dissertation on a comparison of the social conditions of the French and British colonies.<sup>174</sup> She published a book based on her dissertation entitled, *Slavery and the French Revolutionists 1788-1805*.<sup>175</sup> Her research on Haiti reflected the connections of individuals of African descent that were the foundations of the alternative black curriculum.

Anna Julia Cooper served as an example of how African American women navigated the roles of classroom teacher and scholar. Cooper’s confidence in her beliefs was “nourished by her sense of equality with black men.”<sup>176</sup> School as a site and space of equality echoed throughout the work of the black women architects of

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<sup>171</sup> Karen Johnson, *Uplifting The Women and The Race: The Educational Philosophies and Social Activism of Anna Julia Cooper and Nannie Helen Burroughs* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000)54.

<sup>172</sup> Maurice Jackson and Jacqueline Bacon, eds., *African-Americans and the Haitian Revolution: Selected Essays and Historical Documents* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 142-143.

<sup>173</sup> Johnson, *Uplifting The Women and The Race*, 112.

<sup>174</sup> Jackson and Bacon, *African-Americans and the Haitian Revolution*, 142-143.

<sup>175</sup> Johnson, *Uplifting The Women and The Race*, 112.

<sup>176</sup> Deborah Gray White, *Too Heavy a Load, Black Women in Defense of Themselves 1894-1994* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), 37-39.

the alternative black curriculum. In referencing the “dialogical spaces” between education and history that Woodson and Du Bois explored, we must understand that in the male dominated world of the early twentieth century, African American women had to create a different space within which to create knowledge. Although no black women’s scholarship was as publicly recognized as their male counterparts, these early women activists envisioned new realities for African American students. In Cooper’s precedent we see women were using knowledge to expand African Americans’ visions of the African Diaspora. In the revisionist curriculum these early scholars sought to understand the similarities between the various communities that comprised the African American experience. Anna Julia Cooper did not receive her doctorate until the age of 67, which impacted the amount of scholarship that she subsequently produced. However, she set the precedent for being both a scholar and a teacher.

#### Scholarly Dimensions on the Life and Work of Nannie Helen Burroughs

In 1909, Nannie H. Burroughs realized her dream of opening a girl’s school in Washington, DC Committed to the “three B’s-the Bible, the bathtub, and the broom,” the National Training School for Women and Girls (NTS) sought to provide a place for African American girls to be educated and nurtured in a separate setting.<sup>177</sup> Burroughs’ vision of industrial and vocational education was heavily influenced by Booker T. Washington and his vocational training school, Tuskegee Institute.<sup>178</sup> She believed strongly in the professionalization of domestic service, black women’s most

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<sup>177</sup> Burroughs coined the term, “the Bible, the bathtub, and the broom, to emphasize the values in her schools’ vision. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women’s Movement in the Black Baptist Church 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 213.

<sup>178</sup> Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent*, 213.

prevalent occupation after farm work during this era.<sup>179</sup> However, this outward vision of industrial education was also balanced with a strong belief in African Americans civil rights, as well as a love and passion for black history.

During the fifty-two years of NTS's existence, Burroughs did not have to rely on large donations from white philanthropists; she instead utilized smaller fundraising efforts and contributions from working class black women.<sup>180</sup> Evelyn Higginbotham stated:

Year after year black women, many without education themselves, regularly contributed small amounts of money enclosed in barely literate letters of support. By giving "pantry parties," collecting redeemable soap wrappers, and continually devising imaginative money-making ventures, black church women across the nation worked for the furtherance of their school.<sup>181</sup>

Although it is difficult to imagine because schools are so populated with people, I define NTS as a "solitary dialogical space" because of Burroughs' reliance on her black women networks, which afforded her the freedom to experiment with the type of curriculum her school could offer. She was able to design a school structure that could match her vision of how black girls should be educated. In this space, Burroughs experimented with how she implemented the alternative black curriculum. She fashioned an Annual Appreciation Day, a pageant and a course dedicated to African American history.<sup>182</sup> Burroughs pageant, *When Truth Gets A Hearing* was designed to provide black people with the opportunity to defend themselves against

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.,220.

<sup>182</sup> Taylor, "Womanhood Glorified," 390-402.

white justifications for racism. This pageant is not Burroughs' only attempt at writing. She also wrote the *Slab-Town District Convention*, a play focused on Christian morality and values performed in the 1920s. In addition, she edited *The Worker*, a missionary magazine sponsored by the Women's Convention Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention.<sup>183</sup> She served as the editor for that magazine from 1934-1961.<sup>184</sup> Despite her many responsibilities and commitments, writing was a tool that she utilized to promote racial and womanly pride.

Scholarship on Nannie Helen Burroughs has focused on two areas. First, a number of scholars have outlined the biographical and social context for her educational philosophy. Opal Easter has authored the most comprehensive biographical review of the life of Nannie Helen Burroughs to date.<sup>185</sup> She outlined Burroughs's roles in the women's auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention (NBC) and the National Association of Colored Women, as well as the founding of the National Training School for Women and Girls.

Sharon Harley examined the social context of Burroughs's spheres of influence. Harley situated her work in the class dynamics that influenced Washington, DC in the early part of the twentieth century.<sup>186</sup> She characterized Burroughs as an activist who advocated for the working class because of her own humble beginnings. Born in Culpeper, Virginia, in 1879, her mother was determined to provide her with a superior education so she moved Burroughs to Washington,

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<sup>183</sup> Audrey Walker, *Scope and Content Note of Nannie H. Burroughs Papers* (Washington D.C: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, 2001), 5.

<sup>184</sup> Walker, *Scope and Content Note*, 6.

<sup>185</sup> Opal Easter, *Nannie Helen Burroughs* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995).

<sup>186</sup> Sharon Harley, "Nannie Helen Burroughs: The Black Goddess of Liberty," *The Journal of Negro History* 81 (Winter-Autumn 1996): 62-71.

DC.<sup>187</sup> Burroughs graduated from M Street High School in 1896 and hoped to become a teacher in domestic science. In her pursuit of a teaching position, Burroughs encountered discrimination based on her class and racial status and was unable to find a teaching position.<sup>188</sup> Sharon Harley argued that it was this experience which led Burroughs to advocate for working women's education.<sup>189</sup>

Scholars also have examined Nannie Helen Burroughs's professional work in the field of education, including her instructional leadership at the National Training School for Women and Girls. Karen Johnson compared the work of Anna Julia Cooper and Nannie Helen Burroughs's in their educational philosophies and careers.<sup>190</sup> She concluded that Burroughs's work was more practical than Cooper's, given its basis in concepts associated with industrial education. Traki L. Taylor examined the role of Nannie Helen Burroughs in creating a school specifically to develop and uplift the self-esteem of African American girls. Taylor emphasized Burroughs' embrace of domestic education and its potential to uplift the self-esteem of African American girls across the United States, the Caribbean, and Africa.<sup>191</sup> Michelle Rief discussed Burroughs' founding role in the International Council of Women of the Darker Races, created by African American female educational activists after World War I to deepen their understanding of the histories of the countries of China, Egypt, and parts of the Caribbean.<sup>192</sup> Most recently, Sarah Bair

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<sup>187</sup> Easter, *Nannie Helen Burroughs*, 25.

<sup>188</sup> Easter, *Nannie Helen Burroughs*, 26.

<sup>189</sup> Harley, "The Black Goddess of Liberty," 64.

<sup>190</sup> Johnson, *Uplifting the Women and the Race*, 1-13.

<sup>191</sup> Traki Taylor, "Womanhood Glorified," 390-402.

<sup>192</sup> Michelle Rief, "Thinking Locally, Acting Globally: The International Agenda of African American Clubwomen, 1890-1940," *The Journal of African-American History* 89 (Summer 2004):215.

provided an analysis of how Nannie Helen Burroughs implemented a curriculum that emphasized civic education and African American History.<sup>193</sup>

Unlike many black school leaders, Nannie Helen Burroughs had the freedom to implement a school vision that used black history to support and develop the identity of African American girls without the fear of reprisals. Although the work of the school was not considered as prestigious as writing a book, the work created at this site must still be considered a type of knowledge production. By disseminating complex scholarly ideas, women school teachers and administrators provided an invaluable service to the establishment of the alternative black curriculum.

### Collaborative Spaces

The collaborative spaces that developed between black women and men were still very fragile because of the sexism that was pervasive during the period, 1890 to 1940. For example, during the Harlem Renaissance, key leaders, such as Alain Leroy Locke, discounted actively the ideas of black women.<sup>194</sup> However, because of their direct service work with black children, black women activists felt very comfortable engaging in debate about the direction of black education.

The final “dialogical spaces” I will consider is where black women met as a separate, equal group of colleagues. The collaborative group spaces served as a policy “think tank” where black women could push each other to think about solutions that affected the African American community. In this space, black women challenged each other to think about innovative ways to lead change in their respective local

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<sup>193</sup> Sara Bair, “Educating Black Girls in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century: The Pioneering Work of Nannie Helen Burroughs: (1879-1961),” *Theory and Research in Social Education* 36 (Winter 2008): 9-35.

<sup>194</sup> Pero Gaglo Dagbovie, “Black Women, Carter G. Woodson, and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History,” 38.

settings. The Pan-African spirit reflected in these conversations formed a foundational piece of the alternative black curriculum.

In 1922, a group of women comprised of prominent black women activists established the International Council of Women of the Darker Races (ICWDR in Washington, DC. This organization, comprised of elite black women leadership such as Margaret Murray Washington, Mary Church Terrell, Charlotte Hawkins Brown, Nannie Helen Burroughs, and Lugenia Hope Burns, sought to create a forum for education, political affairs and social uplift.<sup>195</sup> Embracing Pan-African principles, the group extended the work of the National Association of Colored Women Clubs (NACWC) to include international scholarly dimensions. The purpose of the ICWDR was to connect the activism of African American women in the United States with women of color throughout the world. The group focused on education and uplift in Nigeria, Brazil, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Haiti.<sup>196</sup>

The early leadership of ICWDR critiqued the narrowing focus of the NACWC on issues dealing with black women's sexuality.<sup>197</sup> The ICWDR leaders sought to broaden the discussion to more political issues.<sup>198</sup> The ICWDR's most vital purpose was to provide a "dialogical space" where discussions could occur about how women of color could affect international issues. Since women were often excluded from venues of scholarship like Harvard University, the ICWDR provided them with spaces to reflect, learn, and converse about the diverse nations of the world. The vision of these African American women represented the Pan-African spirit prevalent

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<sup>195</sup> Michelle Rief, "Thinking Locally, Acting Globally," 203.

<sup>196</sup> Deborah Gray White, *Too Heavy a Load*, 135.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*

during the inter-war period. The ICWDR contributed to the creation of a school in Haiti and formed study groups to analyze the conditions of women throughout the world.

The most successful portion of their platform was to include study groups to examine issues throughout the diaspora. Since the ICWDR membership consisted of educators, we can see that embedding an international dimension to their work was helpful to the membership. For example, there is evidence that as a result of Nannie H. Burroughs' participation in the ICWDR she began to become more active in incorporating black history into her curriculum.<sup>199</sup> Although the ICWDR folded by World War II, African American women's desire to seek understandings about the African diaspora is reflected in the alternative black curriculum in social studies. In addition, the ICWDR represented a space for women to participate in scholarly dialogue about topics that impacted the black community

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<sup>199</sup> Bair, "Educating Black Girls," 20.

## Chapter Four

### Examining the Alternative Black Curriculum in Social Studies: A Textual Reading of *When Truth Gets A Hearing*

Historians of the National Training School have emphasized its conservatism, discipline, and adherence to the industrial Christian model.<sup>200</sup> A close examination, however, of the “unofficial” curricula of the school, and in particular, the annual black history performance, *When Truth Gets A Hearing* challenges this view. The pageant, acted by the students, was performed between at least 1916 and 1930, according to extant records found in the Library of Congress collection of Nannie Burroughs’ papers.<sup>201</sup> In three crucial respects this black-centered pageant challenges current historiography. First, a reading of *When Truth Gets A Hearing* subverts traditional underpinnings of the nature of Nannie Helen Burroughs’ philosophies of “training” black girls for their “proper place” in early US twentieth century white supremacist society. Second, a reading of *When Truth Gets A Hearing* challenges current narratives about how the field of social studies was constructed and reconstructed to incorporate black history.<sup>202</sup> Finally, the work of Nannie Helen Burroughs also challenges traditional epistemological frameworks of the field of social studies/history education. These interpretations have tended to emphasize the standards of social studies organizations, such as the National Council of Social Studies.<sup>203</sup> In contrast, Nannie Helen Burroughs, through her correspondence with Carter G. Woodson, and the authoring of *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, reveals a case

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<sup>200</sup> Bair, “Educating Black Girls,” 9-35.

<sup>201</sup> These are the minimum of years that the pageant was performed, future documentary evidence may reveal more years of performance.

<sup>202</sup> Carter G. Woodson, *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, 13.

<sup>203</sup> Gloria Ladson-Billings, ed., *Critical Race Theory: Perspectives on Social Studies: The Profession, Policies and Curriculum* (Greenwich CT: Information Age Publishing, 2003).

of how African American scholars actively sought to reshape social studies through the creation of an “unofficial” curriculum. In this alternative curriculum, history became a vehicle for uplifting, educating, and inspiring African American girls in the early part of the twentieth century.

Throughout the course of this chapter, I will consider the structure and the content of *When Truth Gets A Hearing* and its implications for the development of the alternative black curriculum in social studies.

### Creating a Revisionist Curriculum

Between Reconstruction and World War I, social studies educators and other scholars created pageants as vehicles to strengthen a rapidly industrializing nation’s identity. During this period, social studies educators conceived of pageants similar to *When Truth Gets A Hearing*. In fact, by developing the pageant, Burroughs participated in a historical era where pageants were in vogue as a form of cultural transmission. Beginning in the early 1900s, pageants became a popular form of expression for communities to express pride in American history.<sup>204</sup> Historical pageants served an extremely important function in the black community. Whereas in white communities pageants tended to be used as a source of acculturation for recent immigrants, in black communities leaders such as W.E.B. Du Bois and Carter G. Woodson viewed pageants as sites with multiple purposes. Black community leaders argued that pageants should be a site for development of a sense of a black identity.

<sup>205</sup> Pageants have represented a vehicle wherein the narrative of the alternative black

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<sup>204</sup>David Krasner, *A Beautiful Pageant: African American Theatre, Drama, and Performance in the Harlem Renaissance, 1910-1927* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 85.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

curriculum in social studies could be conveyed. Finally, pageants also represented a rebuttal of the narratives transmitted in textbooks.

Nannie H. Burroughs' *When Truth Gets A Hearing* is an early example of a black pageant in a school setting. Typically, pageants tended to be divided into history pageants and intimate dramas.<sup>206</sup> Pageants provided an opportunity for girl students to act in prominent roles, belying their reduced status in larger society. Pageants represented a site where black women created a “dialogical space” where they co-authored the alternative black curriculum in social studies. Black women educators could transform their visions of history into a written form. Katherine Capshaw Smith noted that:

Pageantry became a way for teachers, many of them women, to respond to the educational structures in which they participated and to serve the community's needs for building a collective identity.<sup>207</sup>

Situated in the period prior to the Harlem Renaissance (circa 1919-1930), *When Truth Gets A Hearing* is an early example of black women creating new knowledge using pageantry as a vehicle. The literary flowering of the Harlem Renaissance also ushered in the significant period in which black women were writing educational pageants. In 1924, Dorothy Guinn, a teacher, wrote a historical pageant, “Out of the Dark.”<sup>208</sup> In the 1920s, Inez M. Burke, a teacher, wrote the intimate drama, “Two Races.”<sup>209</sup> In 1934, Mary Church Terrell wrote an historical pageant. While men focused on writing scholarly monographs, black women

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<sup>206</sup> Smith, *Children's Literature of the Harlem Renaissance*, 57.

<sup>207</sup> Smith, *Children's Literature*, 61.

<sup>208</sup> Smith, *Children's Literature*, 64-66.

<sup>209</sup> Smith, *Children's Literature*, 67.

educators focused on new modes of learning about American history through pageantry.

African Americans used the pageants to discuss critical issues facing the African American community. Embracing the popularity of pageants as a form of race pride, W.E.B. Du Bois penned his own pageant, *The Star of Ethiopia*, which opened in 1913. The extravagantly produced *Star of Ethiopia* played in Philadelphia (1913), New York (1913), Washington, DC, (1915), and in Los Angeles (1925).<sup>210</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois fervently believed that historical pageants served a function in connecting the disciplines of art and history.<sup>211</sup> He also thought that the narrative of the *Star of Ethiopia* directly repudiated racist movies such as *Birth of a Nation* (1915).<sup>212</sup> He advocated that pageants were essential tools for teaching African Americans about their history.<sup>213</sup> Du Bois argued that pageants also served to connect the histories of the people of the African Diaspora. He hoped that *The Star of Ethiopia* would inspire a pageant movement that “will spread among colored schools throughout the land.”<sup>214</sup> In his pageant, Du Bois connected elements of African history, the Middle Passage, slavery and Reconstruction into one sweeping narrative.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Krasner, *A Beautiful Pageant*, 82.

<sup>211</sup> Krasner, *A Beautiful Pageant*, 81.

<sup>212</sup> Krasner, *A Beautiful Pageant*, 85. *Birth of a Nation* (1915) directed by D.W. Griffith is a silent movie which chronicles the arc of two families from the North and South from the Civil War to Reconstruction. The content of *Birth of a Nation* is highly controversial because of the negative depiction of African-Americans and the glorification of the KKK.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.

<sup>214</sup> *The Star of Ethiopia*, by W.E.B. Du Bois, directed by Charles Burroughs, October 1913. W.E.B. Du Bois Papers, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, <http://www.library.umass.edu/spcoll/dubois/>. On the back page of one draft of *The Star of Ethiopia* there short statement describing the pageant to the public.

<sup>215</sup> Krasner, *A Beautiful Pageant*, 89.

Staged with approximately 350 actors, and requiring large venues such as Griffith Stadium in DC, *The Star of Ethiopia* occurred on a much grander scale than Burroughs' pageant. However, both of these educators understood the critical role that ritualized ceremonies played in the black community. Theresa Perry argued that graduations, pageants and assemblies nurtured the psyches of African American children.<sup>216</sup> She posited that the church, school, and community events acted as a "triangulation of influences" that combated doubts about African American students' intellectual skills.<sup>217</sup>

*When Truth Gets A Hearing* represented an attempt by one educator to use a pageant to uplift and educate African American girls. Burroughs developed a pageant that combined an appreciation of past historical triumphs of Africans with contemporary problems African Americans confronted in the United States. Burroughs embedded in the transcript religious themes, racial issues, rich musical traditions, an analysis of labor issues, a critique of lynching, and revised narratives of ancient and US history.

#### The Structure of When Truth Gets A Hearing

Analysis and commentary of the pageant is based upon the undated typed script found in Box 47 of the Nannie H. Burroughs collection. The entire pageant is transcribed in its entirety in Appendix A. Handwritten notes, some illegible, are contained in brackets and are assumed but cannot be authenticated, to be from Nannie H. Burroughs. To date, no scholar has published the pageant or analyzed its contents.

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<sup>216</sup> Theresa Perry, "Freedom for Literacy and Literacy for Freedom: The African American Philosophy of Education," in *Young, Gifted, and Black: Promoting High Achievement Among African American Students* eds., Theresa Perry, Claude Steele, and Asa Hilliard (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2003), 45.

<sup>217</sup>Perry, *Young, Gifted, and Black*, 101.

Readers of this dissertation should utilize the page numbers from the footnotes to cross reference with Appendix A.

Burroughs designed the pageant to be a court hearing where white and black characters presented their perspectives on the color line that defined the twentieth century. Burroughs did not structure this play in a chronological order but rather allowed the characters to argue in a topical fashion. Although not a linear narrative, *When Truth Gets A Hearing* allows the audience to digest the complex arguments for and against racism. The characters of Injustice, Prejudice, Ignorance, Error, Public Opinion and Business represented the perspectives of the dominant white culture. On the other side, the characters Truth, Law, Peace, Goodwill, Fairplay, Justice, History, and Representatives of the Negro Race and Africa forcefully defended black humanity. In addition to spoken roles, there were multiple opportunities for students to perform poetry and musical selections. Clearly, Burroughs meant for the pageant to represent the complex nature of African American culture in the United States.

Burroughs grouped the characters together in order to create a cohesive narrative for the play. She started the play with the character *Justice*. She framed the introduction of the play as a call for “Negro Justice.” In the opening speech, Justice referenced the relationship between Justice and Christianity. In this portion of the play, Burroughs established African American claims for humanity. Justice made the biggest speech of the pageant, carefully establishing the overall tone for its entirety. The character of Justice symbolized the need for African Americans to seek

recognition from the white community in the United States.<sup>218</sup> Throughout the pageant, the character of Justice acted as the judge in the trial.<sup>219</sup>

Burroughs aligned the characters Injustice, Prejudice, Ignorance and Error in an attempt to represent the dominant racial attitudes of whites during the early twentieth century.<sup>220</sup> One could conclude these characters were the “white” characters of the play. In the character of Prejudice, she explored the racist arguments that the United States was a “white man’s world” and the suggestion that African Americans return to Africa. Through the character of Prejudice, Burroughs delved into racists’ justification of residential segregation, churches, and schools. Prejudice also railed against the idea of intermarriage. In the characters of Error, Injustice, and Prejudice, Burroughs exemplified the fear that whites had against miscegenation.

The character of Injustice outlined the contemporary problems that African Americans in the early twentieth century confronted. Early in the pageant, Injustice mockingly told the court, “This is the white man’s world and we hope you are not even thinking of giving the Negro equal opportunity.”<sup>221</sup> Injustice mocked Africans-Americans for mining gold and diamonds in South Africa. Injustice mentioned that African Americans were only smart enough to cultivate rubber on plantations.<sup>222</sup> Through the character of Injustice, Burroughs delved into the common racist argument that African Americans also lacked a written culture. In addition, the

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<sup>218</sup> Nannie Helen Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, Box 47, Papers of Nannie Helen Burroughs, Library of Congress, 1. Readers may refer to original transcript pages in Appendix A. There are some pages in the original pageant that were incomplete.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.* Readers may also refer to Appendix A.

<sup>220</sup> Fitzhugh Brundage, *Lynching in the New South, Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

<sup>221</sup> Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, 4.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

character Injustice rebutted the necessity of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> amendments to secure citizenship rights for African Americans. Injustice stated, “I am tired of hearing about Negro rights; what about his duties?”<sup>223</sup>

The characters of Ignorance and Error assumed much smaller roles than Injustice and Prejudice. Through the character of Error, Burroughs tackled the colorism which haunted her own career trajectory.<sup>224</sup> Burroughs perceived that she did not receive an opportunity to work at the DC colored public schools because of skin color prejudice in the black community.<sup>225</sup> Error also highlighted the issue of skin bleaching as a problem that the African American community confronted.<sup>226</sup> Error also referenced the common religious justification that promulgators of racism used to oppress African Americans – the story that black people were the descendants of Ham.<sup>227</sup> In addition, the character of Ignorance derided African Americans about their spotty voting record in elections, without acknowledging the systematic exclusion of blacks from exercising their political rights.<sup>228</sup>

Burroughs juxtaposed the character of Public Opinion with Injustice, Error and Ignorance. Through Public Opinion, she discussed how the public media only published negative things about African Americans. Public Opinion offered that the news media tended to focus on murder, crimes and assaults, boot-legging, and gambling.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>225</sup> Johnson, *Uplifting the Women and the Race*, 55.

<sup>226</sup> Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, 4.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 10. The story of Ham occurred in the Old Testament of the Bible when Noah cursed his son Ham’s descendants to continual servitude.

<sup>228</sup> Litwack, *Trouble in Mind*, 7.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., 39.

Burroughs used the characters in this section to outline common attitudes about whites' superiority. She emphasized that racism was all-encompassing, including the loss of political rights, segregation, skin-color prejudice, and religious and historical justifications for slavery. Her clever use of these characters to lay out particular arguments allows subsequent characters in her play to successfully rebut or refute racism.

The major characters that begin to refute the justifications of racism are Virtues, Historical Characters, Labor, Political Rights and Religious Justifications. In the characters of Fairplay, Truth, and Goodwill, Burroughs mounted a vigorous defense of the immorality of racism. Burroughs introduced the character of Truth by describing her as a handmaiden for Justice.<sup>230</sup> Handmaidens are typically house servants to wealthy households. By assigning Truth a gender, Burroughs made Truth an ardent defender of the contributions of African American women to history.<sup>231</sup> She directed Truth to serve as a counter to the lies of Error, Ignorance and Injustice.

The character of Truth spoke in defense of black womanhood. Truth argued that all civilizations had slavery at one point in time. In addition, Truth analyzed the impact of skin color prejudice in the black community from a positive perspective, arguing that skin pigment protected African Americans from sunlight.<sup>232</sup>

Truth proclaimed the heroic nature of African Americans in the Battle of Erie and the Battle of San Juan Hill during the Spanish-American war.<sup>233</sup> Burroughs made an interesting link between notions of Truth and the role that history played in

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., 17.

changing the social status of African American people. Advocates of the alternative black curriculum in social studies viewed history as playing a crucial role in creating a correct re-telling of the African American experience in the United States.

Burroughs envisioned the character of Goodwill as a representative of the quiet strength of the African American people.<sup>234</sup> She also used Goodwill to assert the role that white allies served in creating social change. Goodwill stated:

Let Injustice and Prejudice keep up their unreasonable attacks, their organized and mischievous Propaganda, their vile onslaughts and they will find men and women, north and south, east and west, in church and state, from the ranks of the humble and from the throne of the mighty, who will not only speak in defense of the race, but will join the Negro in his battle for Justice.<sup>235</sup>

Burroughs clearly believed that whites could serve as important allies in creating social change.

Finally, Fairplay advocated forcefully for addressing ancient and contemporary injustices against black people.<sup>236</sup> Fairplay also argued that African Americans should be treated just like any other race. Fairplay voiced the opinion that all races should come together and jointly address problems. Through Fairplay's character, Burroughs joked, "You cannot solve the Negro problem any better then you can play Hamlet without the ghost."<sup>237</sup> Fairplay argued that African Americans

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<sup>234</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid., 5.

deserved a place at the table to discuss race.<sup>238</sup> Fairplay described how African American children lacked opportunity to grow up in safe communities. Through the character of Fairplay, Burroughs outlined how the unsanitary living conditions of urban areas severely impacted African American children.<sup>239</sup> Burroughs believed that African American children were denied their “birthright” because children had to grow up in “unspeakable living conditions.”<sup>240</sup>

Additionally, Nannie H. Burroughs’ working class ethos permeated *When Truth Gets A Hearing*. Her use of the character Labor demonstrated her concern about how the economy affected the black community. She used Labor to reify her commitment to industrial education. Using the character of the Ex-Slave (who only makes a brief appearance) as a vehicle, Burroughs highlighted the crucial role that African Americans served in building the infrastructure of the United States. Labor represented Burroughs’ views on the importance of black labor to the growth of the US. One of Labor’s speeches is marked by the song, “We Fought Every Race’s Battle but Our Own.”<sup>241</sup> Labor quarreled with Injustice about the persistent wage discrimination that African Americans confronted.<sup>242</sup> The allusion of the song is that exploitation of African American labor resulted in the inability to fully support businesses in their own community. The Labor character referenced the amount of work African Americans had to perform, as well as the wage discrimination and the consistent unemployment that African Americans confronted.<sup>243</sup> The character of

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<sup>238</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., 20.

Labor notes how European immigrants send remittances back home, investing elsewhere instead of the US. In this example, Labor is emphasizing the domestic loyalty of African Americans. Labor argued:

The Italian laborer sends most of his money back home. The Greek sends thousands of dollars back to his native land. The Pole sends American money back to his beloved Poland. This is as it should be, but even while the Negro is digging in the ditch for a dollar, he is singing in his loyal heart, My Country, "Tis for Thee."<sup>244</sup>

This commentary also highlights the increased tensions between racial and ethnic groups in an era which led to the xenophobic passage of the Immigration Reform Acts of 1921-1924.<sup>245</sup>

Burroughs also introduced the character of Negro Business. Through the character of Negro Business, she defended the entrepreneurial spirit of the black community and sympathized with how business owners in the segregated black community struggled to attract customers and grow their businesses. The character Business symbolized the white business community's perspective on why black businesses tended to fail. Business stated:

Operated by Negroes for Negroes; I came opposing that impossible un-American scheme. There is no "Jew" business for Jews, no "Greek" business for Greeks or Chinese business for Chinese; so why then should there be a Negro business for Negroes? Business is business, regardless of race.

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>245</sup> Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

The black character, Negro Business, offered a rebuttal, discussing the difficulties that all businesses confronted in establishing and growing financial institutions such as banks.<sup>246</sup> The character of Legislation probed issues relating to the systematic political disenfranchisement of African Americans, which occurred in the early twentieth century. Between the end of Reconstruction and World War II, African American voting levels decreased to percentage points below ten in most Southern states.<sup>247</sup> Legislation opened its speech with the phrase, “Justice, I am Legislation, I am here to speak for the enforcement of the laws.”<sup>248</sup> She takes the government to task for spending more time in enforcing liquor laws than protecting the political rights of African Americans.<sup>249</sup> Legislation referenced the blood African Americans shed during the Civil War while fighting for the freedoms represented in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. It is through the character of Legislation that the issue of lynching is addressed.<sup>250</sup> During the height of lynching from 1890-1930, more than 3,000 blacks were lynched in southern parts of the United States.<sup>251</sup>

The concerns that African Americans had about the loss of political rights and the lack of enforcement of the Fourteenth and Fifteen Amendments are symbolized through these characters.<sup>252</sup> The strength of Burroughs’ pageant is how she portrayed the complexity and depth of issues that the black community faced in the beginning of the twentieth century. The characters in the play also signified Burroughs’ understanding of the larger issues that informed the field of social studies.

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<sup>246</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>247</sup> Morgan Kousser, *Colorblind Injustice: Minority Voting Rights and the Undoing of the Second Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

<sup>248</sup> Ibid., 35a.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., 35a.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., 36a.

<sup>251</sup> Brundage, *Lynching in the New South*, 8.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., 34.

Through the character of Legislation, the audience could understand how the lack of access to full citizenship rights impacted the black community's participation in American society. Legislation also illustrated the systematic Jim Crow legislation African Americans faced on railroad cars. Legislation argued:

Charging first class fares for seats in dirty, *stenchy* "Jim Crow" is not only highway robbery, but those cars are a disgrace to America's sense of justice."<sup>253</sup>

In 1896, the US Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that separate railroad cars could be maintained for blacks and whites. This case that solidified and legitimized practices of Jim Crow that were already informally in place throughout Southern cities.<sup>254</sup> In this section, Burroughs is railing against the injustice of this court case, which maintained segregation codes throughout the South until the 1950s and 1960s Civil Rights Era.

The historical characters in the play included Representative of the Negro Race, History, and the Representative of Africa. The Representative of the Negro Race introduced the character of History to defend the humanity of the black race. She embodied the notion of the spokesperson figure in the black community. Burroughs position as an important spokesperson in women's political and religious circles possibly prompted her to include this figure in the play. The character entered on the song, "It Pains Me How My Race is Treated." She rebutted claims by Error and Prejudice that African Americans should return to Africa.<sup>255</sup> Instead, The

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<sup>253</sup> Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, 37.

<sup>254</sup> C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955).

<sup>255</sup> Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, 7.

Representative of the Negro Race advocated for recognition of the contributions that the continent of Africa made to the world.

The Representative of Africa came from the ancient black civilization of Abyssinia. The reference to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) is typical of writers of the alternative black curriculum in social studies.<sup>256</sup> Black scholars revered the culture of Ethiopia, often comparing its civilization to Greece and Rome. At one point during the pageant, Burroughs used the Representative of Africa to defend the African race:

Africans are mentally smart, but they are no match for moral perverts, who were not satisfied to steal the African from Africa, but turned around and stole Africa from the Africans. We are not schooled in that kind of states craft. The African is powerful. When he wakes up from his long sleep and girds himself again for the new march out of darkness, the world will face a man.<sup>257</sup>

Throughout the play, Burroughs tended to describe Africa as a continent conflating the many different countries and experiences of the African people into one continuous narrative. The Representative of Africa characterized Africa as an important birth place for black people. One distinct flaw of the narrative embedded in the alternative black curriculum was that African American scholars tended to turn Africa into a country rather than treating it as a distinct continent. With respect to Africa, many black scholars were just as guilty as their white counterparts in distorting key facts about the range of cultures in African history. The character of the Representative of Africa exemplified the stereotype. During the play, the

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<sup>256</sup> Snyder, *Race, Nation and Education*, 124.

<sup>257</sup> Snyder, *Race, Nation and Education*, 16.

Representative of Africa continually compared positively the “African” people to European countries. By not separating African experiences, Representative of Africa confirmed the stereotypes that Africa was a country, not a series of distinct political and social cultures. At the same time, Representative of Africa characterized the continent as an important homeland for black people. In a continual defense of black humanity, scholars sought to reconstruct history for former slaves who often had a difficult time tracing their ancestors. The notion of homeland took on a more complex meaning for African Americans who had been robbed of the opportunity to align with a civilization or nation-state.

Overall, the structure of Burroughs’ pageant allowed African Americans to respond to the injustices prevalent during the period of segregation in a manner non-threatening to white society. Thus, Burroughs’ choice of arts as a vehicle to defend her race embodied one of the few avenues available to oppose white discrimination without severe consequences. In a more politically charged venue such as a published article, Burroughs’ content could have incited a more negative reaction. For example, when Ida B. Wells waged a very public campaign against lynching, she received multiple threats to her safety.<sup>258</sup> Burroughs’ efforts were received more peacefully, as the arts provided a vehicle to portray the complexity of the black experience whilst demonstrating intelligence and creativity in its production.

#### The Content of *When Truth Gets A Hearing*

The theme of African Americans’ continual fight against discrimination was reinforced through Burroughs’ re-evaluation of content. In the 1916 *Report of the*

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<sup>258</sup> Paula Giddings, *Ida: A Sword Among Lions: Ida B. Wells and the Campaign Against Lynching* (New York: Harper Collins Press, 2008).

*Committee on Social Studies on the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Schools*, members proposed a sequence which included the following courses:

“European History to about the 1700s” and “Including the Discovery and Settling of America.” In this curriculum sequence, students were encouraged to learn about the accomplishments of ancient Greeks, the Roman Empire, the Exploration Age, and the rise of England and France as nation-states. These type of courses are exemplars of the importance of European history in US secondary schools curricula in the early part of the twentieth century.

In contrast, in the section on ancient history in *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, Burroughs challenged traditional notions of how students were taught about the world predating 1500 C.E. The section on ancient history begins with Justice declaring, “History, give us the facts about the Negro’s contribution to ancient civilization and to the development of the New World.” By framing the opening of this section of the pageant with an emphasis on facts, Burroughs provided the reader with a guide to implicit critiques of the traditional narrative that followed. In the early part of the pageant, Nannie Helen Burroughs constructed a narrative that paralleled accomplishments in Greece and Rome with those of Egypt, Nubia, and Abyssinia (Ethiopia). Burroughs’ perspective that Egyptians should be included in the black racial group in Africa was quite different from scholars who categorized Egyptians as Middle Eastern and Caucasian. She described how Africans created the Sphinx at Giza and the civilization of Meroe and Abyssinia. Truth argued, “Five thousand years before Christ, black men were building empires in Africa.”<sup>259</sup> By placing the emphasis on the role of race, Burroughs offered an immediate example of how

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<sup>259</sup> Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, 9.

African American scholars were trying to create a link to the past, a past that predated modern Europeans' construction of history. A critical tenet of the alternative black curriculum was the acknowledgment of stories of black leadership in the ancient world. The authors of the alternative black curriculum desired to create an inclusive narrative that authenticated and documented these histories.

Another distinctive characteristic of the alternative black curriculum evident in the pageant is the comparison of African civilizations to the mythic European past. In the ancient history section, Burroughs referenced the history of Germany. She directly attacked notions of European superiority when she wrote, "In fact, [when] the Anglos were barbarians in northern Germany eating food out of the skulls of their ancestors and using the bones of their dead for knives and forks while black men[sic] were at work building civilization in Africa."<sup>260</sup> This direct attack on European assumptions of superiority represented an attempt by Burroughs to strengthen her claim that African civilizations such as the Kingdom of Ghana and Mali were often more advanced than their European counterparts during the Middle Ages. White historians during this period generally accepted dominant discourses about black history and white scholarship. Challenging these discourses was not really mounted until C. Vann Woodward's lectures on the history of "Jim Crow" legislation in the South in 1954.<sup>261</sup> In contrast, W.E.B. Du Bois and others were already unearthing new evidence and interpretations about the black experience in the first decades of the twentieth century.

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<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Novick, *That Noble Dream*, 14

Another aspect of the alternative black curriculum evident in Burroughs' pageant is her illumination of the rich tradition of scholarship on the African continent. Since scholars in the nineteenth century claimed blacks lacked civilization, Burroughs connected African Americans to a past that included significant scholarly accomplishments. She declared:

Justice, the best scholars and historians concede, after years of research and investigation, that Ethiopia, or Black men, gave learning to Egypt-Egypt to Greece-Greece to Rome-Rome to Britain-and Britain to the world. This fact, therefore gives the Negro a high place in the intellectual and political history of the world.<sup>262</sup>

By making the argument that Ethiopia and Egypt gave learning to the Greeks, Burroughs attacked the idea that African Americans were intellectually inferior to their white counterparts. Often the scholarly literature about Burroughs portrays her as a female version of Booker T. Washington, exhorting African American women to a life of labor.<sup>263</sup> In creating an external portrayal of the National Training School for Women and Girls, which focused on training girls for positions of laundresses and secretaries, Burroughs seemed to outwardly remain loyal to Washington's vision. However, in *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, she imparted a more complicated message which included a passionate defense of black intellectualism. Burroughs seemed quite aware that black school leaders needed to communicate a varied message to the diverse audiences who ranged from White philanthropists to the parents of girls who attended her school.

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<sup>262</sup> Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, 14.

<sup>263</sup> Harley, "The Black Goddess of Liberty," 67.

In the US history portion of the pageant, similar themes to the section on ancient history begin to emerge in Burroughs' writing. The play was written in subsequent drafts between 1916 and 1921, and clearly the events of the inter-war period impacted Burroughs' analysis. Evident in the US history section is the focus on African American men's participation in the military. Burroughs traced how black men served in the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, Spanish-American War, and World War I. She referenced the death of Crispus Attucks in the Revolutionary War. Through the pageant, she reinforced the message that African Americans had been loyal patriots. Burroughs wrote in the shadow of the Red Summer of 1919, when race riots occurred in the summer and fall.<sup>264</sup> The focus on black males as citizens and patriots challenged notions of black men as threats to white people of the United States.

In addition, Burroughs also examined the contemporary issue of lynching, which was connected to the Red Summer of 1919. During the summer of 1919, blacks experienced a wave of violence which included clashes amongst the races, massacres and lynching.<sup>265</sup> By addressing the controversial topic of lynching Burroughs again demonstrated the subversive tendencies of the alternative black curriculum. In the section on lynching, Burroughs actively worked to connect racial violence with a lack of enforcement of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments. Burroughs, through the character of Legislation, explained:

This government has spent millions of dollars for the enforcement of the eighteenth Amendment and not one cent for the enforcement of the

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<sup>264</sup> Amy Louise Wood, *Lynching and Spectacle: Witnessing Racial Violence in America, 1890-1940* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

<sup>265</sup> Leon Litwack, *Trouble in Mind*, 7.

14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments. It is more important that men have the liberty in America, than it is for them to not have liquor.<sup>266</sup>

Immediately after discussing issues of legislation, Burroughs referenced the lynching report created by the Commission on Interracial Cooperation. The Commission on Interracial Cooperation was established by a coalition of religious groups including the Atlanta Christian Council and the YMCA War Work Council to investigate the race riots that occurred in the summer of 1919.<sup>267</sup> By referencing these events in the pageant, Burroughs created a forum for her audience to contemplate meanings of African American citizenship in the face of racist conditions.

Burroughs also focused on the labor of women slaves, which she claimed was a crucial component in the establishment of the United States. Burroughs' character Negro Womanhood stated, "I felled trees, tilled fields, protected homes, nursed the children of another race, made brick, built big houses for others and cabins for myself."<sup>268</sup> In her section on black women's labor, Burroughs explored two key themes. First, she sought to combat the stereotype that African Americans lacked a work ethic. One of the central premises of the National Training School for Women and Girls was its emphasis on the role of women's hard work in uplifting the black community.

Secondly, she encouraged African American women to be proud of their work ethic through the voice of Negro Womanhood. In references to Christianity,

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<sup>266</sup> Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, 35a.

<sup>267</sup> Robert L. Blaustein and Robert L. Zangrando, eds., *Civil Rights and the American Negro: A Documentary History* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1968).

<sup>268</sup> Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, 17.

Burroughs clearly wanted to connect the Protestant doctrine to the work that Blacks consistently were required to do throughout the history of the republic.

### Negro Womanhood Defined

In the development of a black historical narrative, Burroughs' work showed similarities to narratives posited by black male historians such as W.E.B. Du Bois and Carter G. Woodson. Pero Gaglo Dagbovie discussed how black women served as practical implementers of the alternative black curriculum.<sup>269</sup> Nannie H. Burroughs and many other black women educators not only implemented the alternative black curriculum in their schools but also added to key discourses about the history of African Americans in the United States. Much like her male colleagues, Burroughs appeared interested in uplifting and defending the black race through history. However, Burroughs in her pageant, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, added to the narrative by conceptualizing the role of black womanhood in the United States and in world history quite differently.

For example, one of the explicit themes both Du Bois and Burroughs considered in their pageants was the impact that black women had on United States and ancient world history. In the *Star of Ethiopia* Du Bois idealized the image of a saintly African American woman. He created a character, "The Veiled Woman," who appeared throughout the pageant, symbolizing the dignity and splendor of black womanhood. He wrote:

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<sup>269</sup> Dagbovie, "Black Women, Carter G. Woodson and the Association for Negro Life and History," 30.

At last dimly enhaloed [sic] in mysterious light, the Veiled Woman appears, commanding in stature and splendid in garment, her dark face faintly visible, and in her right hand Fire, and Iron her left.<sup>270</sup>

Evident in this quote is Du Bois' attempt to romanticize black women. "The Veiled Woman" is symbolic of strength but his characterization of black women leaves them silenced in a conversation about change in the black community. Joy James critiqued Du Bois' portrayal of women in his literary works when she stated:

Du Bois's fictional portraits of African American women emphasize and romanticize the strength of black women. They thus differ from his non-fiction writing regarding individual African American women. Although Du Bois makes no chauvinistic pronouncements like the aristocratic ones characterized in his early writings on the Talented Tenth, his nonfiction minimizes black female agency. Without misogynist dogma his writings naturalize the dominance of black males in African American political discourse.<sup>271</sup>

Throughout *Star of Ethiopia*, Du Bois continued to provide his male characters (such as Mansa Musa, Stephen Dorantes, Touissant L'Ouverture, John Brown and Frederick Douglass) with far more agency than women in the fight against oppression and racism. In Du Bois' framing of black history, black womanhood became idealized. As a result, black women lost their potency as equal advocates to men in promoting freedom in the African American community.

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<sup>270</sup> *The Star of Ethiopia*, by W.E.B. Du Bois, directed by Charles Burroughs. October 1913. W.E.B. Du Bois Papers, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, <http://www.library.umass.edu/spcoll/dubois/>.

<sup>271</sup> James, *Transcending the Talented Tenth*, 36.

Nannie H. Burroughs conceived the role of black women quite differently. She explicitly mentioned the impact of the Queen of Sheba and Candace (Queen of Meroe) leadership of kingdoms in ancient civilization. She praised the accomplishments of black women generally but also provided specific examples in history giving clearer shape to the work of women. More explicitly, she gendered the role of black labor. In one particular passage, the dynamic became evident. She wrote:

Truth: Justice, this is an ex-slave. Will you let (her) tell her about her contribution to the up building of America.<sup>272</sup>

In the pageant, the character of “ex-slave” delivered a speech about black women’s labor. Through this speech, Burroughs squarely placed the work of black women on an equal status with black men. Thus, in Burroughs’ vision of the alternative black curriculum, women’s agency played a critical role. Instead of idealizing the black woman, she explicitly argued about the concrete contributions of African American women to the construction of black nationhood.

The ancient history section of *When Truth Gets A Hearing* also stresses the role of Black women as creators in history. Burroughs writes about Candace, Queen of the Meroe civilization. When the Meroe civilization was ruled by a line of queens they were also known as a *candace* or *kandake*.<sup>273</sup> With this example, Burroughs tries to establish that women of color have always served as leaders in their communities. Burroughs may have attempted to include a perspective that would

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<sup>272</sup> Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, 17

<sup>273</sup> G, Mokhtar, *General History of Africa: Ancient Civilizations of Africa* (Berkeley, CA: Unesco, 1990), 76.

highlight the accomplishments of black women, because she served as a leader in a predominantly African American setting. Indeed, Burroughs subverted common ideologies of women relegated to the home. This pageant directly supported the idea that African American girls served their world outside of the domestic sphere. Burroughs publicly emphasized the connection between the role of labor and the black woman, since the National Training School was reliant on outside philanthropists. The use of Candace, however, points to a more subtle message: black women had royal traits and heritage and could be leaders beyond the narrowly circumscribed roles as domestics that were the focus of industrial education for girls.

In her section on United States history, Burroughs also extended the alternative black curriculum to a defense of black womanhood. Burroughs wrote, “I represent Negro Womanhood. For 250 years I worked in the cornfields, kept the big house like a palace, nursed the children of my master and loved them with a love and tenderness such as the world has never seen and will never see again.”<sup>274</sup> Here, Burroughs acknowledged the role over time that labor played in African American women’s identity. She offered a counter-narrative to the diminished role that black women were often relegated to in segregated America. She called for black women’s work to be recognized. Burroughs’ perspective is complicated, though, by her reliance on the common sentimentality of the slave woman and her care of white children, which was associated with images of Southern womanhood during that time period. African American women in the post-Reconstruction era struggled to define themselves in both the private and public sphere. Throughout her pageant, Burroughs

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<sup>274</sup> Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, 28.

seeks to create a narrative that views black women as significant contributors to their community.<sup>275</sup>

### A Comparison of Pageants

*The Star of Ethiopia* and *When Truth Gets A Hearing* possess important similarities and differences. The purpose of both pageants is to provide a passionate defense of black humanity and freedom. Each of these pageants utilized music extensively. Music played a central role in *When Truth Gets A Hearing*. At critical moments Burroughs shifted the momentum of the play forward with a variety of music, which assisted in setting the mood for a particular scene. She mostly used spirituals, including, “I am on a Shining Path,” “Steal Away Jesus,” “Go Down Moses,” “Oh Freedom,” “I am so Glad,” and “I Shall Not Be Moved.” Obviously, given Burroughs’ deep religious faith, it is not surprising that she relied quite heavily on Christian spirituals to score her pageant. During slavery, spirituals performed an essential role in the slave quarters and the free black community. Eugene D.

Genovese theorized about the role of spirituals in the black community:

They don’t necessarily refer to deliverance in this world or in the other, for they might mean either or both. But either way or both ways, they might imply the immanence of God’s justice here or hereafter, as He sees fit to bestow it.<sup>276</sup>

Furthermore, the music tradition was deeply embedded in the oral tradition of slave society. Prohibited by law from learning to read and write after the 1830s, African

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<sup>275</sup> Stephanie Shaw, *What a Woman Ought to Be and to Do: Black Professional Women During the Jim Crow Era* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1996).

<sup>276</sup> Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll Jordan Roll: The World That Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), 249.

American slaves utilized music and songs as part of their historical memory making.<sup>277</sup> Underlying *When Truth Gets A Hearing* is this belief that blacks deserved God's justice in the afterlife for the treatment they received from whites. Burroughs utilized spirituals in conjunction with the dialogue to cement this theme. Burroughs also explored the impact of race in the Bible. She used the character Simon the Cyrenian to exemplify how African Americans contributed to the story of Jesus Christ's crucifixion. She referenced Cyrenian being from North Africa, which she argued made his race black. Even with referencing religious history, Burroughs made an explicit argument about the value of blackness to larger society.<sup>278</sup>

Burroughs used music to reference the popular culture of the period. Stephen Foster penned the parlor song, "Old Black Joe" in an attempt to capture nostalgia about life on plantations. Whites enjoyed listening to music similar to this in the form of minstrel shows that were popular in the period prior to the Civil War.<sup>279</sup> Burroughs used "Old Black Joe" to introduce the character of the ex-slave in her pageant. Burroughs' use of the song attempted to evoke the audience members' memories of plantation life; however, the ex-slaves' pointed dialogue exposed the difficult conditions of life on the plantation.

Burroughs used the musical form of ragtime to support the dialogue in the section on the Spanish American War. She referenced the song, "There will be a Hot-Time in the Old Town Tonight." Again, music served as a landscape to conjure up memories for the audience, as this ragtime ballad, composed in 1896, was popular in

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<sup>277</sup> Janet D. Cornelius, *Slave Missions and the Black Church in the Antebellum South* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999.)

<sup>278</sup> Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, 17.

<sup>279</sup> Burton W. Peretti, *Lift Every Voice: The History of African American Music* (Boulder, CO: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 26.

the Spanish American War. Although a devout Christian, Burroughs understood that ragtime served as an important cultural reference for her predominantly African American audience. Burroughs also referenced the blues tradition in *When Truth Gets A Hearing*. Burroughs used the song, “You Bettah Mind” to introduce the Representative of the Negro Race. Blues was an especially appropriate choice for this character because blues musicians captured the complexities of African American life under the regime of Jim Crow.<sup>280</sup> Burroughs ends the pageant with the audience singing the black national anthem, “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” Written in 1900 by John R. Rosamund Johnson and James Weldon Johnson, “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” was created to celebrate the anniversary of Abraham Lincoln’s birthday.<sup>281</sup> Burroughs’ strategic use of music underscored the themes embedded in the alternative black curriculum in social studies.

W.E.B. Du Bois used music more sparingly than Burroughs. He waits until Scene IV, Episode X, to fully employ music. In Scene IV, black freedom fighters, Nat Turner, Toussaint L’Overture, and John Brown, appeared. Du Bois made reference to three songs: “Walk Together Children,” “Marching through Georgia,” and “John Brown’s Body.” The most famous song, “John Brown’s Body” served as a rally cry for Union soldiers during the Civil War.<sup>282</sup> Similar to Burroughs, W.E.B. Du Bois was attempting to provide the audience with songs that would evoke feelings of pride in the fight for African Americans freedom. The strategic use of music played a

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<sup>280</sup> Peretti, *Lift Every Voice*, 68.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> Franny Nudelman, *John Brown’s Body: Slavery, Violence & the Culture of War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 1.

central role in constructing a narrative of freedom and redemption in the alternative black curriculum.

Structurally, W.E.B. Du Bois imbued mystical dreamlike qualities to his production of the alternative black curriculum. He framed his pageants by focusing on the “gifts” that African Americans brought to the world. He wrote the pageant in five scenes: Scene One, “The Gifts of Faith,”; Scene Two, “The Dream of Egypt,”; Scene Three, “The Glory of Ethiopia,”; Scene Four, “The Valley of Humiliation,”; Scene Five, “The Vision Everlasting.” In contrast, Burroughs framed her pageant by using the backdrop of a court scene in which African Americans were on trial defending their humanity.

Unlike Burroughs, W.E.B. Du Bois used dialogue between the different characters only minimally.<sup>283</sup> Instead he tended to use imagery to allow the audience to recognize the strength of African Americans. In the first scene, Du Bois referenced ancient history and the role that iron played in developing ancient civilizations.<sup>284</sup> The second scene explored the connection between Egypt and the kingdoms of black Africa. The third scene mentions the leadership of Queen Candace, Mansa Musa, and Mohammed Askia from 200-1500. The fourth scene dealt with the humiliation and trials of slavery. Finally, in the last scene former slaves removed the psychological chains of the past.

In comparing these two narratives, important elements of the alternative black curriculum emerge. The narrative that black scholars used to re-center black history

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<sup>283</sup> It appears in subsequent drafts the director of the pageant, Charles Burroughs, added additional descriptions in order to provide the actors some with more direction. In addition, in the archives there also appeared a draft of *The Star of Ethiopia* that was directed to a women’s group in Ohio where some of the dialogue was changed to further address the accomplishments of women.

<sup>284</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois, *Star of Ethiopia*, Episode 1, 1.

began with a discourse of Egypt and Ethiopia. In *The Star of Ethiopia*, Du Bois depicted Ethiopia as the cradle of African American civilization. For example, in Scene Three, Candace of Ethiopia hosted a feast with all the leaders of black civilization. This is a creation of historical fiction. However, by creating this scene, Du Bois attempted to conceptualize a glorious African past. Often in scholarly traditions, versions of Ancient Greece and Rome are at the heart of instruction. Du Bois and Burroughs were very explicit that the histories of Egypt and Ethiopia begin the narrative that grounded the alternative black curriculum.

In considering the alternative black curriculum, it is important to also explore the role of spirituality and religion, critical institutions of support and affirmation for the black community. For example, very early on in the pageant, Burroughs wrote:

You are Jehovah's sleepless, tireless servant. You were here when Jehovah laid the foundation of the earth, stretched the lines upon it, and laid the corner stone. You were here when the morning stars sang together; when the Mighty God shut up the sea with doors and said to the waters of the earth, "Hither shalt thou come, but no further." You were here when He turned darkness into light; when He made a way for the lightning and the thunder, You were here. You were here when He created man. It was at that time that He gave me life and clothed me with power and authority to preside over his World Court. You have been generation after generation, race after race, empire after empire, nation after nation, rise and fall, work and triumph, falter and fall, but we two have never failed our Creator and never will.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> Burroughs, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, 2.

Embedded in this example is Burroughs' deep faith and religiosity. Throughout her entire career, Burroughs never separated her faith from her commitment to public service. Religious themes were also apparent throughout *The Star of Ethiopia*.

W.E.B. Du Bois used the history of Christianity to defend African American history. In his text, he examined the interplay between the religions of Christianity and Islam. For example, in Scene III, Episode VII, he referenced the battles between ancient African religion and Islam. Du Bois is much more interested in the dynamic between religion and its impact on world history. W.E.B. Du Bois portrayed John Brown, the famous abolitionist, as a crucial moral and religious catalyst to the start of the Civil War.

The pageants' treatment of history gave shape to the content of the alternative black curriculum. In terms of content, both pageants highlighted the horrific Middle Passage, emphasized the contribution of black labor, and discussed the impact of Crispus Attucks on the start of the American Revolution. However both authors also added their own interpretations of history to the alternative black curriculum. W.E.B. Du Bois added a geographical interpretation to history. In the last scene of the play, W.E.B. Du Bois used imagery of the five key river systems of the world to highlight the contributions that African Americans made to the world. For instance, he used the Mississippi River as a literary device to give African American's gift of Knowledge to the world. He then used the Congo River to symbolize African Americans' gift of Labor to the world. These references alluded to the common idea that Africa served as the geographical center of the world.

Burroughs elaborated on the impact of Christianity on black America. Burroughs used a historical pageant to connect African American's past to contemporary events in a compelling fashion. Burroughs work is not as much homage to black ancestry but rather a frontal attack to institutional racism. Burroughs intended *When Truth Gets A Hearing* to be an appropriate vehicle to not only capture the vitality of the black experience but demonstrate agency to combat injustice.

## Chapter Five

### Operationalizing the Alternative Black Curriculum in Social Studies: A Case Study of the Social Studies Curriculum of the National Training School for Women and Girls

Beginning in the mid-1920s the National Training School for Women for Girls in Washington D.C. hosted an annual Appreciation Day. Located on the program, underneath the title of Nannie Helen Burroughs (President) was a quote:

To pay tribute to those men and women who worked for abolition of slavery and those who helped establish the “going” of race in America.<sup>286</sup>

This quote expressed the purpose of Appreciation Day programs which celebrated the history of African Americans in the United States. During the programs, African American girls used music, oratory, poems and prayers to celebrate the lives of black people. On the Fifth Annual Appreciation Day, a student Miss Doris Nelson recited a speech about the “Underground Railroad” and Miss Georgiana Butler spoke on the “Appreciation of the Negroes’ African Background.” These speeches typified the oration that occurred on Appreciation Days. Encapsulated in the above example is one of Nannie H. Burroughs’ attempts to create an instructional vision that was rich in the achievement of African Americans. With both the dual purpose of uplifting and fundraising, the Appreciation Days at NTS imparted a specific narrative about the history of the United States.

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<sup>286</sup> Burroughs, *Appreciation Day Program*, Box 312, Library of Congress. The word “going” is in the program it means the continuing struggle of African-Americans.

In black schools across the nation and in community locations such as churches and libraries, black educators attempted to reframe US and world history to include an accurate re-telling of the struggle of African Americans.<sup>287</sup> However, the physical space which Nannie H. Burroughs nurtured was unique for she created a school geared specifically for the achievement and affirmation of African American girls. The number of public schools which served solely African American girls was minimal during the first decades of the twentieth century.<sup>288</sup> Financial limitations often made single-sex education prohibitive for struggling black private schools. Detailed documentation of how many private black girls schools existed has not yet been carried out, but NTS and the Daytona Literary and Industrial School for Training Negro Girls, which became Bethune-Cookman College in 1924, are the two best known.<sup>289</sup>

As indicated in Chapter Four, Nannie H. Burroughs also constructed a specific narrative about black history. She not only created a school site, she authored a pageant which promoted an alternative approach to history. However, in thinking about the alternative black curriculum in social studies, Burroughs was ironically afforded the opportunity that Carter G. Woodson and W.E.B. Du Bois never had or desired as intellectual academics—she was able to operationalize an alternative black curriculum in social studies for a school.

In this chapter I will analyze how Nannie H. Burroughs' approach to social studies was operationalized at NTS. I will consider the following questions:

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<sup>287</sup> Des Jardins, *Reclaiming the Past and Present*, 265.

<sup>288</sup> David Tyack and Elizabeth Hansot, *Learning Together: A History of Co-Education in American Public Schools* (New York: The Russell Sage Foundation, 1992).

<sup>289</sup> Veronica Thomas and Janine A. Jackson, "The Education of African Girls and Women: Past to the Present," *The Journal of Negro Education* 76 (Summer 2007):357-372.

- 1.) What was Nannie H. Burroughs' vision for the history curriculum at NTS?  
How were the history courses a negotiated terrain between Burroughs and her teachers?
- 2.) What were the key elements of the alternative black curriculum that were present in the social studies instructional program of the school?
- 3.) To what degree did Nannie H. Burroughs succeed in creating a school that provided girls the opportunity to learn a curriculum rooted in black history?

### Theoretical Considerations

In the book, *Young Gifted and Black*, Theresa Perry articulated a theory of academic achievement for African American children. She made the argument that African American schools were “intentionally organized to oppose the ideology of Black intellectual inferiority.”<sup>290</sup> It is clear that Nannie H. Burroughs attempted to create a school that tried to resist the dominant culture's attempts to categorize African American children as inferior. In building NTS, Nannie H. Burroughs created curriculum, clubs, and activities which in Perry's words attempted to affirm her students' “Black humanity, Black intelligence, and Black achievement.”<sup>291</sup> So, when analyzing NTS, it is important to place her work in this theoretical context. When building her school, Burroughs had to be explicit about crafting a particular school culture.

Nannie H. Burroughs represented a fascinating case of an educator who dealt with one of the central challenges women reformers in the social studies confronted as she attempted to combine “low-status practice” with efforts to create new

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<sup>290</sup> Perry, *Young, Gifted and Black*, 88.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

epistemologies.<sup>292</sup> In her play, “*When Truth Gets A Hearing*,” she authored a portion of the alternative black curriculum. She created a specific narrative that added to the content of the alternative black curriculum in social studies. However, under her leadership at NTS, Burroughs worked to infuse her narratives about black history into the rich complexities of school life.

Unlike many public black school principals under segregation, Burroughs could operate her building without oversight from white school boards.<sup>293</sup> Burroughs’ freedom enabled her to offer a more varied curriculum and provided her with the liberty to go about the “practical” work of her school with a creative flair.

#### Methodological Considerations

Historians have found researching change in instructional practices over time challenging.<sup>294</sup> Unlike contemporary qualitative researchers who can capture conversations between individuals via digital means, the historian’s analysis of dialogue which occurred between administrators and staff is limited to the extant archival records. Nonetheless, faculty meeting notes developed as rich sources for understanding the evolution of her social studies curriculum. In meetings with her staff, Burroughs gave motivational speeches, set clear expectations for students and focused on the logistics of operating the school on a daily basis. Her teachers gave updates about the performances of students and expressed frustrations about

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<sup>292</sup> Christine Woysner, “Notes towards a Historiography of Social Studies,” in *Research Methods in Social Studies Education: Contemporary Issues and Perspectives* ed., Keith Barton (Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing, 2006), 3.

<sup>293</sup> Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Hello Professor: a black principal and professional leadership in the segregated south* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

<sup>294</sup> Larry Cuban, *How Teachers Taught: Constancy and Change in American Classrooms 1890-1990* (New York: Teacher College Press, 1994).

classroom management. These documents provided insight into the dialogue that informed the social studies curriculum in her building.

I examined the documents with an eye towards elements of Nannie H. Burroughs' vision. I looked at public statements such as "How We Have Been Helped by Negro History," and "Our Music, We Sing at the School." I studied her public speeches as well as the speeches she gave to her staff. Finally, I analyzed these documents searching for the evolution of how Nannie. H Burroughs' vision, of a nurturing environment for African American girls, impacted her school. Burroughs' vision drove how the curriculum was constructed and carried out in her school.

In order to develop a curriculum history at NTS, I explored the documents that gave voice to the teachers in the building. During the school's fifty-two years (1909-1961) operation, numerous teachers were hired in the building. To capture the experiences of teachers I looked for patterns concerning instructional decisions teachers made daily. The lesson plans served a foundational role in my analysis of teacher work. Lesson plans are particularly important in recapturing teachers' instruction because the plans revealed the daily decisions of teachers. The lesson plans also demonstrated how teachers reconciled Burroughs' vision with the insistent demands of classroom instruction. The weaknesses of lesson plans as source of data is they represent a small percentage of what teachers might cover on a daily basis. Lesson plans also don't accurately reflect how successfully teachers implemented the content they aimed to teach. Their decisions were clarified in the objectives and strategies described in lesson plans. I also examined the final examinations generated

by history teachers in order to establish which topics and ideas were valued in history classes.

Finally, in constructing this curriculum history I searched for student voice. Capturing student voice tests the education historian because students often had the least amount of power in a school setting; recovering their thoughts and ideas represents the most challenge for the researcher. In order to capture the faint sound of student voices, I looked at documents that showed how students participated in the school. I examined the Appreciation Day programs for when students spoke and I looked at the *1929 Student Annual* where students summarized key events that happened during that school year. In addition, I analyzed student answers to history examinations. I also considered two student projects, one on Dorie Miller, the first African American sailor to receive the Navy Cross, and the other on the history of Germany during World War Two. Both provided insight into the knowledge that students were accruing in their history classes.

### Teaching and Learning at NTS

Nannie H. Burroughs created NTS to support the development of African American girls. She emphasized the importance of Christian service and virtue.<sup>295</sup> In the design of her school she advocated for a space for black girls to develop an identity centered on service to the community and success. She developed the social studies program at NTS with that purpose in mind. She argued for the necessity of education for African American girls in one of her promotional brochures when she stated:

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<sup>295</sup> Burroughs, *Miss Burroughs Appeals to Parents to Save Their Girls Now*, undated, Box 46.

Our race will be morally bankrupt if parents do not put first things first in the care and protection of their daughters. If they must be away from home all day, they should send their daughters to the best Christian boarding schools, so that they can get the kind of training that will prepare them for the great day of economic competition that is surely coming.<sup>296</sup>

While she was appealing to parents' sense of morality and race loyalty as a means to enroll more students, the girls were exposed to a more radical environment. She generated a space where African American girls could see themselves and their contributions to history at the center of the curriculum and developed a school that combated the patriarchy of the black community.

Nannie Helen Burroughs articulated a clear set of principles to guide instruction at NTS. At the heart of her instructional vision was her desire for her staff to learn about the lives and interests of the girls attending the school. She encouraged her staff to “get to know the girls in order to motivate them.”<sup>297</sup> She exhorted her staff to exhibit a high level of enthusiasm in working with the students during and after school. In a rousing speech on November 22, 1942 to the faculty, Burroughs stated:

We have gone through difficult days here, but I am convinced that God is going to restore us very fully all of the things we have had and that He is going to give us more things. I believe that God is helping me by giving those who take this work as seriously as I do.....

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<sup>296</sup> Burroughs, *Miss Burroughs Appeals to Parents to Save Their Girls Now*, undated, Box 46.

<sup>297</sup> Burroughs, *Faculty Meeting Notes*, November 22, 1942, Box 46.

“A CAUSE LIKE THIS” requires that we-

- (1) Know Young People.
- (2) Influence in character ideals

It requires “heart interest” in our ideal.

“A CAUSE LIKE THIS” means team-work.

“A CAUSE LIKE THIS” is hurt, damaged, destroyed, and defeated by petty, selfish, weak, lazy teachers.<sup>298</sup>

This speech demonstrated the level of passion that Burroughs brought to her work as leader of the school. Burroughs expected an immense amount of passion for students being educated in her building.

Burroughs viewed education as an ethical enterprise wherein teachers served as important role models for the girls in the building. In the NTS *Code of Professional Ethics* Burroughs detailed her expectations. In the code Burroughs encouraged her teachers to “dignify their calling” in their interaction with students.<sup>299</sup> She encouraged staff not to critique their supervisors and cooperate with the administration of the building. In the *Code of Ethics* she emphasized that teachers be kind and refrain from gossip about co-workers. She ended the *Code of Ethics* with the phrase, “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pitchers of silver.”<sup>300</sup>

In a humorous little survey, Burroughs queried the professional attitude of her staff. She asked questions such as: “Do you have a good alibi for your mistakes? Do you often wear a martyr’s expression? Do you denounce every set of new pupils as

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<sup>298</sup> Burroughs, *Faculty Meeting Notes*, Box 46.

<sup>299</sup> Burroughs, *Code of Professional Ethics*, undated, Box 311.

<sup>300</sup> Burroughs, *Code of Professional Ethics*, undated, Box 311.

“dumber than the last”? Do you say Yes, but this is different-in reference to your shortcomings? Do you beat the children to the door at dismissal?”<sup>301</sup> Employing a sarcastic tone, Burroughs sought to show teachers that having high standards and a love for your work was fundamental to being a staff member at her school.

In an undated document Burroughs outlined the principles of a successful classroom. In classroom instruction, she encouraged teachers to provide a well-organized classroom that supported student learning. Burroughs advocated for drills and a series of higher order thinking questions to convey critical facts to students. She supported instruction with a daily planning period. She suggested that teachers use the radio to learn about key events in the community. She advocated for debates to execute student learning. She encouraged students to tutor other students.<sup>302</sup> Compared to descriptions of traditional education in early twentieth century, Burroughs exuded a somewhat modern sensibility about how staff should interact with the student population. In an era where conservative instruction methods were the norm, Burroughs encouraged a variety of methods that encouraged students’ participation and excitement. She sought to create a school where students were engaged in a student-centered learning environment.

In order to establish a sense of unity among the senior high staff, Burroughs conducted meetings where faculty could share concerns and problems. In addition, by speaking with her staff they were afforded the opportunity to brainstorm ways to work with students. Although Burroughs appeared to be quite strict with her

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<sup>301</sup> Burroughs *Take Your Professional Temperature*, undated, Box 311.

<sup>302</sup> Burroughs, *Take Your Professional Temperature*, undated, Box 311.

expectations, she afforded her staff the opportunity to be respectful participants in building her vision.

Although Nannie H. Burroughs set the tone for her school, the faculty voiced their opinions and concerns respectfully to Burroughs. On November 8, 1941, Ms. Burroughs held a staff meeting with the following agenda: Reports, Minutes, Proposal, Assignments and Remarks.<sup>303</sup> Mrs. Etta Head, social science teacher, immediately voiced a concern about instruction, “The class seems to be unable to get into the text. All of my other classes are doing good work, and I am unable to diagnose the trouble with this class.” The meeting notes reflect that her colleagues suggested Mrs. Head try to motivate students using their own interests and a variety in presentation for her lecture topics. She agreed to allow her students to write their own questions and let other students answer peer-generated questions. Mrs. Head seemed to be confounded with how to keep her class engaged in the topic. Mrs. Head’s problems are not unusual; teachers confront this tension daily and struggle with levels of engagement. In addition, Mrs. Gunn, a sewing teacher, brought her colleagues’ attention to the problem of a student, Miss Mildred Nixon. Miss Nixon had apparently skipped a meeting with Mrs. Gunn about an assignment. Burroughs brought Miss Nixon into the meeting and admonished Miss Nixon about her responsibilities as a student.<sup>304</sup> She demanded that Miss Nixon not miss any future meetings with her teacher.

#### Ms. Burroughs’ Vision of History Instruction at NTS

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<sup>303</sup> Burroughs, *N.T.&P Teachers’ Conference*, November 8, 1941, Box 311.

<sup>304</sup> Burroughs, *N.T.&P Teachers’ Conference*, November 8, 1941, Box 311.

To examine how the alternative black curriculum developed, the method Nannie H. Burroughs and her teachers used to build a social studies program at NTS will be analyzed. In order to examine the nature of teaching and learning of social studies at NTS, I will look at (1) how social studies was broadly defined at NTS, (2) how Nannie H. Burroughs integrated black history in the instructional program at NTS, and (3) how teachers responded to Burroughs's vision in their classroom instruction.

Despite advertising NTS as a school focused on providing girls with opportunities to work as domestic servants and secretaries, Nannie H. Burroughs provided a surprisingly classical education for her students.<sup>305</sup> Walking the tightrope that many African American instructional leaders faced, Burroughs scheduled rigorous coursework while promoting the image of a focus on "industrial education" for outside donors.<sup>306</sup> In her social studies program students took a wide range of courses. These courses included: US History, Modern European History, Ancient History, Psychology, Sociology, Negro History, and Problems of American Democracy.<sup>307</sup>

The breadth of the history courses offered was impressive. Burroughs' recommendations for social studies appeared to follow a sequence that was recommended by the Committee of Ten (1893) and The Committee of Seven (1916).<sup>308</sup> Her textbooks choices included, *The History of Europe-Our Own Times*, by James Harvey and Charles Austin Beard; *Modern European Civilization*, by

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<sup>305</sup> Bair, "Educating Black Girls," 23.

<sup>306</sup> Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 92.

<sup>307</sup> Burroughs, *Liberal Arts Division-Courses Given*, Box 314.

<sup>308</sup> Burroughs, *Textbook Orders*, Box 311.

Hilton Walker; *American People*, by David Saville Muzzey ;and *Leading Facts in American History*, by D.H. Montgomery. In addition, she also required *The Negro in Our History* and *The Story of the American Negro* by Carter G. Woodson.<sup>309</sup>

Many of these works focused heavily on the accomplishments on European civilizations. However, despite this traditional focus on the master narrative it is clear that Burroughs envisioned a more expansive program for her girls. Beginning in the 1920s, she began to incorporate black history into the instructional program at NTS.<sup>310</sup> Possibly influenced by her growing collaboration with Carter G. Woodson and the International Council of Women of the Darker Races, Burroughs began to establish programs and resources that celebrated black history.<sup>311</sup>

In constructing an alternative black curriculum in social studies, Nannie H. Burroughs combined the visions of Carter G. Woodson and W.E.B. Du Bois. She created a school focused on conveying a particular narrative of history with a focus on the arts. Throughout her tenure as an instructional leader of NTS, Burroughs integrated historical narratives with visual and performing arts in an attempt to motivate student learning. In an undated document entitled, “Our Music, We Sing at this School” the author wrote:

The President [referring to Burroughs], of the training school realizes the value of our own music, and she takes time to teach students the value of our own songs and the art of singing them. She makes us feel

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<sup>309</sup> Burroughs, *Textbook Orders*, Box 311.

<sup>310</sup> Bair, “Educating Black Girls,”20.

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid.*,20.

the spirit of the songs, and develops in the entire school a real appreciation for what our race has done in the field of music.<sup>312</sup>

In this quotation the connection between arts as a primary vehicle for transmitting the alternative black curriculum is present. Throughout her career, Burroughs used music to provide context for the black experience in the US.

Initially, in her experiment with black history, Burroughs focused on extracurricular activities such as Annual Appreciation Days and her pageant, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*. In both of these activities a historical narrative of achievement and sacrifice is present. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Burroughs conveyed particular themes about black history. For example, at Appreciation Days students spoke on the following topics: Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, Myrtilla Miner,<sup>313</sup> African American Christian missionaries, Toussaint L'Overture, and key achievements of African civilizations.<sup>314</sup> It is interesting to note that Burroughs always included references to important white allies in the struggle for freedom. For example, in each Appreciation Days program there are references to Abraham Lincoln, John Brown, the Underground Railroad and other key white abolitionists who served the cause of freedom. Throughout Burroughs' work on the alternative black curriculum there is a constant thread of how allies assisted African Americans in their fight for freedom.

In both of the pageant and Appreciation Days, a historical narrative of achievement and sacrifice are present. However, it appears that although there is an

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<sup>312</sup> Burroughs, *Our Music*, undated, Box 312.

<sup>313</sup> Myrtilla Miner was a white educator who founded the Normal School for Colored Girls in Washington D.C.

<sup>314</sup> Burroughs, *Appreciation Day Programs*, Box 312.

attempt made by Burroughs to create an atmosphere encouraging a love for black history outside the classroom, the content of the history classes stayed fairly conservative. For example, the final examinations given to secondary students, revealed a primary concern with topics such as the accomplishments of Grecian democracy to history.<sup>315</sup> So, while we see Burroughs begin to infuse her school with black history themes, there is hesitation by the teachers to fully abandon their attachments to a narrative reliant on the dominant culture.

Beginning in the 1930s but most clearly present in the 1940s, a stand-alone class in Negro history is developed.<sup>316</sup> Burroughs' stand-alone class in African American history is not unique. Jonathan Zimmerman posited that, beginning in the 1930s, many segregated black high schools began to adopt African American textbooks and Negro History courses.<sup>317</sup> By the late 1930s, African American students in segregated schools as far South as Mississippi could take elective courses in black history.<sup>318</sup> This stand-alone class appeared in a master schedule of the school as well as a list of textbooks that had been purchased at NTS.<sup>319</sup> In a photograph dated 1935 the words, "This Room is for the Study of Negro History," is written proudly on the blackboard of one of her classrooms.<sup>320</sup> Despite the evidence of the course being taught in the building, it was difficult to determine the exact nature of what was being taught by instructors of that particular course.

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<sup>315</sup> Burroughs, *History Tests*, 1920-1921, Box 311.

<sup>316</sup> Burroughs, *Liberal Arts Division Schedule*, 1946-1947, Box 314.

<sup>317</sup> Zimmerman, *Whose America? Culture Wars in the Public Schools*, 46.

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>319</sup> Burroughs, *Liberal Arts Division Schedule*, 1946-1947, Box 314.

<sup>320</sup> Located within the digital collection of the Library of Congress there is a classroom picture with a sign stating, "This room is for the study of Negro history." This photograph provided corroborating evidence that there was indeed Negro History being taught in this class: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/coll/item/2004667312/>.

## History Teachers at NTS

Located within the Burroughs archives are the names of social studies instructors. Among them are Lena Jones, I. Orontes Wood, E.J. Bonds and Etta Head, who served the school from the 1920s through the 1950s. In examining the documents, it appears that the majority of teachers in the building were women. Challenged by Burroughs to implement her vision, teachers left the central artifacts of their craft, lesson plans and final exams, for our review. Embedded within these lesson plans is an approach to history narrative and pedagogy that is quite conservative.

A review of the final assessments teachers gave their students during the academic year 1920-1921 gives a glimpse of the type of knowledge the social studies teachers valued. During these years, Lena Jones, I. Orontes Wood and Pauline Oberdorfer were the teachers.<sup>321</sup> Most of these individuals taught the girls in the upper level courses.

I. Orontes Woods' United States history final exams revealed the following topics in her class: nullification, John. C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, tariffs, Missouri Compromise, Battle of New Orleans, and the incident on the ships the Monitor and the Merrimac.<sup>322</sup> Obviously, these topics are not representative of the entire body of work Woods taught; however, it provides a sense of the type of information that Woods valued. In addition, on the final examination Woods required students to answer fill in the blank questions:

Who Said----

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<sup>321</sup> Burroughs, *History Tests*, 1921-1922, Box 311.

<sup>322</sup> Burroughs, *History Tests*, 1921-1922, Box 311.

“Our Federal Union! It must be preserved”!

“I can scarcely contemplate a more incalculable evil than the breaking of the Union into two or more parts.”<sup>323</sup>

This form of assessment mirrored the traditional pedagogical approach in history.

Pauline Oberdorfer’s First Preparatory Class focused on the early events of United States history. On her final exam she asked about Sir Walter Raleigh and the settlement of Roanoke Island. In addition, she taught about Native Americans and the colony of Jamestown.<sup>324</sup> In this section, the only direct reference to the history of African Americans was a question on the arrival of slaves to Jamestown. Even though she mentions the first slaves’ arrival to the New World, she does not offer a complete history of the early role that Africans played in Jamestown. In the early period of NTS, the curriculum maintains a very specific focus on traditional U.S. history narratives.

Lena Jones taught ancient history courses in which comprehensive and wide-ranging information was introduced to her students. In her Junior Normal class she taught early civilizations and early English history.<sup>325</sup> In the school year 1920-1921, her Second and Normal class learned about Egypt, Babylonia, Aesyria, Phoneneica, Palestine, and Greece. Her students learned key figures in ancient history including but not limited to: Hippocrates, Erastosthenes, Euclid, Manetho, Draco, and Pericles.<sup>326</sup> The existence of a Junior Normal class, which for instance, prepared students for teaching and the breadth and depth of the history curriculum, even in its

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<sup>323</sup> Burroughs, *History Tests*, 1921-1922, Box 311.

<sup>324</sup> Burroughs, *History Tests, First Preparatory Class*, 1920-1921, Box 311.

<sup>325</sup> Burroughs, *History Tests, Junior Normal Class*, 1920-1921, Box 311.

<sup>326</sup> Burroughs, *History Tests, Junior Normal Class*, 1920-1921, Box 311

traditional form, was far more comprehensive than a skilled domestic would need to perform her duties.

In her Junior Normal class Jones expected her students to probe deeply into early English history. She asked students to classify the rulers of England up to Edward I, key early literary pieces in England, Richard I, and the story of the Holy Grail. Students at NTS were expected to memorize significant details about the past in line with what other academic high schools and normal schools were teaching during this time period, but not an historical understanding of “trade schools” curricula.<sup>327</sup>

In the school year 1920-1921, teachers did not include on African American history in the final exams nor is there any reference to a Negro history class until 1929.<sup>328</sup> By the late 1920s, Burroughs, influenced by her increasing collaboration with Woodson and the ICDWR, appears to have become more confident in her own understanding of black history. One has to wonder if Burroughs shared her increasing knowledge with her teaching staff or whether her increased involvement in the study of African American history in that era was a personal journey.

In assessing the lesson plans and tests at NTS two decades later patterns and trends emerged. Etta J. Head taught at NTS in the 1940s. She taught United States History, Problems in American Democracy, Senior High World History, and Psychology. In addition to Ms. Head, Ms. E.J. Bonds also taught United States History. When examining their lesson plans it appears they focused instruction on

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<sup>327</sup> Herbert M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893-1958* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina, 2004).

<sup>328</sup> In her papers the first significant reference to a Negro History class occurs in the 1929 Student Annual. This reference corroborates with her increasing involvement with the ICWDR.

topics such as: the differences between Southern, Middle, and New England colonies and key geographic features of early America.<sup>329</sup> The multi-tasker of the staff, Ms. E.J. Bonds taught Secretarial Subjects, Math and United States History. In her history class, Bonds seemed to focus on Geography, reviewing with students the importance of cotton and linen to the American economy and the invention of the cotton gin.<sup>330</sup> In her *Problems of American Democracy*, Ms. Head explored the history of labor unions. On a test administered on May 8, 1942, we can glimpse into World War II content related to the history and formation of labor unions. On the tests students are asked to: define Labor Union, trace the development of the Labor movement in America, discuss the impact of the New Deal on the labor movement and trace the extent of unemployment from 1920-1933.<sup>331</sup> The final exams reveal that students at NTS were engaged in active examination of current events and problems in history, as well as understanding the key events of the past. Throughout the WWII era in the United States, similar courses to Ms. Head's *Problem of American Democracy* courses were being taught, much to the consternation of their conservative critics.<sup>332</sup>

There were challenges linking lesson plans to a particular teacher, but even the unidentified lesson plans offer us insight into the world of NTS. In reviewing the lesson plans of an unnamed teacher the focus of the lesson plans were the foundations of early American history.<sup>333</sup> The topics addressed in the lesson plans included: Cortes's invasion of Mexico, the awakening of early exploration in Europe, early

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<sup>329</sup> Burroughs, *Etta Head Lesson Plans*, December 1,3,5 1941, Box 311; Burroughs, E.J. Bonds *Lesson Plans*, undated, Box 311.

<sup>330</sup> Burroughs, *E.J. Bonds Lesson Plans*, undated, Box 311

<sup>331</sup> Burroughs, *Second Semester Examination*, May 8, 1942, Box 311.

<sup>332</sup> Zimmerman, *Whose America? Culture Wars in the Public Schools*, 64-65.

<sup>333</sup> Burroughs, *E.J. Bonds Lesson Plans*, undated, Box 311

American institutions such as the House of Burgesses, the Mayflower Compact, and Declaration of Independence. In a review of all the lessons, the focus on the master narrative is definitely being conveyed to students. Although it is twenty years after the 1920-1921 final exams were given, it is clear there are still parts of social studies instruction that remain quite connected to a traditional approach to understanding history.

In ancient history courses there seems to be a focus on learning about early Asian history, the Old Stone Age, Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, and Jewish history. In examining the lessons of unnamed teachers, textbook use seemed frequent. Students were told to examine books and answer questions. The tension between Burroughs' expansive vision of history and the everyday challenge of teaching and learning is present. The staff at NTS appeared to be seeking a balance of nurturing a love for black history with the reality that students would need to understand key themes about the "master narrative."

In 1946, Mrs. Carter taught a stand-alone course in Negro History.<sup>334</sup> This is not the first time mention of a Negro history course appears in the records of the school. Prior to appearing on the schedule mention of the course occurred in the 1929 student annual. By showing up on the student schedule in 1946 it is clear that the Negro History course became a part of the social studies curriculum being provided at the school. However, since there are no remaining lesson plans or tests it is difficult to discern the exact nature of the narrative being taught in the course. One could tentatively conclude that the narrative of the American and Ancient History course stayed quite conservative at NTS because teachers might have believed that the Negro

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<sup>334</sup> Burroughs, *Teachers Reports*, Fall of 1949-Spring 1950, Box 311.

History course immersed students in new narratives of black history. It is clear that Negro History was not infused in the regular history curriculum at NTS, but kept separate. The importance of having a Negro History Course should not be underestimated.

The pedagogical methods at NTS were typical of teachers during the early twentieth century.<sup>335</sup> In a review of the lesson plans of the teachers, the primary pedagogy being utilized by the teacher was oral recitation. David Tyack described the prevalent use of recitation in schools at the turn of the century. He described the use and purpose of oral recitation in the schools:

Through an elaborate system of graduation, programmed curriculum, examinations, and rules for “deportment,” then, the pupil learned the meaning of obedience, regularity, and precision. He learned to “toe the line”—a phrase that today has lost its literal significance to most people. Joseph Rice, who visited hundreds of urban classrooms in the 1890’s, described what it meant in one school. During recitation periods, when students were to demonstrate that they had memorized the text, children were expected, said Rice, “to stand on the line, perfectly motionless, their bodies erect, their knees and feet together, the tips of their shoes touching the edge of the board in the floor.”<sup>336</sup>

David Tyack’s description of recitation is reflected as the primary pedagogy in most of the lesson plans at NTS. The strict and conservative nature of NTS probably led to

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<sup>335</sup> John L. Rury, *Education and Social Change: Themes in the History of American Schooling* (Mahwah NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002), 142-147.

<sup>336</sup> David Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 55.

the extensive use of this technique. However, in other parts of the lesson plans we have some glimmers of more participatory forms of learning. For example, in Ms. Bond's notes, there was mention of a simulation called a "Pioneer Party".<sup>337</sup> In addition, one of Etta Head's students constructed an in-depth project on the heroic African American Navy Sailor, Dorie Miller.<sup>338</sup> So, despite the conservative leanings of the teachers, there seems to be present some innovative pedagogy to support student learning. In addition, there were multiple opportunities for the girls to participate in Appreciation Days, pageants, and clubs which reinforced the curriculum of the school in a much more compelling fashion.

Although scarcer, there is evidence in the archives about the larger questions that permeated the study of history. In a lesson plan for a World History class, an unidentified teacher asked the students questions such as: What is history? Describe the field? Name the sources of history? Name the sources of historical information.<sup>339</sup> Although most of the information seemed to be focused on memorization and the collection of facts, this particular teacher wanted students to understand the nuances of how historians generated knowledge.

Nannie H. Burroughs's vision of implementing a black history experience was complicated by the lesson plans and assessments written by the teachers in her building. In an examination of the work of teachers, the traditional narrative of ancient and world history appeared to be quite present in the classroom. In addition, the persistent use of oral recitation seemed to thwart Burroughs's efforts to infuse a more student centered approach to learning in her building. One of the central

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<sup>337</sup> Burroughs, *E.J. Bonds Lesson Plans*, undated, Box 311.

<sup>338</sup> Burroughs, *Negro Project*, undated, Box 166.

<sup>339</sup> Burroughs, *Student Work*, Box 167.

tensions which have defined work in the education field in the twentieth century has been the struggle between advocates of child-centered instruction and advocates for instruction which guides students directly.<sup>340</sup>

### Student Voice

Life at NTS was all encompassing. An average student at the school participated in academic classes, discussions, forums, vespers, seminars and Sunday schools.<sup>341</sup> NTS was a boarding school, and each portion of their week was detailed down to the minute for students. Students received training in Christianity and domestic arts. Along with the foundations of religion, students were heavily involved in community service.<sup>342</sup>

In the implementation of Ms. Burroughs's vision of the alternative black curriculum in social studies, the activism of the students is apparent. In a yearly Appreciation Day, girls sang, provided oration and speeches. Public speaking seemed to be particularly valued. The Appreciation Days provide the clearest example of how the narrative of the alternative black curriculum was present for students. By listening to guests such as Professor Kelly Miller, a sociology professor at Howard University, or a medley of voices of students from NTS, Burroughs worked to transmit the historical principles of the alternative black curriculum to their students. The pedagogical technique of letting the students be active participants in learning opportunities is apparent.

### Examining Student Work

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<sup>340</sup> Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, *An Elusive Science: The Troubling History of Education Research* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2000): 47.

<sup>341</sup> Burroughs, *Outside Activities*, Box 311.

<sup>342</sup> Burroughs, *Outside Activities*, Box 311.

NTS was open for well over fifty years; however, my sample size of student work is relatively minuscule. Despite these limitations, an examination of the student projects that were preserved provides insight into how students assessed historical narratives. The student tests revealed a range of students' abilities and ideas. In a Junior class history test dated October 7, 1940, Miss Whitaker responded to the question, "Give the names of five great world leaders and tell what each advocated."<sup>343</sup> The student answered:

- 1.) Miss Nannie H. Burroughs advocated that young people needed training.
- 2.) Dr. J.J. Starks president of Benedict College, Columbia, South Carolina advocated that education is needed in every home.<sup>344</sup>
- 3.) Adolf Hitler advocated that England would be conquered by December.
- 4.) Hattie McDaniel advocated that Hollywood had been a friend to her.<sup>345</sup>

Miss Whitaker's response shows her perception of world leaders. She clearly valued education because she mentioned the leadership of Burroughs and Dr. Starks. The reference to Hitler is notable because in 1940 the larger public was not aware of the destructiveness of the Third Reich. Finally, by identifying Hattie McDaniel, she

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<sup>343</sup> Burroughs, *Student Work*, Box 167.

<sup>344</sup> Benedict College was all black at the time and today is has a student enrollment of about 3,000 students.

<sup>345</sup> Burroughs, *Test*, Box 167.

demonstrated her pride about the fight against discrimination in the black community.

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Students were well versed in the dominant narrative of social studies. In a test dated October 7, 1941, Miss Minoya Washington responded to a series of questions about early American history. Ultimately, Washington received a “B” on the test. She answered questions about George Washington, John Quincy Adams, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln, and their loyalty and leadership to the United States. Her response in relationship to Washington read as:

1. George Washington distinguished for his loyal service in the army and for the being the first president to receive an honor as the “Father of this country.”<sup>347</sup>

Similarly to Whitaker, it is clear that students at NTS were exposed to the dominant narrative. By responding to the test, Washington demonstrated her understanding of key facts about the development of the United States. After examining student work, the complexity of the social studies instructional approach becomes evident. Students’ exposure to the dominant narrative, as well as the alternative black curriculum, is present in the answers of the students. Nannie H. Burroughs work fits squarely in the tradition of black educators who sought to prepare students for success in the white world.<sup>348</sup>

Project reports offered interesting insights into how students synthesized the content of their social studies classes into a comprehensive report. Student projects

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<sup>346</sup> Hattie McDaniel was the first black actress to win an Academy Award for her role in *Gone With The Wind* (1939).

<sup>347</sup> Burroughs, *Test*, Box 167.

<sup>348</sup> Perry, *Young, Gifted and Black*, 28.

by Miss Lorraine Shearron and Miss Gloria Dunlap offer a glimpse into different students' understandings of narrative. Shearron wrote a report entitled, "The Past and Present History of Germany."<sup>349</sup> Written in the early 1940s, the report showed Shearron's purpose in thinking about the central role Germany assumed in World War II. She examined: *The Government of Germany, Industry and Labor, Religion and Education, Military Defense, the Decree of 1933, The Ides of March, Sources of Nazism, The Nazi Creed, Political Tactics, Youth under Hitler, State Attitude of the Conquered, Military Tactics and the Voices of the Allies.*<sup>350</sup> She used the *Webster's Dictionary*, the *Washington Post*, the *Washington Star*, *Liberty Magazine*, and *Life* magazine as her sources for the project.

Shearron begins her report with the history of Germany, emphasizing the leadership of Charlemagne. After discussing the leadership of Charlemagne, she writes about the unification of Germany and the political structure of Germany. Shearron's written remarks demonstrate a student clearly able to articulate key elements of a Eurocentric narrative in history.<sup>351</sup> In order to examine other parts of Germany's history, she used book reviews and newspapers. She examined the book *People Under Hitler* by Wallace R. Deul to discuss the impact of Nazism. She used newspaper's article to analyze Hitler's political tactics and his use of young people.<sup>352</sup>

In her report, Shearron also found an article about how a young Austrian girl lived in fear of Germany after its invasion. She adeptly used a variety of sources to effectively communicate key events in the history of Germany. Her report

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<sup>349</sup> Burroughs, *The Past and Present History of Germany by Miss Lorraine Shearron*, Box 166.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid.

<sup>351</sup> Ibid.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid.

represented a fascinating glimpse into how much Americans know about the extent of the atrocities that were being committed against the Jewish people.<sup>353</sup> Clearly, the students at NTS recognized how to use primary sources to effectively communicate vital facts about history.

In another project, Gloria Dunlap, a student of Mrs. Etta Head, focused on the life of Dorie Miller, Pearl Harbor hero. Dunlap's work is an exemplar of how the students in Burroughs' school came to accept and understand the goals of the alternative black curriculum. The assignment entitled, "Negro Project," is an in-depth report of the impact of Pearl Harbor on the black community.<sup>354</sup> One could tentatively conclude by examining this project that students were being exposed to a historical narrative about African American history. Ms. Dunlap begins her project with a poem. She writes:

The Rhyme of A Race  
They break a barrier every day  
Their staunch and splendid loyalty;  
Their true unchallenged bravery,  
Stand firm no matter what the test.  
In years they're still an infant race  
But occupies an elder's place.  
An equal—to the world's best men.  
They wrote their names on scrolls of fame;  
They fought and fell in war's red bell;

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<sup>353</sup> Ibid.

<sup>354</sup> Burroughs, *The Negro Project by Miss Gloria Dunlap*, Box 166.

Before the enemies shot and shell;  
Defended the play—their lives the shield—  
From Lexington to Flanders Field.

They have few records to regret;  
The grave mistakes 'twould be well forget  
We fear the future to darken the way  
The bright light of Victory proclaims their new day.  
Swift on the highways of life they advance.  
They ask no favor but equal shame.

Thus ends as was premised: “The Rhyme Of A Race.”

Through thousands of years of historical trace.

The End

Outlined in the table of contents are the following topics: *Dorie Miller, Life of Dorie Miller, Navy American Awards to Dorie Miller, Navy Pays Tribute to the Parents of Dorie Miller, Tribute to Negro Airmen, Captain Benjamin Davis, Jr, Democracy Triumphs, Originator of “Double “V”, Author of Pearl Harbor Verse, Appeal to Victory Won by Negroes, N.Y. Times Has Faint Praise for Negro Policy, Minnesota Defense Force Welcomes Major, Gov. Lehman Signs Law to End Race Job Bias, Race Aviator Honored, Courier’s Double V” Song, Whites Have More to Lose, Helping Beat the Axis, Raise Carpenters get 75 jobs in Tennessee Arms Plant, and the Most Outstanding Negroes.* In reading Miss Dunlap’s table of contents it is clear that she created a narrative of African American triumph over the racism endemic in

American life. The report addressed topics such as segregation in the military, the historic role of the Tuskegee airmen in World War II, the impact of housing discrimination, and African Americans' critical role in the larger war effort. Dunlap's exposure to the alternative black curriculum in social studies is evidenced by her ability to write a detailed and comprehensive synthesis. Her narrative reflected the larger principles of race pride embedded in Burroughs's vision of social studies instruction in her school.

Her comprehensive report includes photographs of family members, romantic relationships, and newspaper clippings from African American newspapers. In addition, she provides captions for each page of the report. She relied quite extensively on African American newspapers, demonstrating the importance of their utility for reconstructing an alternative history. Dunlap's work is multi-layered. Throughout her project she represents the image of the African American community with pride and distinction. For example, in her report she connects the life of Dorie Miller with the struggles of other African American servicemen. In her report [ See Figure 1.1] she writes a caption praising Negro airmen, stating:

More than 60 Hampton boys have completed Civilian Pilot training course prescribed by the government. Many of them had to shrug off the traditional prejudice of the Army and Navy again.<sup>355</sup>

In addition to examining the training of Negro airmen, Dunlap also comments on the leadership of Benjamin O. Davis and the Army's attempt to form an All-Colored Air Combat Unit. Dunlap creates an ode to the contribution of African

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<sup>355</sup> Burroughs, *The Negro Project by Miss Gloria Dunlap*, Box 166, 18-19.

Americans to the military. Ms. Burroughs' vision of students' activism and race pride is exemplified in the work of this student.

Ms. Dunlap also connects heroism to larger themes of Democracy. She links Dorie Miller to the construction of housing units in Detroit, Michigan and challenges black faced finding decent housing. She writes:

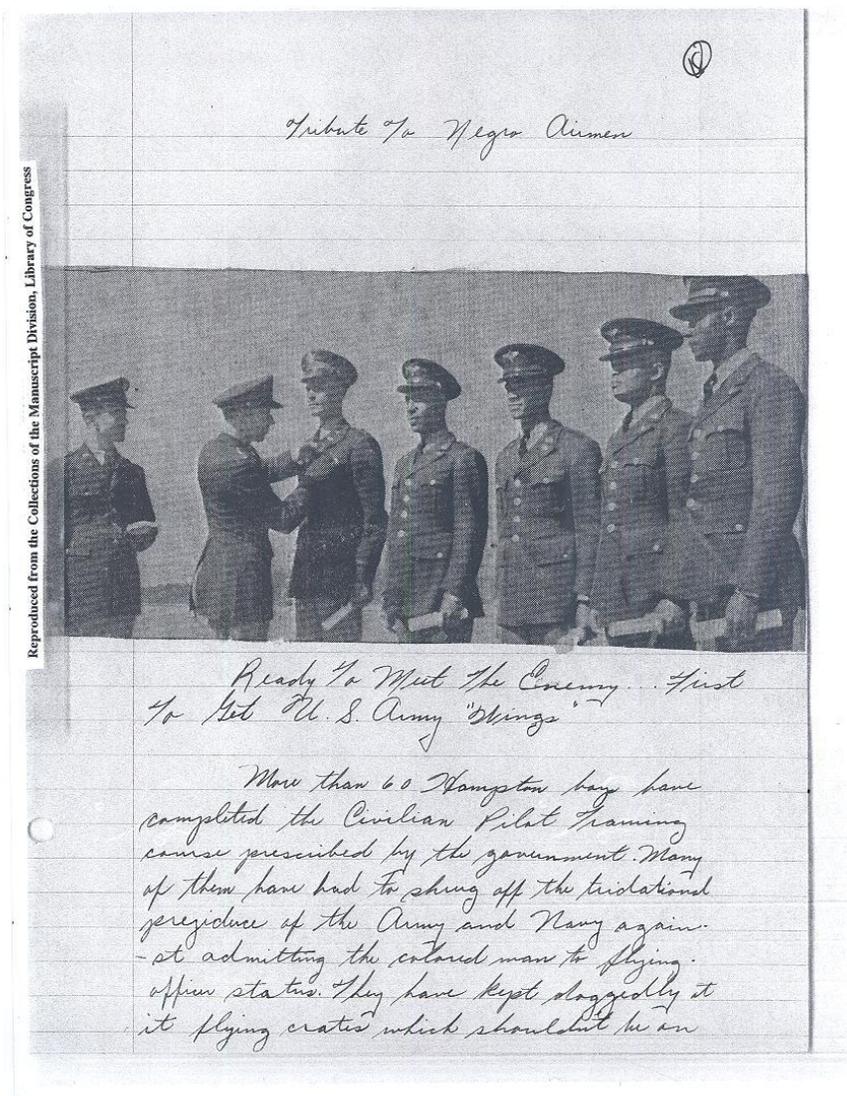
In Detroit, the Sojourner Truth Homes were erected for Negro occupancy because the need of Negroes was greater because of residential segregation embraced by realtors and property owners.<sup>356</sup>

Embracing Burroughs' challenge to uplift the race, Dunlap generated new alternatives to history and connecting African American servicemen's struggle to larger issues about democracy.

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<sup>356</sup> Burroughs, *The Negro Project by Miss Gloria Dunlap*, Box 166, 23-24. Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Post War Detroit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

Figure 1. *Below*, image from report entitled, "The Negro Project" by the student, Miss Gloria Dunlap. This image refers to the caption praising African-Americans participation in a training course provided by the Army and Navy.



Finally, Dunlap introduced the story of Henry Patterson. According to Dunlap, Henry Wilson Patterson was an African American messenger in the Navy. He wrote a poem and tribute to all the black servicemen who died at Pearl Harbor. In keeping with the principles of the alternative black curriculum in social studies, Dunlap introduced the narrative of the “ordinary” men and women who struggled to end segregation in the United States.

The final two images of Miss Dunlap’s work combined Miss Burroughs’ Christian vision with the fight for racial equality [See Figures 1.2 and 1.3]. The first image entitled, “Breaking Down Racial Prejudice” referenced the discrimination which limited African American’s participation in the factories that produced military weapons. Throughout World War II, African American men and women systematically were denied lucrative jobs in the defense industry. For example, one half of the jobs for military production were reserved for whites.<sup>357</sup> For black women, the situation was even worse. Even in 1940, black women still primarily served as domestic servants.<sup>358</sup> Miss Dunlap’s selection of this image reveals her awareness of discrimination on the defense industry. The second image entitled, “He Shall Come with Victory” showed an image of Jesus Christ, with what appears to be a “Double V” drawn

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<sup>357</sup> Harold Sitkoff, “African Americans and other Minorities on the Home Front,” in *World War II & The American Home Front: A National Historic Landmark Theme Study* (Washington D.C.: US Department of the Interior, 2007), 104-128.

<sup>358</sup> Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work and the Family: From Slavery to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 235.

Figure 1.2 Below, image from report entitled, "The Negro Project" by the student, Miss Gloria Dunlap. This image symbolized the segregation that African Americans faced in defense industry employment in World War II. It is an artifact of the alternative black curriculum in social studies.

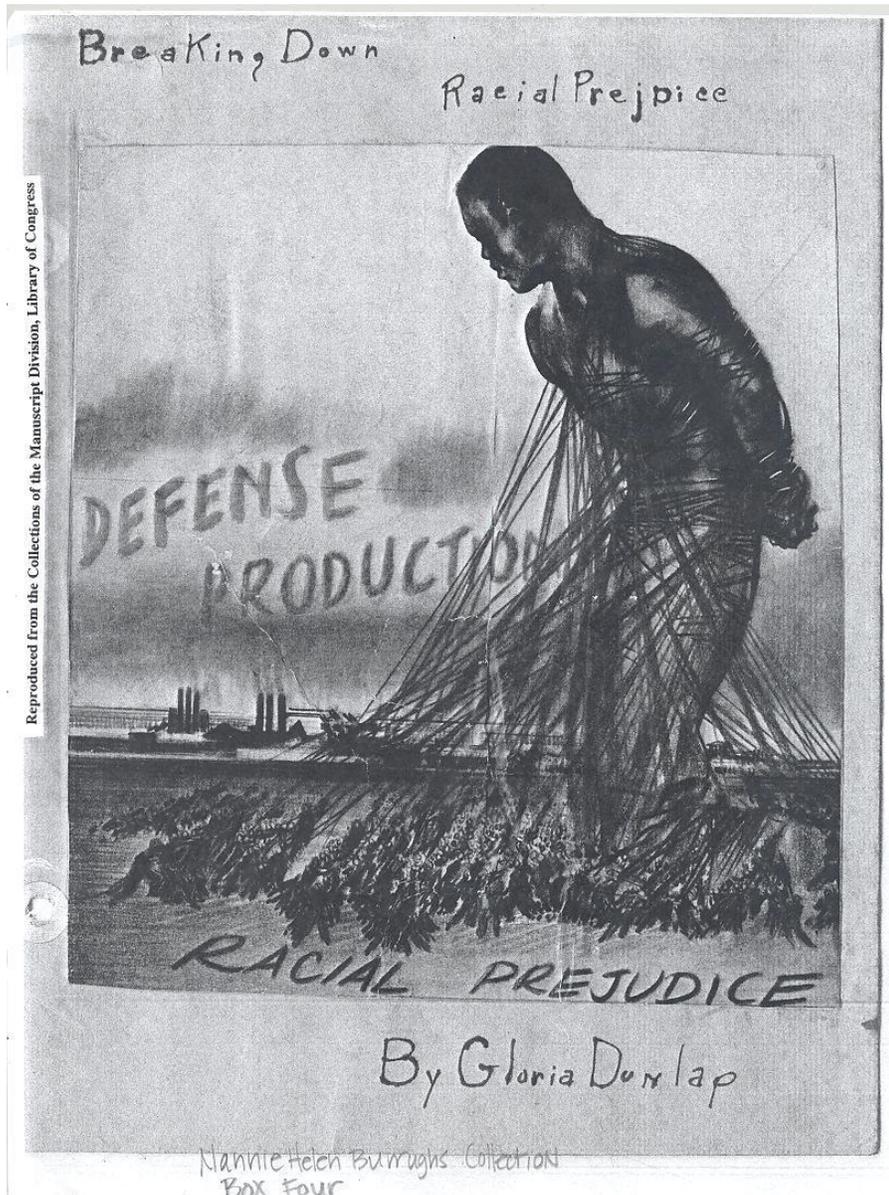
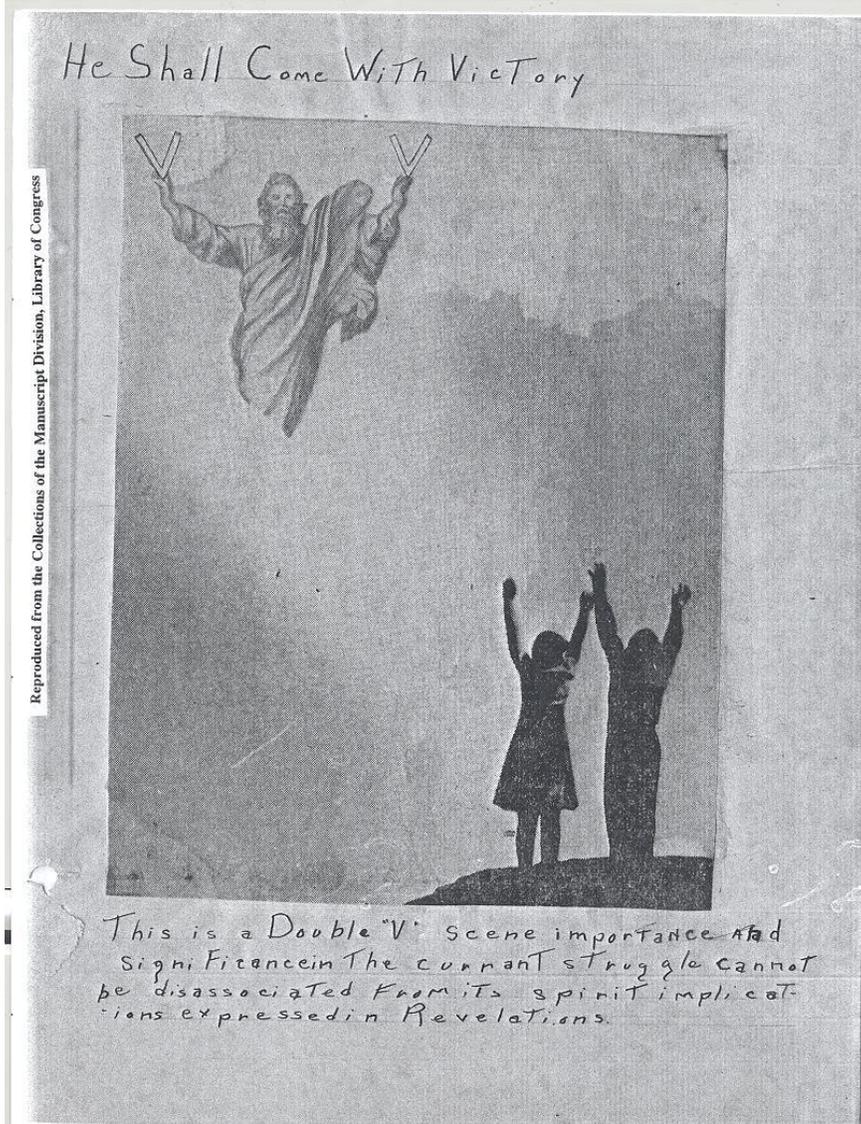


Figure 1.3, *Below*, image from report entitled, "The Negro Project" by a student, Miss Gloria Dunlap. In this image she included a reference to "Double V." The "Double V" represented the threats African Americans faced from abroad as well as the segregation they faced in the US.



into his hands. Miss Dunlap, overlaid religious themes with a reference to the “Double V”, which stands for “Double Victory.” In World War Two, the “Double V” symbolized the fight African Americans faced abroad against fascism and the segregation that they faced in the United States.<sup>359</sup>

Burroughs’ vision is encapsulated in Dunlap’s work, combining the vision with the fight for racial equality. Mrs. Head’s feedback and grade on the report stated, “a very excellent book-A.”<sup>360</sup> Perhaps, Burroughs kept the work because it exemplified her vision. One way that students express themselves is through their creativity—This project shows a pride and thoughtfulness about the black experience in the United States. In this aspect of her vision, Nannie H. Burroughs succeeded because she created an opportunity for a black girl to enter the dialogue about what black history meant to her. At its best, her school became an intellectual forum where girls, often marginalized by larger society, could co-write new understandings about the black experience in the United States.

In examining the totality of the NTS social studies curriculum, paradoxes emerged. Teachers at NTS taught facts about United States history with an eye to the students confronting a harshly racist society. However, from courses such as Negro history, the Annual Appreciation Days and historical pageants to the more expansive curriculum of NTS, girls became strong leaders of the black community.

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<sup>359</sup> Burroughs, *The Negro Project by Miss Gloria Dunlap*, Box 166, 28. Sitkoff, “African Americans and other Minorities on the Home Front,”95.

<sup>360</sup> Burroughs, *The Negro Project by Miss Gloria Dunlap*, Box 166, 28.

## Conclusion

The alternative black curriculum is still with us. During the school year 2011-2012, I attended the Black Saga competition.

Black Saga's purpose is to "test students' knowledge of the African American experience as part of American history."<sup>361</sup> Black Saga is a state-wide event in Maryland geared to elementary and middle school students. Black Saga is attended by black, white, Asian, and Hispanic students, reflecting the diversity of Maryland's student population. As a result of attending Black Saga, students were exposed to elements of the alternative black curriculum in social studies. Located in the Chesapeake Bay region of the United States, Maryland's rich black history lends itself to this type of program.

The actual day of competition of Black Saga, is the end of a learning process. In the previous two years, my student interns and I worked with six African American girls to prepare for the competition.<sup>362</sup> My students tried to memorize one thousand questions about the black experience in the United States. My Black Saga girls did not necessarily take to the task with as much diligence as I would have liked; however, throughout the year they were exposed to a variety of facts about African Americans and the African diaspora. For some reason, during the two years I coached Black Saga, all of the participants were black girls. The identities of these girls came from a wide range of countries as some of my students came are from Panama, Mexico, and Sierra Leone.

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<sup>361</sup> <http://www.blacksaga.org>, March 16, 2012.

<sup>362</sup> During these two years, my student interns, Rhonda Humphries and Vassiliki Key, worked with me as co-coaches on the Black Saga team.

At our weekly Tuesday meetings, besides learning about black history, we talked about how young ladies should behave, watched You Tube clips showing black performers such as Beyonce and Nikki Minaj, and gossiped about the minutia of middle school. By exposing my students to the alternative black curriculum, my students' racial identity developed to include more knowledge about their own history. Each of the students talked about how they used facts about African American history in their own social studies class. So, much like Nannie H. Burroughs, I participated in the nurturing and development of African American girls. My mentorship might have been a little less formal than Ms. Burroughs; however I understood that my role as their coach was to mentor girls who would serve in positive ways in our school. The Black Saga competition, is thus representative of a modern-day attempt to continue to expose students to the tradition of African American history in the United States.

#### New Discourses in Social Studies

The experience of desegregation was a disruptive event in the educational experience of African Americans. African American teachers lost their jobs in large numbers. Many of the rituals that defined black students' experiences in schools were lost.<sup>363</sup> The tenuous presence of the alternative black curriculum today though depends on our recognition that the alternative black curriculum has its own key narrative, as well as its own particular pedagogical techniques. This thesis contended that a conscious recovery of the conceptual and pedagogical techniques can be fully realized through instruction in social studies classrooms. Reform, in this instance, means recovery.

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<sup>363</sup> Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential*, 4-5.

The existence of the Black Saga competition represents a modern-day example of educators' desires to expose students to the rich tradition of African American historical writing. Indeed, there is a direct linkage to the practices I have discussed in this thesis. The primary sponsor of Black Saga, Dr. Charles Christian, is a professor at Coppin State University, who is a tireless advocate for the teaching of black history in the state of Maryland. He also assisted in an effort to incorporate African American history into the Maryland state voluntary social studies curriculum.<sup>364</sup> Thus, his work seems to embody the central tenets of the alternative black curriculum, its accessible popularization of ongoing historical research within the field of African American studies.

I conclude this chapter with three primary claims as to the development of the alternative black curriculum in social studies. First, the alternative black curriculum demonstrates how black scholars critiqued more prominent education reform movements in the United States. In undergraduate and graduate social studies seminars across the nation the typical narrative of how the social studies field developed reads:

*The NEA Committee of Ten (1892) under the leadership of Charles William Eliot created a standardized curriculum, which is still in use in secondary schools in the twenty first century. In these meetings these esteemed men suggested a course of study which included world history, US history and*

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<sup>364</sup> The Maryland State Department of Education formed a partnership with the Reginald F. Lewis Museum to write a K–12 state-wide curriculum. The objective of the partnership was to create a curriculum guide highlighting Maryland African American history, culture and art. Dr. Christian also wrote a textbook on black history entitled, *Black Saga: The African American Experience: A Chronology* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1995).

*government. This course of study has been taught in American schools for over 100 years.*

This dissertation, however, contributes to a new and more complete narrative in the historiography of the field of social studies. I contend that a more complete narrative of the formation of the social studies field would include the following statement:

*Beginning in the early twentieth century, a group of black intellectuals, inclusive of men and women, drawing on the knowledge of early historical writings began to shape a narrative of the African American experience in the United States. This significant educational reform institutionalized the black history movement which is present in schools today. Along, with white groups such as the Committee of Ten it altered how students learn social studies in the twenty first century.*

My claim is that the alternative black curriculum is representative of an enriched narrative that should be embraced in how knowledge is constructed in social studies. The alternative black curriculum is by no means the only narrative about how minorities in the United States challenged oppression. Future historiographical projects in the field could study the possibilities of multiple discourses, such as the impact of Latino/Chicano counter-narratives in the 1970s and the continual arrival of Latinos to the United States.

#### Racial Identity and the Social Studies

My second claim is that the emergence of the alternative black curriculum in social studies brings attention to the prevalence of race as a construct in a generation

of new epistemologies in social studies. W.E.B. Du Bois viewed *The Brownies' Book* as a vehicle to popularize his complex historiographical re-reading of Reconstruction and its aftermath. Such popularization would, consequently, instill a sense of pride for black students. In the advent of the twentieth first century scholarship in the discipline of social studies it is important to consider how “race” informs how researchers design their studies and/or select topics to study. The formation of a students’ racial identity is a critical component to how students learn in the social studies. In the last twenty years, educational researchers sought to provide shape to ideas of culturally relevant teaching.<sup>365</sup> However, in order to provide tangible pedagogies for teachers to implement culturally relevant teaching, it needs to be informed and supported by a discipline rich approach. In order to accomplish the goals of these approaches, the constructs of race need to be used in the research design process.

For example, instead of simply using the descriptor of “student” in a study it is critical to ascribe the “student” with a racial or ethnic group. When students are ascribed a racial identity it could be an important tool for determining how the students can experience social studies instruction. In the research of Tyrone Howard and Terrie Epstein, the use of the lens of race is demonstrating new directions in research which needs to be embraced by emerging educational researchers. By continuing to use race as a theoretical tool, understandings of scholars in social studies can be refined to further measure student growth and achievement.

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<sup>365</sup> Gloria Ladson Billings, “But That Is Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy,” *Theory into Practice* 34 (1995): 159-165.

## Black Women Pioneers in the Development of the Social Studies Field

My third claim is that black women educators should be understood as co-creators of the alternative black curriculum in social studies because of their work in creating “dialogical spaces” that served to refine the pedagogical and theoretical content of the alternative black curriculum. These dialogical spaces closed the distance between practice and theory. Thus, the representative work of this study, *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, embodies this dialogical space. This pageant, represents a significant contribution to the literature of the development of the alternative black curriculum in social studies. In her integrated framework on race and gender, Evelyn Nakano Glenn called for studies, which re-evaluate the constructs of race, gender and power as relational. Evelyn Nakano Glenn offers us a way to evaluate *When Truth Gets a Hearing*. A surface reading of Burroughs’ work suggests a conservative vision of change. A relational reading suggests, though, its’ potentially subversive strategies for navigating a more complex historical reality. A relational reading of *When Truth Gets a Hearing* suggests three key strategies for the construction of the alternative black curriculum. First, the creation of the pageant represents a black woman’s reinterpretation of the dominant narrative in social studies. Second, Nannie Helen Burroughs’ is doing so within the context of a school that she founded and was responsible for determining its curriculum. Therefore, the students interrelated to the material *through* Burrough’s leadership within the related community; therefore, the conservative message was coupled with Burrough’s creation of a separate, gendered space that placed her students’ into a relationship of power. Finally, the title of the pageant suggested that power could be questioned through hearing and counter-

presentation. The pageant would be a way to present skepticism as to the popular historical narrative, and indeed, if performed in front of parents and others interested members, would offer this potentiality to the broader African-American community

As an educator whose work as a teacher has been minimized in the scholarly community, I relate to Nannie H. Burroughs. Much like me, she generated works for classroom practice that were ignored and obscured by the “academy” because they were not peer reviewed. Inherent in Burroughs’ work, is the tensions associated with creating a curriculum in which learning can co-exist with educational activism and community building. The case study of Burroughs’s work is about acknowledging practitioners’ contributions to scholarly discourses about how to reflect and improve on practices in school. Black women in the education field searched to find a larger role in the “accepted” discourse of the education community. This tension between practice and research are one of the characteristics of educational research.<sup>366</sup>

In 1961, Nannie H. Burroughs died and with her death a very particular vision of how African American girls should be nurtured and educated faded. Nannie H. Burroughs aimed to create an institution with an intellectual curriculum based in a sense of community and racial pride. Her leadership exemplified how she attempted to negotiate a lofty vision with the tedious nature of teaching and learning. In operationalizing the alternative black curriculum in social studies, Nannie H. Burroughs succeeded in one sense and failed in another. Throughout the period I studied at NTS, teachers continually conveyed the dominant narrative. As other

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<sup>366</sup> Lagemann, *An Elusive Science*, 242.

scholars noted, the dominant narrative in social studies is surprisingly resilient.<sup>367</sup> In fact, the evidence has demonstrated the dominant social studies curriculum was present at the NTS. However, through a course on Negro history, the Annual Appreciation Days and *When Truth Gets A Hearing*, Nannie H. Burroughs succeeded in creating an environment where black girls received the opportunity to be exposed to multiple narratives. In fact, the story of her school is similar to the struggle which activist educators confront today: How do I balance the needs of the dominant society with the needs of my black and brown children? Nannie H. Burroughs willingness to take the principles articulated by her male and female colleagues and create a curriculum around them is a considerable accomplishment.

Chancey Monte-Sano and Sam Wineburg, examining whether changes in curriculum materials have impacted popular historical consciousness, surveyed eleventh and twelfth graders about whom they viewed as heroes excluding presidents.<sup>368</sup> An interesting finding emerged: Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, and Harriet Tubman were the most common popular figures mentioned in a range of student answers.<sup>369</sup> This finding demonstrates that a key goal of the alternative black curriculum, an accessible popularization of historical counter-narratives has been achieved. In schools across the nation, students are demonstrating a broadened awareness of the centrality of African Americans in the narrative of American history. Indeed, the presence of Harriet Tubman intrigued most; she was an illiterate slave woman without much systematic impact on the ending of slavery. Wineburg

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<sup>367</sup> VanSledright, "Narratives of Nation-States," 113.

<sup>368</sup> Sam Wineburg and Chauncey Monte-Sano, "'Famous Americans': The Changing Pantheon of American Heroes," *The Journal of American History* (March 2008): 1186-1202.

<sup>369</sup> Wineburg and Monte-Sano, "Famous Americans," 1191.

and Monte-Sano attribute her presence on the list to the increased use of the book since 1956, *The American Pageant*, by Thomas Bailey with high school students.<sup>370</sup> I would argue that the continual focus on African American freedom fighters of the antebellum period, by black educators and professional scholars provided a foundation for the work of white scholars which began to appear in the 1940s and 1950s. In a reconsideration of the major education movements of the twentieth century the impact of the alternative black curriculum must be acknowledged. Bringing to light the obscured work of Nannie H. Burroughs, her pageants and approach to black history at NTS enriches and challenges conventional understandings of the evolution of black history into the social studies curriculum.

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<sup>370</sup> Ibid., 1195.

# Appendix A

## When Truth Gets A Hearing

Reproduced from the Collections of the Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

WE ARE IN A DRIVE TO ENROLL—

One thousand Friends in the National Training School Foundation--

SO THAT THE SCHOOL CAN LIVE TO BLESS WOMANHOOD.

*undated photograph -- shows the new pageants in the school*



PAGEANT PLAYERS  
Training School Girls Have Sung Themselves Into  
The Heart Of The World.

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**National Training School for Women and Girls**  
Miss Nannie H. Burroughs, President

Lincoln Heights, *Rox 312, Folder 13* Washington, D.C.

Figure 1.4 Above, Pageant Players, National Training School for Women and Girls. In the undated photograph above, the pageant players of the NTS are pictured. This is a picture most likely in conjunction with the fundraiser, "When Truth Gets A Hearing."

*When Truth Gets A Hearing*

P.1 of original transcript

(Enter JUSTICE. Walks majestically, and speaks loudly, but clearly.)

JUSTICE: I am Justice. I am an attribute of God. I am immortal, eternal, and immutable. I am the shield of the innocent. I am the hope of all who suffer, and the dread of all who do wrong. (Scans the audience). I know no race, no color. I am absolutely blind to these physical incidents. My business is to transform ignorance into enlightenment; conquer prejudice by unswerving devotion to Truth; destroy jealousy with Purity; defeat Injustice by the enforcement of Jehovah's immutable laws, and purge men's hearts of Error.

Truth is my hand maid; Freedom is my child; Peace is my bosom friend; Fairplay walks in my footsteps; Christianity glorifies my mandates; Brotherhood crowns my efforts with success. Jehovah speaks to mankind through me. All races and nations will finally bring their claims before the bar of justice for just and equitable settlement. Let no individual, race or nation become restive, disturbed or doubtful because months and years and centuries must necessarily pass away before their case is reached my docket (Takes up memorandum). Time keeps the count.

(Back curtain opens with Time seated, looking into the hour glass)

“That fierce spirit of glass and sey [sic]the  
Pours forth the never-ending flood of years with His mighty hand, from an  
exhaustless urn. Revolutions sweep o'er earth like visions o'er the breast  
Of dreaming sorrow; cities rise and sink  
Like bubbles in the water; fiery isles  
Spring, blasting, from the ocean and go back to their mysterious caverns;

P.2 of original transcript

Mountains rear to heaven their bald and blackened cliffs, and bow

Their tall heads to the plain; new empires rise,  
Gathering the strength of hoary centuries,  
And rush down like the Alpine avalanche,  
Startling the nations; and the very stars,  
Yon bright and burning blazonry of God,  
Glitter awhile in their eternal depths,  
And, like the Pieda, loveliest of their train,  
Shoot from their glorious spheres and pass away  
To darkle in the trackless v. old; yet thou,  
Time, the tomb builder,  
Dark, stern, all pitiless, pauses not  
Amid the mighty wrecks that strew thy path,  
To sit and muse like other conquerors,  
Upon the fearful ruin thou hast wrought.

Thus, it has been through the centuries. You are Jehovah's sleepless, tireless servant. You were here when Jehovah laid the foundation of the earth, stretched the lines upon it, and laid the corner stone. You were here when the morning stars sang together; when the Mighty God shut up the sea with doors and said to the waters of the earth, "Hither shalt thou come, but no further." You were here when He turned darkness into light; when He made a way for the lightning and the thunder, You were here. You were here when He created man. It was at that time that He gave me life and clothed me with power and authority to preside over his World Court. You have been generation after generation, race after race, empire after empire, nation after nation, rise and fall, work and triumph, falter and fall, but we two have never failed our Creator and never will.

Together we shall work until the last nation is swept from the dace of the earth; the last race disappears and the last man stands before God to give an account of his stewardship. (Ascends the throne).

The American Negro will present his case before this court today. He has waited a long time for a hearing.

P.3 of the original transcript

(Enter Crier. Takes station at left. Folds arms, ready for orders. ENTER PATIENCE.

Bow gracefully to Justice. Takes position indicated on diagram.)

PATIENCE: Justice, your honor, I am Patience. I see by the docket at least the Negro race will be given an opportunity to present its case before this Court. The Negro has waited a long time, but, thank God, since every man has his day in your court, there is no road too long to those who advance deliberately and without undue haste; there is no honor too distant to those who prepare themselves for it with faith and patience, I have supplied the Negro with an abundance of patience. His achievements are the result of patience working and waiting.

“Out of the wilderness; Out of the night.  
The Negro race has crawled to the dawn of light.  
He has come through the valley of great despair.  
He has borne what no white man ever could bear.”

Patiently working-Patiently striving-patiently suffering-patiently praying-patiently hoping-patiently waiting. Thank God for this day in court. For time rewards those who work, wait, and hope. Patience and Time do more than Strength or Passion.

God’s delays are not God’s denials. He that can have patience, can have what he will.

(Enter: Injustice, Prejudice, Ignorance, and Error, eyeing Justice slyly and guiltily. Injustice advances; takes seat near front. Others slink into rear seats, looking first at each other and then at Justice. Justice ignores their presence, Patience eyes them tolerantly. Enter: TRUTH, LAW, PEACE, GOODWILL, and FAIRPLAY.)

INJUSTICE: Justice, your honor, we four have come here because we understand that the Negro is going to have a hearing in your court today. Prejudice, Ignorance, Error, and I, Injustice, know the Negro only too well, and we have come to testify.

JUSTICE: You may stay and give testimony in this case, but

P. 4 of the original transcript

I want you to understand that my sets, decisions, and decrees, are founded upon the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth, tempered with mercy (Injustice, Prejudice, Ignorance, and Error, bow faithfully to Justice.

JUSTICE: Crier, announce the opening of this Court. (Crier bows.) (Matter to be prepared).

Truth, [Fairplay], and [Goodwill] take your places and assist me in the case that is to be presented.

INJUSTICE: Justice, your Honor, may I assist you, too?

JUSTICE: Did you receive the summons?

INJUSTICE: I did not receive the summons, but I know I have some facts that will not be presented unless one of us present them. We four know the Negro better than anyone else. That's why we came together. I hope you will hear us. The Negro is not entitled to the same rights and privileges as are enjoyed by other races. This is the white man's world, and we hope that you are not even thinking about giving the Negro an equal opportunity.

FAIRPLAY: Justice, your Honor, these witnesses know that this is the World Court? That this is the bar of Justice? Do they know that every race and nation under the sun is to be granted a hearing before you? Do they know that the Negro has a world claim? Do they know that he has labored, fought, bled, and died as willingly and as valiantly as any other race?

IGNORANCE: I told you so!

PREJUDICE: And so did I. The Negro is always pushing himself where he doesn't belong. Now, we've got to stick together and work together to keep him from getting justice in this court.

P.5 of the original transcript

(Ignorance, Error & Injustice; to Prejudice): Leave it to us. Leave it to us. We'll stick.

JUSTICE: The Court will come to order.

FAIRPLAY: Justice, your Honor, these witnesses are trying to try to this case before the Negro is brought into court. They are actually in contempt. Furthermore, by what right do they accuse a defendant before the bar of Justice and the accused not present to defend himself? Can't wait until the case is called? Where is the Negro?

ERROR: Out of doors where belongs, and we are here to see that he is kept in his place.

FAIRPLAY: That's the trouble. Injustice, Prejudice, Ignorance and Error, have tried to solve the Negro problem without the Negro. [They do not seem to realize that we] cannot solve the Negro problem without the Negro any better than you [we] can play Hamlet without the ghost. By what right do these four witnesses come here to try to put the Negro in what they call, "his place?"

God has commanded [commissioned] any race to make it their business to confine another race to any particular place in this world. The Divine Command to the entire race is "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it."

ERROR: Why do you stop there? That isn't all. He said, "Have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over every living thing that movieth

the earth. That's it, every living the thing that moveth upon the earth! The Negro must be that living thing that moveth upon the earth."

[IGNORANCE: You said That's it. "Every living thing that moveth upon the earth!"

The Negro must be the "living thing."

TRUTH: That has no reference to the Negro nor to any other race that matter. The Negro is not a thing. He is a man like

P. 6 of the original transcript

Men. He is your brother.

IGNORANCE: My brother? Excuse me!

FAIRPLAY: He is your brother if you are a member of the human race. I, therefore, repeat my question: What rights do have to try to put him in what you call “his place”?

Injustice: By the right of white. Whoever heard of giving the Negro a square deal? Whoever heard of it? He has gotten so accustomed to getting what you call his rights, that he doesn't even expect them, and he puts forth very little effort to get them. A square deal! Nordics? In some remote corner of the earth might be partially fair in some of their dealings, but when it comes to an absolutely square deal, an equal opportunity, we reserve these blessings for the white race only. We have fought, bled and died for them and we are not going to give them to Negroes.

Justice, we want the Negro circumscribed, segregated, boycotted-do anything to keep him in his place. Issue the decree. Ignorance, Error, Prejudice and I will see that it is carried out. (The three applaud and nod their approval.)

PREJUDICE: Leave it to us. Leave it to us.

(Insert for Page 6)

FAIRPLAY: I imagine it is a little more comfortable and hopeful for small fish in dry ponds than croaking lobsters in hot water.

P. 7 of the original transcript

(There seemed to be a break in dialogue, lost page)

bar of justice. You four will be brought into this court some day, and “as you mete it unto others, it shall be measure unto to you. Litigants are tried in this court on evidence and not on race or color. I stand for right. All testimony will be heard, all evidence taken, and the course of the Negro will be tried on its merit. He has given to the world, centuries of labor and toil. His hands are not red with murder, nor are his heart bitter with hate. He sings in the midst of greatest trials. He has never smitt en the hand that is lifted against him. (Hears music in outer court) These are facts quite worthy of the just consideration of this court. Crier, call the representative of the Negro race.

CRIER: Representative of the Negro Race, the court is now open to hear your case.

Representative of Negro Race: (Enter singing, “It Pains Me How My Race is Treated”)

JUSTICE: Are you representative of the Negro race? In this case?

Representative of Negro Race: I am, your Honor.

JUSTICE: This is the day on which you are to present your case to this court.

Representative of Negro Race: Thank God! At last! Justice, I have waited a long time, but I know this day would come. Just as I expected, however, my old foes, Injustice, Prejudice, Ignorance, and Error have preceded me here. They have hounded my footsteps from time immemorial. They have tried to crucify my spirit, drown my hope and limit my progress. They have come her today for the avowed purpose of crushing

Truth to earth, poisoning your mind, delaying your decision, and humiliating me  
before the whole world. I am prepared to present

P. 8 of the original transcript

The record of my race and I know you will consider the case on its merit.

JUSTICE: Representative of the Negro race, let not your heart be troubled. The witnesses who appear against, might, by falsehood and circumvention, delay and defer decision, but justice cannot be bought nor/defeated. Ignorance and Error are contesting your claim. They say that have not contributed anything worthwhile to [ancient] or [modern] civilization. But Truth and History are always witnesses in the cases that are tried before the court. They have all the facts. Those facts will be impartially and clearly revealed.

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NEGRO RACE: Error says that I have not made a real contribution to civilization? Justice, [Your honor History is Here]. She has [my record]. While she is coming, may I tell you in song just how I feel about my case which will be put into your hands today? (Sings, "I am on Shining Pathway.")

INJUSTICE: Justice, will you please stop the Negro from singing in here? This no church.

Justice: Each witness, you included, will be permitted to present his testimony in any way he sees fit. (Singing continued).

JUSTICE: Crier, call History.

CRIER: History, appear before the court.

JUSTICE: History, give us the facts about the Negro's contribution to ancient civilization and to the development of the New World.

P.9 of the original transcript

HISTORY: Five thousand years before Christ, black men are building empires in Africa. Under Pharaohs, whose features are too distinctly Negroid for Nordics to claim them, the ancient glories of northern Africa challenge the wonder and admiration of the world. The great Sphinx at Gizeh, so familiar to all the world, the Sphinx of Tanis, the statue of Fayum, the statue of the Esquiline at Rome, and the Colossi of Bubastis all represent the work of black, full-bodied Negroes. Black men sat on the golden throne of Meroe, several centuries. That city supported at one time 4,000 artisans and 200,000 soldiers—all black, comely and courageous. Candace, queen of Meroe, a Negro woman, waged war against Rome at the time of Augustus. There was another great queen, Maqueba, of Sheba, who made the famous visit to Solomon.

PREJUDICE: Wait a minute! The Queen of Sheba was not a Negress.

TRUTH: No, she was not a Negress, she was a Negro. Justice, the marvelous discoveries of Egyptologists and Anthropologists settled that question long ago. Recent investigations make it certain that a pre-historic civilization was built from the Niger plateau toward the north and west, by the black West-African type of Negro. Justice, the fact is, that Abyssinia of today is a continuation of Sheba's great reign. My records show that what is known as the middle empire in Africa arose 3,064 years before Christ, and lasted nearly 24 centuries. Therefore, the Negro and his civilization are of greater antiquity than other race or civilization. In fact, when [the] Angles[sic] were [barbarians in northern Germany], eating this food out of the skulls of their ancestors and using the bones of [their] dead for knives and forks, black men were at work building a civilization in

P. 10 of the original transcript

Africa. The Africans were inventors of Divine worship, of festivals, of solemn assemblies, of sacrifices and of every religious practice. My records show that civilization comes from the black tribes of Punt.

PREJUDICE: (scornfully) taking us back 7,000 years.

INJUSTICE: That suits the Negro; He's always bragging about his glorious past. He had better be trying to do something about his inglorious present.

IGNORANCE: Ain't it the truth? (All laugh).

ERROR: But we have been sitting up with him ever since he has been in America.

PREJUDICE: Yes, and we must sit up with him before this court, because of old History, Truth, and Fairplay are here with loads of bunk like that we've just heard.

ERROR: Justice, you are fair, and we know you are not going to try to undo what God has done. You are not responsible for the Negro's blackness nor for his place of servitude. He brought all that on himself. Truth knows why the Negro is black. He is descendent of Ham, who was one of the sons of Noah. Noah got [beastly] drunk and Ham became disgusted at his father's condition. Noah not only cursed him black, but doomed him to servitude.

TRUTH: Error's statement as to how the Negro became black is fallacious. So far as Noah's curse upon his son is concerned, most drunken men curse. But, since God forgave Noah for getting drunk, you know he forgave Ham for being disgusted at his father. Furthermore, men's curse is nothing.

IGNORANCE: Well, it it's nothing, why has the Negro been black, and a slave, and hewer of wood and a drawer of water ever since?

P. 11 of the original transcript

TRUTH: The race has not always been black, nor has it always been a slave race.

Remember, all races, including yours (with sarcasm), have been slavery at some time.

Regardless of the fact that....

Said when.....

That he found a.....

That they were not of a sufficiently high state of intelligence, to be slaves, but made slaves of them later. In the ancient times, Africa was not more a slave hunting ground than Europe or Asia, and both Greece and Rome had a much larger number of white slaves than of black.

IGNORANCE: (laughing) White slaves? Whoever heard of such a thing?

ERROR: Justice, I deny that statement.

TRUTH: Your denial does not change the fact. Color is incidental.

ERROR: If the Negro thinks that his color is only incidental why does he use so many bleaches and concoctions to change it?

FAIRPLAY: For some reason that you so many rouge to change yours.

TRUTH: Justice, may I enlighten Error by informing that her that conditions of heat, cold, and moisture working for thousands of years through skin, and other organs have given men their differences of color. This color pigment is necessary to protect against sunlight. It varies with the intensity in the fierce sun of the desert, red Pygmies in the forest and yellow Bushmen on the cooler southern plateau.

Not only has the Negro lived for over 50,000 years under the tropical sun of Africa, but when you snatched him

P. 12 of the original transcript

from his native and land and brought him to America, you sat in the shade and forced him to work in the sun.

So far as race is concerned, there is but one race on this planet. That is the human race. All of these varieties of color, [here], and other incidental and exterior differences, have been brought by climate, inter-marriage and inter-mingling.

IGNORANCE: (leaping to her feet) Inter-marriage!

TRUTH: Yes, inter-marriage.

PREJUDICE: Well, of all things! Inter-marriage! Negroes marrying into our race?

TRUTH: No—you marrying into the Negro race, because I am sure you know Moses married a black woman.

PREJUDICE: and Miriam and Aaron gave him rats about it, too.

TRUTH: [Yes but] did ever read where God gave Miriam leprosy [in return] for meddling with his business and [where] Aaron admitted he was

Insert for Page 13.

Ignorance: I don't care what they say. Negroes are inferior and whites are superior. That's all there is to that. [Whale or no Whale]

TRUTH: Justice, Ignorance does not know that whoever does the superior thing is superior and whoever does the inferior thing is inferior, regardless of race or color.

P. 13 of the original transcript

and a million men, engaged the King of Judah in a battle.

PREJUDICE: Yes, and Judah beat the socks off of him and ran him into the river [too].

TRUTH: [Let me remind you that], Judah could have been a plaything for Zerah, if God had not taken a hand in the great battle. The record states plainly, “Jehovah smote Ethiopia”—Zerah was not only an able general but had the best trained army in the world. That’s what the record says.

PREJUDICE: Yes, and those Africans stole a whole lot of things from Judah. That’s what the record says too.

[Ignorance-Laughter covers her mouth with hands, “Some folks say a Negro won’t steal.”]

JUSTICE: Let History continue.

HISTORY: Descendants of Zerah actually heaped coals for fire on Judah’s head by rescuing Jeremiah from the dungeon.

IGNORANCE: [Indignantly] Put the coals of fires on his head? A savage?

JUSTICE: Proceed, History.

HISTORY: The Negro played the most touching and dramatic part in the journey of Jesus Christ of Nazareth on the way to the crucifixion at Calvary-Simon the Cyrenian.

“Saw the wayworn traveler  
In tattered garments clad  
Struggling up the mountain.”

He was touched by the tragic picture of the Savior of the world stumbling and staggering under the great load. Simon got under one end of the Cross and helped Jesus get to the crucifixion on time. (Music—"Seeking for Me").

PREJUDICE: Justice, don't let the Negro bring his religion into this court. The Negro tries to put his religion into everything.

JUSTICE: The God of Christ did that. [The Christian religion is good for what hurts us most.]

P. 14 of the original transcript

Continue, History.

HISTORY: Justice, the best scholars and historians concede, after years of research and investigation, that Ethiopia, or black men, gave learning to Egypt—Egypt to Greece—Greece to Rome—Rome to Britain—and Britain to the world. This fact, therefore, gives the Negro a high place in the intellectual and political history of the world.

INJUSTICE: History, why on earth do you waste your time, paper, and ink writing down all of those [old] things about the Negro? Take my advice. He isn't worth it. Negroes who lived 10,000 years ago might have done some of those things, but look how he is sitting down in Africa today---waiting for the white man to come and find the diamonds and gold and the precious stone. Waiting for us to come and cultivate rubber plantations. He lives in the richest continent on the globe but he is too ignorant, satisfied and lazy to stoop down and pick up the diamonds that are rolled up in the must of South Africa. The Negro is satisfied. He is asleep. Do not wake him up.

REPRESENTATIVE OF NEGRO RACE: Asleep? Justice will you let Africa be called?

JUSTICE: Crier, call the representative from Africa.

CRIER: Representative from Africa!

JUSTICE: Are you the representative from Africa?

REP. FROM AFRICA: Justice, your honor, I am come from Abyssinia. I come to present Africa's claim to this court. Abyssinia is an illustration of how long the Negro can keep on keeping on. We have the oldest organized government on the face of the

earth. The line is absolutely unbroken from Solomon to....., the present ruler. Before the Christian era, or what you call the.....

P. 15 of the original transcript

North and Central Africa. We had a civilization in Nigeria, Gold Coast, Benin, Moscaland, Timbucktu, and other areas. We built ancient Thebes with her 100 gates—her wonderful temples. Karnac, and the pyramids were built by Africans. Meroe—the city of splendor and glory, noted for its inventive genius and varied scholarship; the cradle of civilization and the mother of art.

PREJUDICE: It's strange you did so much over there and when we brought representatives of your race over here, we had to appoint overseers to make you work.

REPRESENTATIVE FROM AFRICA: Our shows that the African worked. He is not accustomed to being **worked**. If you make the time to study our history, you will see that we had rulers, governments, religious customs, architecture, tomb buildings—production of arts and crafts such as carved elephant trunks, ivory armlets, stone images, glass and porcelain objects, remarkable terra cottas, and exquisite metal castings centuries before we were stolen from our native lands. Justice, Negroes from the Guinea coast made visits to [America] before Christopher Columbus discovered this continent. We came here before white men knew that there was such a country.

PREJUDICE: You are mighty late telling it.

IGNORANCE: And nobody believes it. The white race built this New World, and we've done everything else that's worth writing down. What those Africans did was done before writing was in style.

REPRESENTATIVE FROM AFRICA: When you witnesses become enlightened as

P. 16 of the original transcript

to the contribution of races to civilization, you will be convinced that you inherited the civilizations of those races that were as powerful in their day and generation as you are in yours. If you will take the time to read history, you will find that your race has not done everything. You will find that your race has inherited much from other races and that it has been helped much by other races.

PREJUDICE: If you are so smart, why don't you go on and develop your own country? If you are so powerful, why do you all other nations to dominate Africa? [You have only little old Liberia left and you can't build that up.]

REPRESENTATIVE FROM AFRICA: Africans are mentally smart, but they are no match for moral perverts, who were not satisfied to steal the African from Africa, but turned around and stole Africa from the Africans. We are not schooled in that kind of statecraft. The African is powerful. When he wakes up from his long sleep and girds himself again for the new march out of darkness, the world will face a man. Justice, in spite of what is going on in Africa today, no race on earth will ever crush Africa. [You may take our land and gold and ivory but you will never take our spirit.]

TRUTH: Justice, will you let History tell you about the Negro's contribution to the development of Africa?

JUSTICE: History, you may give us a summary of the Negro's contribution to the development of America.

P. 16a (version 1) of the original transcript

HISTORY: Of the three hundred thousand troops in the Revolutionary War, it has been estimated that five thousand were Negroes. History shows that Negroes bore a

brave part in the first struggle of this country for liberty and freedom. In the war of 1812, a Commanding officer protested against the enlisting of blacks.

IGNORANCE: He was right. I wish I knew his name. We should build a monument to his memory.

TRUTH: But Commander Chauncey rebuked his contemptible prejudice by saying, "I have yet to learn that the color of the skin can affect a man's qualifications for valor and usefulness. I have nearly 50 blacks on board this ship and they are among my best men."

At the famous battle of Lake Erie, under Commodore Perry, black men displayed as much courage and patriotism as did the white men. In the civil war, in which thy country was baptized in the blood of five hundred thousand patriots and emptied its treasury of three billion dollars, black men who were in bondage went to the battle field to fight for

P. 16a (version 2) of the original transcript

Their own freedom and save the Union.

[Music-Tramp, Tramp, Tramp]

In the Spanish-American War, in the famous battle of San Juan Hill, black men took the block house, saved the day for the nation, and immortalized the name of Theodore Roosevelt, the Rough Rider, when the 71<sup>st</sup> New York regiment refused to go up that hill under the rain and shot and shell. Every officer had been shot down except a sergeant, and at the risk of losing every man he commanded the black soldiers to deploy as skirmishers, and march forward. A petty officer commanded the black troops to take a position in the rear. A negro sergeant in full voice of proud command, told the petty officer where to go with the rear, and declared, "We are going to the front", and they went, singing. [Music-There'll be a Hot Time In the Old Town Tonight."]

HISTORY: The Negro's record for patriotism is written in the crimson tide that flowed from the body of Crispus Attucks in Revolutionary Times and curled itself through every war waged by America until it wrote of his daring and love of country amidst the howling,

P. 17 on original transcript

dying and smoking battlefields of Eloaney and San Juan Hill, and though hated and oppressed at home, crushed and bleeding in the land of his birth, the Negro sent four hundred thousand men into World War to fight for the flag that does not protect him in times of peace. [Music—"Over There"-History Continues.] His is war record is untarnished and unparalleled in American History. The Negro has been loyal to the stars and stripes. He is neither a traitor nor assassin. He has never shot a president nor betrayed national trust. [Music— Study War No More).

JUSTICE: Crier, call the next witness.

CRIER: The next witness will appear before the bar of justice.

(Ex-Slave enters, singing "Old Black Joe").

TRUTH: Justice, this is an ex-slave. Will you let her tell you about her contribution to the upbuilding of America?

JUSTICE: Did you make a contribution to upbuilding of America?

EX-SLAVE: Justice, you Honor, I did. I worked for the upbuilding of America for 250 years, and I never received a cent for my labor. I felled trees, tilled fields, protected homes, nursed the children of another race, made brick, built big houses for others and cabins for myself. I was denied the privilege of worshipping God. I wore the commonest clothes, ate the commonest

P. 18 of the original transcript

food-was chased by blood hounds, pursued by slave catchers. I never lifted my hand to smite those who held me in bondage. And when they marched away to war to keep me in slavery, I lay at the door of the big house guarding it as would a faithful watchdog to keep any one from entering, to do my mistress and her children any harm. I have nursed my bleeding back; I have held my aching heart—when it was almost breaking with sorrow. I was told that this was a Christian land, but I was denied the privilege of worshipping God. But my burdens got so heavy that I had to find Him. I sought Him in the woods, in the valley, in the canebrakes, in the big house, in the cotton patch, in the cabin. Late night when all was dark and I still would steal away to Jesus. (Singing behind curtain\*”Steal Away to Jesus”)

I found God. He talked with me. When he knew I could stand the trials no longer, he spoke to His Moses-Abraham Lincoln. He said to him, “Go Down Moses.”

[Sing]

ERROR: You ingrate. If we hadn’t caught you and brought you over here, you would be running around in Africa now, without a string of clothes on your black bodies.

REPRESENTATIVE OF NEGRO RACE: Had it been left to you, we would be still be wearing the [shackles] of slavery. Being naked in Africa is a great honor than wearing the chains of slavery in America. God and Justice broke these chains.

(Singing behind curtain-“Oh-Freedom).

JUSTICE: Crier, call the next witness.

CRIER: The next witness appears before the court. (Group enters singing, "Music in the Mine").

P. 19 of the original transcript

LABOR: Justice, I am Labor, the Negro's greatest contribution to civilization. Within my sable hands I bear the implements of toil through the centuries. No spot in this land is free from the touch of my hand nor the might of my muscle. I have gone into the forest with my axe for a scepter and compelled trees to bow in obeisance to me. I have tickled the chocolate soil of Louisiana, and sweet-tempered cane has responded to my blandishments. I have massaged the prairie and corn fields with my hoe and beautiful corn has shown it's teeth in delight. I made every valley of the south a palm of God's hand, heaped high with cotton, corn and tobacco. I made the south bloom and blossom as the rose.

Before the world had machinery to do the hard, heavy, back-breaking work, I was its most dependable hewer of wood and drawer of water. I did the hard work which white men could not or would not do. With the coming of machinery, the world that has climbed up on my strong shoulders, cast me aside, in spite in the Divine admonition to "forget not the ox that treadeth out the corn."

In the labor world, Injustice practices the grossest wage discrimination on the mere scroe of color. She refuses to pay me the same wage that she pays other men for the same kind of work. In all fields of labor the Negro is the lowest paid, the worst treated, the last hired and the first fired. Injustice has set up a system of wage robbery that forces the Negro to live below the standards [of decency].

IGNORANCE: That's where he wants to live—down in some bottom near the railroad track.

P. 20 of the original transcript

LABOR: Justice, the Negro who lives down in the bottom lives there because injustice pays him bottom wages. She takes the money thus gained to buy a mansion for herself on some Grand Boulevard. The mansion really belongs to the Negro laborer; by she holds the deed to it. Her system of wage discrimination robs the Negro of a home—it robs his children of an education, and it robs him of self-protection and self-respect. Injustice owes the Negro billions of dollars as the result of wage discrimination. She keeps the Negro out of labor unions so as to keep him in industrial servitude. She keeps him out of labor unions to use him as a mud sill—a door mat and a buffer in industry.

Injustice and Prejudice set up stores in Negro communities and get all of their support from Negro trade, but they positively refuse to give Negroes employment in those stores. She has discriminated against the Negro so long in industry, that her sense of justice is completely seared. In business, she practices reciprocity in dealing with every race and nationality except the Negro. She does not realize that practically all the money that the Negro earns in America is turned back into American business in less than 30 days.

The Italian laborer sends most of his money back to Italy. The Greek sends [thousands of dollars] back to his native land. The Pole sends [American money] back to his beloved Poland. This is as it should be or as it must be, but, even while the Negro is digging in the ditch for a dollar, he is singing in his loyal heart, "My

Country, 'Tis for Thee." [Justice], greater love hath no man that this." In Injustice, Ignorance, Prejudice and Error could see clearly and think straight, they

"For every race on the globe  
America seems to be a home  
She welcomes them with open arms.

P. 21 of the original transcript

REPRESENTATIVE NEGRO RACE: Justice, may I tell you our war story in song?

JUSTICE: You may. This is the time for you to set your case before the world.

(Music-Sing, "We fought Every Race's Battle But Our Own".)

would conclude that it is to the best interest of America that she gives employment to citizens who would in turn invest their earnings in American business.

Justice, I come asking that you open shops and factories; asking that you give me a right to work with machinery. I have earned the right. When I ask for opportunity, Tolerance, Sympathy, and Pity give me charity. I cannot live on charity. It crucifies my self-respect. I will make me but a millstone around of the past, I come before you pleading for economic justice.

PREJUDICE: Justice, if the Negro does not like the way that he is treated in this country, why doesn't he go on back where he came from? (The three applaud).

REPRESENTATIVE OF NEGRO RACE: Justice, may I answer that question?

JUSTICE: You may.

REPRESENTATIVE OF NEGRO RACE: The Negro doesn't like the way he is treated, but he has bought and paid for his citizenship rights and he is going to day here until Shiloh comes.

P. 22 of the original transcript

BUSINESS: Justice, I am here to speak to Negro business.

INJUSTICE: (aside) That ain't nothin'! [The four laugh]

BUSINESS: Ignorance. Error and Prejudice are trying to force us into a Jim Crow business. Paraded under the name---Negro Business. Operated by Negroes for Negroes; I come opposing that impossible un-American scheme. There is no "Jew business" for Jews, Greeks business for Greeks or Chinese business for Chinese; and why then should there be a Negro business for Negroes? Business is business, regardless of race. Negroes buy anything from a pin to a Piano/from anybody else, and why shouldn't other races be as fair to the Negro? In business a turn about is fair play.

The first business of Negro Business is to disarm prejudice by competing standard and service. Why should Negroes confine their business to Negroes? If their shops are as well kept, their goods of the same quality, and their service as efficient as other merchants, why color in business? The Negro has spent billions of dollars with American business. Why can't these same Americans encourage him by giving him....

INJUSTICE: The Negro will never make it business. Business has to be run on time.

The Negro never gets anywhere on time,--not even to his own funeral.

REP. NEGRO RACE: We'll redeem our bad reputation for being late by getting to your funeral on time.

Original Transcript p. 23

P. 23 of the original transcript

Banking business soon after slavery. The bank failed, and for over 50 years everybody has been asking where has that Freedman's Bank money gone?

[The four in chorus]: Yes, we all want to know where the money is gone.

NEGRO BUSINESS: Justice, do Error and her associates ever think of going to the bottom of things and finding their cause? Yes, Negro banks and Negro business have failed. So have banks and business managed by members of your race, will all their years of experience. Recent collapse of great financial structures, recent investigations of gigantic financial concerns, in fact, the breaking down of the world's economic structure proves that the Negro hasn't a monopoly on the failing business.

INJUSTICE: The Negro need not talk about what we do to him. He is always whining about what somebody is doing to him or about what somebody is not doing for him. If he would take as much time for himself as he puts in whining and complaining about what somebody is doing to him, he would solve most of

P. 24 of the original transcript

His own problems.

FAIRPLAY: May I ask Injustice a question?

JUSTICE: You may.

FAIRPLAY: What do you mean by the Negro's own problems? The Negro has no separate distinct problems from the other races of mankind. The things that disturb him or hinder his progress—if left alone by the rest of the human race—will eventually disturb and hinder all of us. His future inextricably bound up with that of all other races. This matter of making an honest living is a human problem and not a Negro problem. No race has any right to hinder, circumscribe nor prevent another race from making an honest living in any field of endeavor.

REPRESENTATIVE OF NEGRO RACE: May I ask Injustice a question?

JUSTICE: You may.

REPRESENTATIVE OF NEGRO RACE: How can we solve any part of our great problem when Injustice, Prejudice, Ignorance and Error take every weapon from our hands—even our blood—bought ballot?

IGNORANCE: We knew you did not know what to with the ballot, so

P. 25 of the original transcript

We took it away from you.

REPRESENTATIVE OF NEGRO RACE: Don't judge me by yourself.

PREJUDICE: Justice, the trouble with the Negro is that he wants to get rich quick. He would sell his whole race to his enemies for a mess of potage.

REPRESENTATIVE OF NEGRO RACE: We sell to our enemies, do we? I am sorry, but you are our chief enemy. If it is wrong for us to sell, it is also wrong for you to buy. In wrong dealings the buyer is as guilty as the seller. In fact, if there were no buyers there would be no sellers.

BUSINESS: Error, let me tell you something: You and your associates might buy up a few Negroes, but the hard-working Negro masses, the backbone of the race has never been bought and never will. Live or die, sink or swim, survive or perish, there is a great reserve force in the Negro race that will struggle on until the race makes a place in the business world where men will patronize him not because of his color, but because he has the goods and can compete in quality, price, and service.

INJUSTICE: The Negro makes me tired. He is always talking about what

P. 26 of the original transcript

He is going to do. Take this tip from me—he will never make it in the business world unless he stops talking so much. Money and not mouth counts in business.

REPRESENTATIVE OF NEGRO RACE: Since Injustice is so liberal with her tips, I hope she will take this one from the Negro. Money, and not mouth, talks in business, but the Negro believes in using what he has until he gets what he needs.

INJUSTICE: Stop! None of your tips for me. I don't take tips from Negroes.

REP. OF NEGRO RACE: No, you do not. You go us one better and take all we have, even our good name.

INJUSTICE: You are welcome to your name as far as I am concerned.

REP. OF NEGRO RACE: We shall have both name and money when Justice, Truth, and Fairplay get to work on you. Justice, will you let Fairplay tell how Injustice forces us to live in so-called Christian communities?

JUSTICE: Fairplay, you may give any additional testimony that will help us in this case.

FAIRPLAY: Justice, Injustice and her allies force the Negro to live

P. 27 of the original transcript

In disease breeding, neglected, unsanitary streets, and ramshackle houses, the health and morals of the entire city are endangered. Negro communities are often turned into vice dens—Prejudice and Injustice get rich by degrading the Negro. Negro children are robbed of their birthright because the race is forced to live amid unspeakable conditions.

PREJUDICE: Don't talk to me about living in the same street with the Negro. I am opposed to it. If we all the Negro to live in the same community with us, they will want to go to the same schools, attend the same churches, and be our social equal. I am willing to take my chances on catching the small-pox or any other diseases, just so I don't dies from it, rather than allow the Negro to live in the same block with me and be my social equal. I don't believe in social equality, and if the Negro keeps on getting refined and educated and living where he pleases, that is just what we shall have on our hands---social equality. You don't know the Negro; He has to be confined or he'll he break out of slavery, and he has been breaking out of something or breaking up something ever since. Confine him! That's our

P. 28 of the original transcript

Plan, and we are working it in every way.

REP. OF THE NEGRO: I am sorry to inform you, but you are losing time, because God has a divine plan and you cannot change it. Furthermore, you had better mind how you offend the least of his children, because in so doing you might lose your own soul. [Music: "You Bettah Mind"]

JUSTICE: Call the next witness.

CRIER: The Negro woman wants to testify.

JUSTICE: Admit her.

[Music—"I'm so glad." ] [Womanhood enters, as others sing behind curtain.]

Womanhood: Justice, your Honor. I represent Negro Womanhood. For 250 years I worked in the cornfields, kept the big house like a place, nursed the children of my master and loved them with a love and tenderness such as the world has never seen and will never see again. Many a day I stood at the auction block and had my children torn from my bosom and sold away, God only knows where. I walked in darkness—I was like Rachel weeping for my children and refusing to be comforted. I have come through the sadness and sorrow of it, but thank God my spirit was not embittered. I have never taught my children, race hatred and never will. It is the basest thing that parents can do.

P. 29 of the original transcript

Justice, does Prejudice realize that the Negro woman has been and always will be a great factor in this country in keeping the blood of the two races separate? Let the Negro woman go up, and black womanhood will build the social wall of protection as she goes up; force her to go down and she will tear down the wall between the races as she goes down. In the mixing of the blood, the Negro woman is the most valuable ally or the most deadly of foes.

Justice, we do not want any more crossing the line from either side. We come, pleading that you stop Ignorance from making social excursions in the Negro race, while Error tries to hold our men up as rapists.

FAIRPLAY: Justice, a while ago Prejudice suggested that the Negro be confined.

Will you let Truth tell us whether it is possible to do that?

TRUTH: Justice, there is not force on earth that can confine a race or kept it down when that race make its up

P. 30 of the original transcript

Mind to get up. Furthermore, you cannot keep the Negro in the gutter unless you stay down there with him.

REP. NEGRO RACE: Justice, to hear those four witnesses talk, you would think that we want to break into the white race. As the race representative, I wish to state that the Negro does not want to break into the white race, and he wants the white race to stop breaking into his race.

TRUTH: So far as social equality is concerned, the Negro has social equality. Being white does not make people social equals, but being the same in ideals, standards, and achievements does make people social equals. Prejudice, Injustice, Error and Ignorance are white, but those four are not social equals of other white people who are not handicapped as they are, by Ignorance, prejudice, error and injustice. Neither are they social equals of Negroes who are enlightened in the mind, free from envy and hatred in heart, and a world of bigotry in spirit.

REP. NEGRO RACE: Justice, Prejudice, Injustice, Error and Ignorance are always bringing up those booga-boos-Social Equality and Inter-marriage. Who in the world do they think wants to mix with them?

P. 31 of the original transcript

The Negro does not want to marry into their race.

TRUTH: Justice, if white is all the Negro is looking for, he has enough of that in his own race. The Negro wants Justice, and should not have to turn white to get it.

Equality is his birthright; the Declaration of Independence declared that fact. It says, "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." That will settle it. The

P. 32 of the original transcript

Citizens of this country are promised equality of opportunity and there will be no peace and no abiding progress until they get it. The Constitution promised not to deny or abridge these rights and American must keep up her word.

JUSTICE: Injustice, the Declaration of Independence declares that Negro is your equal and is entitled to the same blessings which you enjoy.

INJUSTICE: If he gets them, he will get them over by dead body.

REP. OF NEGRO RACE: Justice, you will pardon me for reminding Injustice that getting them over a dead body might make them scared.

TRUTH: Justice, right is worth dying for. Others have felt that way and they will continue to feel that way until all races are treated right.

INJUSTICE: I shall not die for the Negro. But, I am willing to die for my convictions on this everlasting Negro question.

REP. NEGRO RACE: Please don't die now. If you do, you will go there the rich men went who did not treat Lazarus right. Wait until you get converted, so that you can go to heaven with us. My race is praying for you everyday.

INJUSTICE: OH! So, you are praying for me, are you? Well if talk

P. 33 of the original transcript

ing about religion gets you to heaven, the place will be crowded with Negroes.

REP. OF NEGRO RACE: No, it isn't going to be crowded with Negroes simply because they talk about religion, but heaven is promised to those who come up through the trials and tribulations and bear their afflictions with patience, hope, and forgiveness. That's what the Bible says. According to Bible standards my race certainly has qualified for heaven. John, in the Revelations, says he saw a number that no man could number coming up through tribulations and great trials. He must have talking about Negroes, because we certainly have trials and tribulations enough to get us up somewhere.

TRUTH: Justice, I wish to present some facts about the Negro's Constitutional rights.

PREJUDICE: My Lord, some more rights. Ain't that somethin'.

TRUTH: Justice, on July 28, 1858, you wrote the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment into the Constitution of the United States and made the Negro a citizen. On March 20, 1870, you wrote the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment and gave him the ballot. Injustice has robbed the Negro of both of these constitutional rights which gave him. The Amendments are not enforced and while

P. 34 of the original transcript

we are trying to get the whole country to cooperate in law enforcement, we must not forget to enforce the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> amendments.

INJUSTICE: You needn't talk about any more Negro rights. I think he is getting along fine, he has the right to come in here and talk all over the place. Now it's Amendments, what else does he want? Those amendments were written before we four had a chance to get together, but we are banded together now and that's why those Amendments are not enforced.

TRUTH: Ah! Justice, that's the trouble. Prejudice and Injustice are banded together to trample the Constitution of the United States under their feet and then stand up in the Court of Justice and brag about it. There is nothing written in the Constitution that is more sacred than those Amendments. They are in deed and in truth blood-brought Amendments.

Furthermore, they are the direct answers to the prayers of four million black men and women who prayed in cabins and the cornfields of the South. They are the results of

Original Transcript p. 35

P. 35 of the original

Two amendments are written in the blood of the five hundred thousand who fell in the Civil War and are sealed with the life blood of our Emancipator, Abraham Lincoln.

INJUSTICE: I am sick and tired of hearing about Negro rights; what about his duties?

FAIRPLAY: You might as well prepare for serious illness because you are going to hear more and more about Negro rights until these rights are granted him. [Just as they are granted every other citizen.]

TRUTH: History has shown that the Negro has done his full duty by this government. He is, therefore, entitled, to his full constitutional rights. Justice, our country may build a pathway of silver, she may carpet the ocean with gold, but unless she is fair to all races, she will fall as did Rome of old.

Justice: America is a democracy—a government of the people, by the people, and for the people; not a government of some of the people, by some of the people, and for some of the people. The Negro is a taxpayer, and above all, she has paid for his constitutional rights by his loyalty to the flag. [Music—"The Call to Race Redemption."]

Justice: Crier, call the next witness.

Crier: The next witness is Legislation. (Enter Legislation).

P. 35a of the original transcript

LEGISLATION: Justice, I am Legislation. I am here to speak for the enforcement of all laws.

This government has spent millions of dollars for the enforcement of the eighteenth Amendment and not one cent for the enforcement of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments. It is more important that men have the liberty in America that it is for them to not have liquor.

P. 36 of the original transcript

The records show that in this Christian land, in 58 years we have burned and roasted over 4,000 [Arthur Rapor has just presented a comprehensive and authentic study of “The Tragedy of Lynching.”] He says that, “The lynching problem is of high national importance. Until America can discover and apply means to end these relapses to the law of the jungle, we have no assurance that ordered society will not any moment be overthrown by the blind passion of a potentially over-present mob.”

[This remarkable study was made by the Commission on Inter-racial cooperation and the Southern Commission on the study of lynching.] It is presented in the hope that it will have some effect in decreasing this modern barbracy.

For a half century the hands of Prejudice and Injustice have been red with murder; Injustice has been girded with authority and Prejudice laughs at the death throes of black men in flames. At lynching bees, so-called Christians have danced like Figi savages around the writhing, smoking, bodies of their victims, and fought for bones to keep as souvenirs. This patient,

P. 36a of the original transcript

suffering race has been helpless and defenseless. The Negro has cried aloud, but Christian America is too busy preaching about the Golden Rule to hear the voice of God saying in thunderous tones, "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

The National Association For the Advancement of Colored People has been fighting for over twenty years for the complete emancipation of America from lynching and injustice. Another grand army, composed of white women, and known as the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching, has recently entered the field to work until America becomes a lynch-less nation. This Association declares that mob violence is a menace to public safety.

It is a fact that much of the lawlessness from which America is now suffering is due to the fact that she silently by for over 50 years and saw Negroes roasted alive. It has taken 50 years for the seeds of lawlessness to germinate, spring up and bear fruit. The nation is now reaping what it has sown.

P. 37 of the original transcript

Justice, I have heard complaints about the inroads that Communism is making on Negro life and peace of mind. Is it true that the Negro is being disloyal to America; and is listening to the pleadings of the communists, the Reds, and the enemies of organized governments?

JUSTICE: Perhaps the Rep. of the Negro Race can answer that question.

REP OF THE NEGRO RACE: Justice, the Negro's answer to any unsound doctrine is. "I shall not be moved." (Sing, "I Shall Not be Moved)

JUSTICE: Proceed, Legislation.

LEGISLATION: Justice, America must stop making laws for black America audience for white America. The nation tolerates "*Jim Crow*" laws. Those laws are un-American and unjust. They give railroad companies the opportunity to rob the Negro. He is charged class fare and is given cattle accommodations. Charging first class fares for sears in dirty, *stenchy* "*Jim Crow*" cars, is not only highway robbery, but those cars are a disgrace to America's sense of justice. Under the laws of weights and measures, the government does not allow merchants to short-measure customers—why does it allow railroads to charge Negro first class fare and give them the most inferior

P. 38 of the original transcript

accommodations? Will the states of the United States pass any more discriminatory laws? We anchored the Negro's citizenship rights in the constitution by legislative enactment. We've robbed him of the ballot; we've brought him into court for trial without allowing members of his race to serve on juries at the trial. We have allowed mobs to lynch him without putting forth any effort to bring the criminals to justice. We have made him ride on Jim Crow cars for which he paid first class fare and received cattle accommodations. Today, the Negro stands in the court of Justice and I come pleading with America to wipe every discriminatory law from the statute books. Remove every Jim Crow car from her tracks, and make this the land of the free.

PATIENCE:

The Negro has been pleading with us for over half a century and we have paid very little attention to his pleadings. There have been times when he has cried out in his anguish, "Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?" Is it, therefore, surprising that he should listen for a voice from somewhere?

P. 39 of the original transcript

JUSTICE: Are there any more witnesses in this case?

FAIRPLAY: Justice, Public Opinion has not been called.

JUSTICE: Crier, call Public Opinion.

CRIER: Public Opinion?

JUSTICE: Public Opinion, what has been your attitude towards the Negro race?

PUBLIC OPINION: Justice, your Honor, I have been one-sided, just as you see me now. I publish only the bad things about the Negro. Very few people are interested in the best side of history. I tell of his murders, crimes, and assaults upon women, bootlegging and gambling, anything and everything, I advertise the worst element in the Negro race: I either leave the good things out or I stick them in a little corner so people will have to hunt for them. That is our policy and we have lived up to it for more than fifty years. Some of the magazines are beginning to shed a little truth on the Negro, but Injustice, Prejudice, Ignorance, and Error say it pays to write the Negro down.

(all four shake their heads and look at each other.)

P. 40 of the original transcript

[Public Opinion cont'd]. In publishing the crimes committed by Negroes—Ignorance, insists that I designate the race. Injustice tells me to be sure to put burly or brute or black after the name, when the offender is a Negro. Ignorance wants me to give the race full credit for every misdemeanor with which it is charged. They pay me to do it. They say that Negro crimes are news, and that I must tell the world. Error insists on leaving out the daily press the stories of good deeds and worthwhile achievements of the Negro. They tell me to play the Negro race down.

IGNORANCE: You got paid for it didn't you?

PUBLIC OPINION: You four told me that it pays to write the Negro down. I wrote him down. I suppose you got the pay, I know I got one-sided.

REP. OF NEGRO RACE: Justice, Christianity and Goodwill are in the anteroom. Will you let them be called before you render your decision?

PREJUDICE: Um! Some more religion. We'll all be holy if this keeps up.

JUSTICE: Call Christianity and Goodwill.

CRIER: Christianity and Goodwill!

P. 40a of the original transcript

JUSTICE: Christianity, your mission in the world is to build the Kingdom of God in the hearts of men. Will you tell the Court what have been doing to that end, so far as the Negro is concerned?

CHRISTIANITY: I found the Negro in the depths of human bondage, and I worked on the hearts of men until I “set the captives free”. I am working for the complete emancipation of all races. I shall work until all men are transformed in sympathy, love, understanding and helpful co-operation. Ignorance, Prejudice,

P. 41 of the original transcript

Injustice and Error have been the greatest enemies to my progress.

It seems impossible to get them to realize

We are brothers all, what e'er the race

Brothers whether in rags or lace

Brothers all, by the good Lord's grace.

Some may sit in a royal hall,

Some may dwell where the rooms are small,

But under the skin, we are brothers all!

My mission in the world is to teach kinfolk how to get along

Together and share the earth and the fullness thereof with each

Other without having to kill of generation after generation,

Fighting among themselves for their common heritage.

[Addition to be made.]

JUSTICE: Goodwill, do you have any testimony to give in this case?

GOODWILL: Justice, your honor I have. As leaven in the lump, I have been working

quietly but unceasingly to make the races of mankind beat their swords into plow

shares and their spears into pruning hooks. I have----

.....

As a result of my untiring effort, the Negro has thousands of friends' right here in this country and other millions throughout the world, who will come to his rescue in a crisis. Don't you think for once that the Negro is fighting his battle for his God-given

rights alone. Let Injustice and Prejudice keep up their unreasonable attacks, their organized and mischievous

P. 42 of the original transcript

Propaganda, their vile onslaughts and they will find men and women, north and south, east and west, in church and state, from the ranks of the humble and from the throne of the mighty, who will not only speak in defense of the race, but will join the Negro in his battle for Justice.

Let Injustice and Prejudice realize that the Negro has not only nursed other races, but he has fought the battles of other races and there does not exist on his planet a single race that is so unjust and grateful as to stand by and see the Negro race crushed in spirit, denied forever his God-given rights and left wounded and bleeding in the land for which he has given his life.

No, the Negro is not alone, and in a crisis, that that be for him will more than they that be against him. Let Prejudice, Injustice, Error go to far in their unjust treatment and the Negro's friends in the white race and other races will rise up, as it were, out of the very ground and marshal the forces of right and righteousness and put these four enemies to all human progress under foot. The men and the women who are helping the Negro overcome his ignorance, improve his living

P. 43 of the original transcript

Conditions, and find opportunities to work and earn his daily bread and lift himself in the world are invincible host, because God is on their side. They might seem few in number, but in the cause of Justice, God makes one man strong enough to chase a thousand of those who are lined up with Injustice and Prejudice, and he gives two of them spiritual power enough to chase ten thousand of the army of the wicked into the midst of the sea.

IGNORANCE: Great day! We had better be leaving.

INJUSTICE: Leave nothing—you are the very one who said we'd stick together until the end. If we lose our courage we might lose our case.

IGNORANCE: I feel like we are losing it.

GOODWILL: Representative of the Negro race, let not your heart be troubled.

Goodwill is at work in America and throughout the world. The angels sang on Bethlehem's plains, "Peace on earth, Good will to men." The Divine command has been reverberating in the hearts of men and echoing throughout the ages ever since. It will continue to echo until it is translated into every day life and every day law among all men. White men and women, north and south, are

P. 44 of the original transcript

Enlisting as never before. All we ask is that

In the cause of Goodwill, you

Lead on, Lead on Justice

Justice, you know that in the cause of right you will lead on, you will lead on.

Through life and death and around the world

Until you set this race free.  
On flag of Liberty, Justice, and Equality  
The Negro has been loyal to thee  
In war and in peace.  
America, you ought to lead.  
With purpose born of God,  
For you are pledged to liberty  
On this, our deathless sod.

PATIENCE: Representative of the Negro race, hold, hold to your faith a little longer.  
Afflictions only make you stronger.

JUSTICE: All of the testimony is in. All the Representatives of the Negro race stand  
while I render my decision and issue my decree? Christianity, you have been derelict  
to duty. Arise! Put on your strength! Apply the social teachings of Jesus Christ to  
every day life among all the races.

Truth, Patience, Fairplay, Just Legislation, Christianity, and Goodwill, you are  
the forces that I have released to work in this world---not for one race alone, but for  
all. I charge

P. 45 of the original transcript

You to go in my name, in the name of Justice, and preach and teach the kind of righteousness that shall exalt all races and put Injustice, Ignorance, Prejudice, and Error underfoot. Right and not white shall reign in this world; character and not color shall be exalted in this land; righteousness and not race shall rule in this world.

Representative of the Negro race, rise and understand forth in the liberty wherewith this flag has made you free. (Unfurls and lifts high)

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NEGRO RACE: Justice, I thank you for giving Truth a hearing in my case. The evidence proves that as a race, we have worked, waited, and suffered. "We've fought every race's battles but our own." From now on the Negro is going to fight with those who fight with him. The weapons of our warfare shall not be carnal, but spiritual. We shall yield not a single God-given right. We shall wipe out Ignorance, defeat Prejudice, annihilate Injustice, and destroy Error. We shall spiritualize our aspirations, glorify our color, and magnify the God of our salvation. From now henceforth my race will press forward towards the mark of the high calling.

P. 46 of the original transcript

Justice, these four enemies will not frighten us, they cannot grey our hopes nor defeat us. We shall meet them in the arena of human conflict, look them squarely in the face and beat them to a frazzle. Justice and Truth are on our side, and they are a majority. Tell the world that my race is on its solid march out of the wilderness, out of the night. By persistent effort, hard work, and loyalty to the captain of our salvation, we shall strike the highway of human progress. We shall make the wilderness and the solitary place glad for us. We shall make the desert bloom and blossom as a rose. We have done it before and we will do it again.

PATIENCE: Public opinion, tell the world that from now on,

LABOR: Will win on its merit.

LOVE: Will reign in the hearts of men.

CHRISTIANITY: Is the leaven that is going to leaven the lump.

HISTORY: Will keep an accurate record.

GOODWILL: Will conquer prejudice.

TRUTH: Will get a hearing.

JUSTICE: Truth, tell the world that Justice is on the throne.

REP. OF THE NEGRO RACE: And the Negro race is facing the rising sun.

(Music---“Lift Every Voice and Sing”)

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