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## **The Production of Political Discourse: Annual Radio Addresses of Black College Presidents During the 1930s and 1940s**

Vickie Leverne Suggs

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doi: <https://doi.org/10.57709/1060076>

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## ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, THE PRODUCTION OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE: ANNUAL RADIO ADDRESSES OF BLACK COLLEGE PRESIDENTS DURING THE 1930S AND 1940S, by VICKIE L. SUGGS, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chair, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty. The Dean of the College of Education concurs.

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## ABSTRACT

### THE PRODUCTION OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE: ANNUAL RADIO ADDRESSES OF BLACK COLLEGE PRESIDENTS DURING THE 1930s AND 1940s

by  
Vickie L. Suggs

The social and political role of Black college presidents in the 1930s and 1940s via annual radio addresses is a relevant example of how the medium of the day was used as an apparatus for individual and institutional agency. The nationalist agenda of the United States federal government indirectly led to the opportunity for Black college leadership to address the rhetoric of democracy, patriotism, and unified citizenship. The research focuses on the social positioning of the radio addresses as well as their role in the advancement of Black Americans. The primary question that informs the research is whether the 1930s and 1940s was a period of rising consciousness for Black America. The aim of this study is to examine the significance of radio during the pre- to post-war era, its parallel use by the United States federal government and historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), and the interrelationship between education,

politics, and society. The use of social history allows historical evidence to be viewed from the lens of identifying social trends. The social trends of the period examined include the analysis of economics, politics, and education. An additional benefit of using social history is the way in which it examines the masses and how they help shape history in conjunction with the leaders of a given period of examination. The research method also entails an in-depth analysis of 14 annual radio addresses delivered by three Black college presidents in the South during the 1930s and 1940s: Mordecai W. Johnson, James E. Shepard, and Benjamin E. Mays. Common themes found among radio addresses include morality and ethical behavior; economic, political, and social equality; access and inclusion in a democratic society; and a collective commitment to a just society. Black education as a form of racial uplift unveiled the meaning of access and the collective advancement of the race. Agreeing to deliver the radio addresses as a part of government-sponsored programming resulted in an inter-racial alliance between Black college leadership and the federal government. To this end, Black college leadership operationalized their access and education to benefit the needs of their race.



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A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the  
Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
in  
Educational Policy Studies  
in  
the Department of Educational Policy Studies  
in  
the College of Education  
Georgia State University

Atlanta, GA  
2008



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication is dedicated to my four grandparents; all who are deceased: Henry Cleveland McLean, Mattie Layton McLean, James William Suggs, and Elleather Johnson Suggs.

I would first like to thank God for without His presence in my life, I would not have been able to successfully navigate this academic pursuit. To my parents, Mattie L. Mitchell and Henry L. Suggs for their never-ending belief in my ability to achieve this educational goal. To my sisters, Valerie Y. Morgan and Vanessa Suggs Wallace; thank you for your support and your many words of encouragement as I moved through this process.

A very special thank you to my dissertation advisor, Philo Hutcheson, who has been a mentor and supporter of my research since the very beginning. Also to my committee members for their guidance, input, criticisms and willingness to challenge me as a researcher. To Wayne Urban and Benjamin Baez for their support and encouragement while at GSU. And a special note of appreciation to Marybeth Gasman for her tireless support of and enthusiasm for my research on black college leadership.

There are others whose support proved significant over the past several years: The archivists at the UNC Wilson Library, NCCU Library, Morehouse College and the Atlanta University Center Woodruff Library, Moorland Spingarn Research Library, and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture who assisted me time and time again. To Dr. Henry Louis Suggs, Dr. Lawrence E. Carter, Natalie Taylor, Theresa Hood, Nina Hammond, and Steven Simmons. And Andrew M. Brown for being my unexpected footstool.

Finally, to my daughter Max Grace Brown; the apple of my eye. I am constantly reminded that the purpose of my every accomplishment and struggle is to sow seeds into your future.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ASALH	Association for the Study of African-American Life and History, Inc.
ASNLH	Association for the Study of Negro Life and History
HBCU	Historically Blacks College or University
ISSA	International Sunday School Association
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NCCU	North Carolina Central University
NSHR	Negro Society for Historical Research
OWI	Office of War Information
UNCF	United Negro College Fund
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE PRODUCTION OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Since the first World War, when we were made aware of the conflicting loyalties of minorities set apart from the rest of the population because of race, culture, and national origin, social scientists have given attention to the effect of changes in American life upon these groups. These minorities may be divided into three groups: those actually or potentially identified with our enemies, those friendly to the United States, and the American Negro.

- E. Franklin Frazier (1942, p. 369)

E. Franklin Frazier (1942) believed the impact of the war on the Negro proved to be a factor in American culture and awareness of minority populations and their struggle to assimilate into American life. The quote suggests that the American Negro occupied the very unique position of being neither an enemy nor friend of the United States, but rather set apart as its own division. The social space of inequity assigned to Negro citizens foreshadows the question of allegiance they faced during both World Wars. According to Frazier (1942), "The growing concern of the United States with immigration during the first decade of

this century became focused upon the problem of Americanization during and following World War I. Our traditional policy of equal treatment before the law and uncoerced assimilation in regard to the various racial and cultural minorities in our midst was to some extent abandoned" (p. 369). Frazier (1942) further argues that, "The change in policy at the time was due partly to the spy mania and the hysteria of war and partly to the realization that the immigrant whether naturalized or unnaturalized, tended to maintain his loyalty to the land of this origin, even when it seemed to conflict with loyalty to the country of his sojourn adoption" (p. 369). During both World War I and World War II, there existed an undercurrent of race that likely would influence the effects of the conflict since the morale of the Negro was in question. Thus, Frazier understood the "need to inquire into the effects of the war upon various racial and cultural minorities" and how that circumstance "assumed a new importance" (p. 369). This study maintains that in the case of how Black college presidents used their individual and institutional agency

during World War II to affect measurable change, Frazier's belief was realized.

For the purposes of this study, I will use the terms Negro, Black, and African American depending on the context in which they are appropriate. The term Negro was commonly used during the period of examination to describe descendants of slaves, thus it is used by the subjects of the research as well as within works cited. I use the terms Black and African American to describe the race of American citizens in a more general sense throughout the study.

The intersection of linguistic practice, change agency, and race relations was the unintended consequence of the United States nationalist agenda during World War II. This study is an examination of 14 radio addresses delivered by three Black college presidents in the South during the 1930s and 1940s. The research examines how these Black college leaders engaged in political discourse at a time when it could be argued that American democracy and the rhetoric of patriotism seemed to collide along racial, social, economic and educational lines. Black college presidents not only found themselves the recipients of the invitation to broadcast on mainstream, government-sponsored radio programming, but they were also ushered into the unique and unprecedented position of creating a rhetorical



setting between their audiences, social communities, and themselves. According to Savage (1999), "Coalitions of African-American activists, public officials, intellectuals, and artists struggled in the World War II era to use the mass medium of national radio to advocate a brand of American freedom that called for an end to racial segregation and discrimination" (p. 1). Savage (1999) argues that

National radio reached full maturity as a political medium in the 1930s and 1940s, drawing its strength in part from the eager embrace of the medium by the Roosevelt administration. As a result, national radio created a new aural public sphere, a discursive political forum for a community of millions of listeners spanning the boundaries of region, class, race, and ethnicity. With its extensive official use during the war, radio recast its own image from that of a source of inexpensive entertainment to that of a civic voice of immediate importance, whether delivering breaking news from the front or carrying politically unifying appeals. The emergence of a newly empowered national government and if the nation's first truly national mass political medium are not coincidental or parallel narratives but stories that converge and reinforce each other. (Savage, 1999, pp. 1-2)

Savage (1999) recounts the many Black leaders, entertainers, activists and organizations who participated in radio programming including Paul Robeson, Cater G. Woodson, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), National Urban League, Louis Armstrong, Ethel Waters, Marian Anderson, Duke Ellington,

and Mary McLeod Bethune when she was director of Negro affairs for the National Youth Administration. The United States government-sponsored radio address program was born out of the government's fear of counterattacks from Black citizens against the war effort; nonetheless, racially conscious programming provided a needed form of racial uplift in which the repressed voice of Black citizens could be heard by the masses. The repressed voice of Black America was a matter of law in Jim Crow South. Thus, unbridled retaliation was a very real threat for Black college leaders who chose to participate in a national conversation on race, despite its government-sanction. Barbara Savage (1999) describes Jim Crow South through the eyes of Sidney Williams, director of the Cleveland Urban League. In his program, "Jim Crow Is On the Run," Williams gives an account of the birth and life of Jim Crow in America:

Jim Crowism spread throughout the economic and political and social life of America like a malignant cancer, eating away the cohesion and unity of our nation. Statutes and regulations were passed in the south requiring that negro and white people be separated....[T]he intent was to make impossible social contacts between white and Negro people....There is no such thing as "separate but equal." Let's be fair to the South and admit, with shame, that Jim Crow has invaded the North too--sub rosa. What other than Jim Crowism is our segregated housing? The quota system in our colleges and universities? The discriminatory employment practices

of our industries and businesses? (Savage, 1999, p. 191)

Unlike Savage (1999), who does not examine college presidents, this research not only discusses the medium of radio during World War II, it also frames the medium and its messages through 14 radio addresses delivered by three Black college presidents in the South. To this end, the intent is to add to the significance of the examination of Black college leadership in America. In reviewing the 14 radio addresses delivered by Johnson, Shepard, and Mays, I found common themes including the Christian faith; morality and ethical behavior; economic, political, and social equality; equitable access to education and employment; respect for law and order; and a collective commitment to a just society. Despite pre-approval of all radio address content by radio networks, the Black American agenda of equality and full citizenship was advanced. According to Savage (1999), "This was not only a time of increased mobility and political visibility for African Americans but also an era of greater intellectual attention to them, as reflected by a proliferation of works by and about them" (p. 3). Savage goes on to argue that because radio programs "were presented on a national mass communications medium, these broadcasts help us understand how the political issue

of race was constructed for a large, diffuse audience and how that construction evolved into a search for a national language of consensus on the question of racial equality" (p. 3). One could argue that a parallel use of the radio program was realized. On the one hand, (Savage, 1999), contends the federal government wished to connect with an audience of Black citizens who would embrace the program's commitment to race relations and also support the war effort without skepticism. Conversely, Black college presidents wished to connect with an audience of compassionate and influential White leaders and citizens as well as Black Americans who advocated social, economic, and political reform. More to the point, Savage (1999) asserts

Many officials at both federal agencies were deeply concerned with domestic racial politics and agreed that something needed to be said about African Americans. At the same time, there was considerable trepidation about how to break the sanctioned political silence about African Americans and their place in the nation, especially in the face of increasingly visible black demands for just such a reassessment. As a consequence, these two important federal agencies produced a relatively limited amount of radio programming about race relations or African Americans considering their level of worry about racial unity and the number of public appeals they offered on other issues. The problem facing these federal officials was simple yet complex: they wanted to build up black morale by integrating a more visible 'Negro' into the public sphere of patriotic rhetoric, but they did not want to endorse the racial reforms blacks sought for fear of offending whites, especially southern congressmen. (Savage, 1999, p. 107)

For these reasons, the idea of a radio address program resulted in a mutually beneficial enterprise between the federal government and Black college presidents.

The method in which Black college presidents sought social equality via radio addresses incorporated vision, courage, and intentional exploitation of the rare opportunity to reach both regional and national audiences. By anticipating the impact of participating in the radio program, these leaders used their agency to benefit Black America—first and foremost. Savage's book, *Broadcasting Freedom* (1999), brings into focus how the nationalist agenda on the part of the United States federal government indirectly led to the opportunity for Black college leadership to weigh in on the rhetoric of patriotism, democracy, and unified citizenship. The aim of this study is to examine the significance of radio during the pre- to post-war era, its parallel use by the United States federal government and presidents of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), and the interrelationship between education, politics, and society. The following questions inform the research: Why was radio the medium of choice and how did it counter repression of voice among Black Americans? Was an inter-racial alliance formed between the

U.S. government and Black college presidents? Were there parallel uses of the radio address program?

In this study, I use historical methods, drawing upon data obtained from a review of radio address transcripts, books, newspaper articles, documentaries, and other written correspondence found in archival collections to identify three presidents and their institutions. I obtained information pertaining to Mordecai W. Johnson, president of Howard University, from Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University in Washington, D.C. Information concerning James E. Shepard, president of North Carolina Central University, was obtained at Wilson Library's North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Additionally, I obtained information relevant to Benjamin E. Mays, president of Morehouse College, from The New York City Public Library, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture as well as Morehouse College and the Atlanta University Center Woodruff Library.

### *Conceptual Framework*

According to Denman (Glenn, Lyday, and Sharer, 2004), "The ancient links between rhetoric, civic life, and democracy are a part of the European heritage of rhetorical thought and practice. The history of rhetoric makes clear

that the teaching of rhetoric was an instrumental part of the development of that civic persona, the 'citizen-orator,' whose skills were at the service of the community" (p. 3). Berlin (1984) maintains that, "A rhetoric is a social intervention. It arises out of a time and place, a peculiar social context, establishing for a period the conditions that make a peculiar kind of communication possible, and then it is altered or replaced by another scheme" (p. 1). Berlin also argues that a rhetoric does not exist in fixed or permanent state, nor is its reception synchronized. To the contrary, a rhetoric changes; responding to changes in social conditions. Berlin further argues

Rhetorical schemes differ in the way each element is defined, as well as in the conception of the relation of the elements to each other. Every rhetoric, as a result, has at its base a conception of reality, of human nature, and of language. In other terms, it is grounded in a noetic field: a closed system defining what can, and cannot, be known; the nature of the knower; the nature of the relationship between the knower, the known, and the audience; and the nature of language. Rhetoric is thus ultimately implicated in all that a society attempts. It is at the center of a culture's activities. (Berlin, 1984, pp. 1-2)

According to Crewell, Draper and Mitchell (1996), rhetoric has three styles:

1. Ethos- The speaker's appeal based on character and reputation;

- 2. Logos- The speaker's appeal based on logic or reason;
  - 3. Pathos- The speaker's appeal based on emotion.
- (Crewell, Draper, and Mitchell, 1996, para. 1)

In his book *Rhetoric and Reality* (1987), Berlin contends:

Rhetoric exists not merely so that truth may be communicated: rhetoric exists so that truth may be discovered. The epistemic position implies that knowledge is not discovered by reason alone, that cognitive and affective processes are not separate, that inter-subjectivity is a condition of all knowledge, and that the contact of minds affects knowledge. (Berlin, 1987, p.165)

Berlin (1987) also asserts that "truth is prior to language and is clearly and distinctly available to the person who views it in the proper spirit, and is communicable in clear and distinct terms" (p. 11). The truth of Jim Crow South, discrimination and race relations in America inform the research and the methodology Johnson, Shepard, and Mays used to dispatch their agency for the good of not only their race, but also the survival of all citizens. The truth of Jim Crow South received in the proper spirit resonated with sympathetic Whites and progressive Blacks during the pre-to post-war era. The subjects of the research were instrumental in raising the profile of race and creating a social space in which that ugly truth could be received by those who wished to engage in an authentic conversation on race in an effort to achieve social change.



Logan (Glenn, Lyday, and Sharer, 2004) advance the idea that by, "Looking to the past for models and uses of rhetorical education, we recognize that social change has always been partially the result of rhetorical action, oral or written arguments crafted to elicit specific responses" (p. 37). Logan gives the example that "Nineteenth-century African Americans first had to argue their entitlement to the status as unenslaved human being; thus the rhetoric of antislavery was necessary. Then Black Americans had to argue their rights to citizenship and to all the privileges and protections associated with it, and in response to these exigencies emerged anti-lynching and civil right discourse (Glenn, Lyday, and Sharer, 2004, p.37). In this same vein, Black leaders and activists, including college presidents, have always understood the significance of participation in discourse around issues of citizenship, democracy, and social justice. As with enslaved Blacks, during the post-slavery to pre-civil rights era, Black Americans relied heavily upon social spaces in which they could privately and safely espouse rhetoric that encouraged racial uplift and collective advancement. Whether that rhetoric was in the form of slaves singing biblical hymns or anthems created by freedmen in response to inequitable treatment, the Black community has used rhetoric and

language to survive and overcome unimaginable obstacles and marginalization.

Berlin (1987) argues that, "Communication is at the center of epistemic rhetoric because knowledge is always knowledge for someone standing in relation to others in a linguistically circumscribed situation....Language forms our conceptions of our selves, our audiences, and the very reality in which we exist. Language, moreover, is a social--not a private--phenomenon, and as such embodies a multitude of historically specific conceptions that shape experience, especially ideological conceptions about economic, political, and social arrangements" (p. 166).

Berlin (1987) also argues that

Rhetoric is epistemic because knowledge itself is a rhetorical construct....For the epistemic, the symbolic includes the empirical because all reality, all knowledge, is a linguistic construct. Meaning emerges not from objective, disinterested, empirical investigation, but from individuals engaging in rhetorical discourse in discourse communities--groups organized around the discussion of particular matters in particular ways. Knowledge, then, is a matter of mutual agreement appearing as a product of the rhetorical activity, the discussion, of a given discourse community. (Berlin, 1987, pp.165-166)

Because it appears that societal circumstances produce situations in which critical discourse can take place, rhetorical intervention such as radio addresses can be seen as a form of social practice for those who choose to

exercise their individual agency. As a result, change can be realized and social (or change) agents emerge.

As Bourdieu (1984) argues, "Social science, in constructing the social world, takes note that agents are, in their ordinary practice, the subjects of acts of construction of the social world" (p. 467). In other words, agents of change negotiate dialogue that promotes critical thinking and how one might analyze the social world in terms of politics, economics, and society. This form of political participation engages members of a society in an examination of social constructs and how we each individually and collectively affect positive and beneficial change. In the case of this research, these social and political actors include Black college presidents, federal government administration and agencies, Blacks activists and artists, mainstream media, the Black press, and all members of American society. Because any society consists of a wide-ranging collection of members, Bourdieu (1984) maintains that the "most fundamental oppositions within the social order is the opposition between the dominant and the dominated" (p. 469). Essentially, he describes a social blueprint all members of a society are expected to follow so that the social order is not disrupted. In his estimation, the position at which

an individual is located in a social space is defined not by class, but by the amount of position and power across various types of capital. Thus, Bourdieu's definition of capital seems more connected to his theoretical ideas on class as a derivative of aesthetic taste than to a socially constructed stratification. Essentially, one's social space in the world is how one defines one's own social standing for oneself. Du Bois (1903) also understands how ideas are related to social space and social order. He sees education as political in its nature and, therefore, prone to bias. Given the construct of social order, Du Bois advocates the importance of one defining and legitimizing one's social, economic, and cultural capital through the achievement of education as a form of capital or uplift. Du Bois is concerned with the education of his people in the United States and believes education to be a part of their liberation.

In *The Souls of Black Folk*, W. E. B. Du Bois (1903) famously prophesizes that "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line" (p.54). to this end, Myrdal, Sterner, and Rose (1944) attempt to examine and disassemble race relations in America through the lens of morality. The authors argue that, "From the point of view of the American Creed, the status accorded the Negro

in America represents nothing more than and nothing less than a century-long lag of public morals. In principle, the Negro problem was settled long ago; in practice the solution is not effectuated" (p.24). According to Reuter and Du Bois (1944), "Recognizing the interdependence of all factors in the Negro problem, and presumably assuming them to be coordinate in importance, the position is taken that change in any one factor will break a 'vicious cycle.'" This idea "gives a basis for optimism and, at the same time, justifies the utilization of political machinery in efforts to change the characteristics of non-political phenomena" (p.116). Thus, one might argue that the participation of Black college presidents in the government-sponsored radio address program was a strategic source of change during World War II. This study investigates this possibility.

In terms of the social role of Black colleges and their leadership, Du Bois's *The Education of Black People* (1973) offers an examination of Black higher education. Over the course of his life, Du Bois's educational thought continued to evolve and this book is an illustration of ten addresses that reveal this evolution as well as the issues that informed his ideals. In particular, the social role of Black college leadership and higher education informed Du

Bois's educational thought in that he argued for operationalizing one's education to benefit the needs of the race. Watkins (2001) echoes Du Bois's call for using education for liberation:

The establishment of Black education was much more than teaching the ABCs to little children of color. It was a political proposition. Black education helped define and forge the race relations that shaped the entire twentieth century and beyond. (Watkins, 2001, p.6)

To the contrary, the ideal and basis for Black education was to indoctrinate former slaves into the economic, political, social prosperity of their country--a country to which they were brought and of which their free labor helped to build. No other group of Americans can lay claim to this level of participation and investment in the American dream, yet access to full citizenship and equal protection under the law remain ever-elusive.

The fundamental rationale for obstructing Black education was stemmed from White fear of the Negro. The education of the Negro was a proposition that essentially terrified White America. Thus, their only conceivable recourse amidst their fear was violent retaliation in an effort to control, protect and maintain the only social order they knew and understood. This and similar concerns on the part of White Americans prompted Du Bois to suggest:

If it was doubtful as to how far the social and economic classes of an modern state could be essentially transformed and changed by popular education, how much more tremendous was the problem of educating a race whose ability to assimilate modern training was in grave question and whose place in the nation and the world, even granted they could be educated, was a matter of baffling social philosophy? Was the nation making an effort to parallel White civilization in the South with a Black civilization? Or was it trying to displace the dominant White master class with new Black Masters or was it seeking the difficult but surely more reasonable and practical effort of furnishing a trained set of free Black laborers who might carry on in place of the violently disrupted slave system? Surely, most men said, this economic and industrial problem of the New South was the first--the central, the insistent--problem of the day. (DuBois, 1973, pp. 87-88)

Post-slavery, how the Negro assimilated economically consisted of two opposing points of view: educated and trained leadership which lends itself to the survival of civilization, or skilled laborers and farmers who lend themselves to industrial development. However, according to Moore (2003), "The differences between Washington and Du Bois were not as great as they appeared" (p. 61). Moore argues

One the issue of education, DuBois acknowledged that industrial education was appropriate for some blacks, and he believed that Tuskegee and Hampton were doing valuable work. Washington, for his part, acknowledged that some blacks should get a higher education. In fact, he sent his own daughter to Wellesley College and later to Berlin to study music, and Tuskegee was one of the largest employers of black college graduates. (Moore, 2003, p. 61)

Washington and Du Bois emerged as race leaders during the Jim Crow Era. Their respective life experiences shaped and influenced each man's philosophy for the advancement of the Negro race. As a result, the great debate of industrial versus college education materialized as each man argued his preferred method of achieving collective advancement for their race. According to Rovaris (2005), W.E.B. Du Bois expressed his belief that the primary rationale for the existence of Black colleges has remained relatively unchanged over the years. In *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), Du Bois wrote:

The function of the Negro college, then, is clear: it must maintain the standards of popular education, it must seek the social regeneration of the Negro, and it must help in the solution of the problems of race contact and cooperation. And finally, beyond all this, it must develop men. (Du Bois, 1903, p. 62)

To this end, Washington and Du Bois helped to define the debate and, as a result, the rhetoric for the education of Blacks in America was set in motion. As a by-product of the debate, Black college presidents used their agency and the agency of Black education to create a formidable social space for uplift and collective advancement of Black Americans.



Using rhetorical theory and social history, I will focus on circumstances operating in the social order that allow for the production of political discourse: one's ability and capacity to speak or debate; one's sense of entitlement to contribute to any given issue of debate; and a social space in which one can engage in the act of speaking or debate.

### *Methods and Methodology*

This dissertation focuses on in-depth analysis of 14 annual radio addresses delivered by three Black college presidents in the South during the 1930s and 1940s. Through these radio addresses, I will examine the social positioning of each address as well as the role they collectively played in the advancement of Black Americans during the period of examination. The primary question that informs the research is whether the 1930s and 1940s was a period of rising consciousness for Black America. Despite repression of voice, racial uplift was at the forefront of the Black experience in America. Thus, education was a vehicle through which collective advancement could be achieved and the mission of the Black college was to create leaders in all fields of study who would exercise their individual agency on behalf of their race. Black college

presidents, via their annual radio addresses, recognized the opportunity to lend their voice to a national conversation on race in America. As a result, the agenda for racial uplift was advanced on a national, state-wide and local stage. In addition to rising Black consciousness, I will discuss the meaning of access through the lens of rhetorical education theory, using the topics discussed in each of the radio addresses delivered by the subjects of the research.

According to Kaestle (1992), "Because history does not have highly developed methodology around which there is consensus, and because historians are continually scavenging other disciplines for methods or theories, we might look to those external sources for guidance on the question, how do we know when we know" (p. 362)? There are different sub-fields of history and this research uses social history. In using social history, the researcher is able to investigate and analyze social trends such as economic, political, and educational structures. This investigation and analysis leads to further study of social customs. Kaestle (1992) argues that, "Using social theory more self-consciously and creatively, historians can create a dialog between it and their data, each informing the other. Social theories, then, can help us decide how to

seek the truth and can shape our answers" (p. 363). An additional benefit of using social history is the way in which it captures the "spirit of an age" and "penetrates the central idea of an era" (Novick, 1998, p. 381). In this way, social history deconstructs the central idea of a particular era that either galvanizes or separates the masses. The masses, in turn, play a significant role in transforming the narrative of that era in collaboration with the leaders of that period of examination. In the case of this research, I examine the Black press, mainstream radio, and the federal government as representations of the masses that help to bring about change during the 1930s and 1940s.

Traditional historical analysis primarily focuses on who, what, when, and where or other elements of time, place, and date. Conversely, social history focuses on the causes of a movement that allows the researcher to "create a dialogue between theory and their data, each informing the other" (Kaestle, 1992, p. 363). In the case of this research, that dialogue may pose questions concerning how the movement of rhetoric became an integral part of the public domain during the 1930s and 1940s as well as what factors may have impeded the movement's development. As a result, potentially hidden social customs can inform the

research in conjunction with clear-cut evidence. Using social history to understand the impact of rhetoric and the unrecognized voice of Black college presidents lends itself to understanding their changing role throughout the 1930s and 1940s.

Primary resources include a total of 14 radio addresses by Black college presidents during the 1930s and 1940s. Four were delivered by Mordecai W. Johnson, president of Howard University, Washington DC; five addresses were delivered by James E. Shepard, founder and president of North Carolina Central University, Durham, North Carolina; and five were delivered by Benjamin E. Mays, president of Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia. Secondary sources include books, biographies, newspaper articles, documentaries, and other written correspondence found in archival collections.

Additionally, biography is used as a form of inquiry, incorporating public and private images of each Black college president. Finkelstein (Kridel, 1998) asserts, "In the case of viewing history, biography provides a unique lens through which one can assess the relative power of political economic, cultural, social and generational processes on the life chances of individuals, and the revelatory power of historical sense-making" (p. 45).

Finkelstein further argues that, "Through the lens of biography, historians have constructed creative windows...that enable education scholars to explore intersections between human agency and social structure" (Kridel, 1998, p. 46). Specifically, Finkelstein (Kridel, 1998) argues

Biographical studies situate historical storytelling at the margins of social possibility where social change originates, constraint and choice merge, large and small social structures intersect, cultural norms converge, and the relative force of political, economic, social and cultural circumstance becomes clear. Historical biography reveals the relative power of individuals to stabilize or transform the determinacies of cultural tradition, political arrangements, economic forms, social circumstances and educational processes into new social possibilities. (Kridel, 1998, p. 46)

Finkelstein (Kridel, 1998) concludes, "Among the more engaging features of biographical study is its capacity to reveal the ideological, economic, political, social and cultural crucibles within which a person develops new ways of knowing, thinking, acting, and being" (p. 47).

Comparative analysis of the life experiences, philosophies, political views, and leadership styles of each subject provides context for obstacles, frustrations, successes, and failures encountered. The process of change and development of individual Black colleges included in the study provides a backdrop in examining each president

and his respective institution at the time of appointment.

As a result, Black college leadership can serve as a barometer of institutional success and how individuals can use their agency to affect social, political, and educational change.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE STRUGGLE FOR A DIVERSE AND DEMOCRATIC MEDIA

#### *Nationalist Agenda of the U. S. Federal Government*

In *The American Dilemma*, Gunnar Myrdal et al. (1944) began with the following assertion:

The American Negro problem is a problem in the heart of the American. It is there that the interracial tension has its focus. It is there that the decisive struggle goes on. This is the central viewpoint of this treatise. Though our study includes economic, social, and political race relations, at bottom our problem is the moral dilemma of the American—the conflict between his moral valuations on various levels of consciousness and generality. The "American Dilemma," referred to in the title of this book, is the ever-ranging conflict between, on the one hand, the valuations preserved on the general plane which we shall call the "American Creed," where the American thinks, talks, and acts under the influence of high national and Christian precepts, and, on the other hand, the valuations on specific planes of individual and group living, where personal and local interests, economic, social, and sexual jealousies; considerations of community prestige and conformity; group prejudice against particular persons or types of people; and all sorts of miscellaneous wants, impulses, and habits dominate his outlook. (Myrdal, Sterner, and Rose, 1944, p.xliii)

Thus, America's democratic philosophy is deemed contradictory by the Negro who is not afforded the same

liberties and freedoms as their White counterparts.

According to Myrdal, Sterner and Rose (1944), "From the point of view of the American Creed the status of accorded the Negro in America has not yet been given the elemental civil and political rights of formal democracy, including a fair opportunity to earn his living, upon which a general accord was already won when the American Creed was first taking form" (p. 24). As a result, it is this conflict between the ideals of the American Creed and reality that is at the center of the "Negro problem" (p. 24).

Savage (1999) maintains that the introduction of government-sponsored radio programming around the issue of race relations demonstrates how the federal government was compelled to address the social circumstance that led to the Black experience in American. The federal government response is associated more with the need for consensus around the war effort rather than a concern for and improvement of race relations, in particular. This rationale for addressing Black Americans echoes the position of Myrdal, Sterner, and Rose (1944) in regards to one's interpretation of social reality. According to the



authors, "Trying to defend their behaviors to others, and primarily to themselves, people will attempt to conceal the conflict between their different valuations of what is desirable and undesirable, right or wrong, by keeping away some valuations from awareness and by focusing attention on others. For the same purpose, *people will twist and mutilate their beliefs of how social reality is*" (p. xlv). The authors understand the level of denial associated with hypocrisy and in the case of the U.S. federal government during World War II, it is apparent that the response to the Negro problem is rooted in the distortion of social reality--placing the war effort above the moral decision to unify the country--which is based solely on the merits of social equality.

Loviglio (2004) explains that Savage "credits three key factors for the broadening inclusivity in radio's public affairs programming" (p. 1081). These factors include Black leadership's use of the rhetoric of unified citizenship to advance social and economic access and inclusion for their race; governmental agency concern over cynicism among Black Americans in response to the call for unified citizenship; and "networks, cowed by anxiety over a pending federal government antitrust lawsuit, represented the third key force in this realignment, as they became

more pliant during the war years when it came to government-sponsored programming calling, at least symbolically, for greater inclusion" (p. 1081).

It can be argued that the American social and political custom of indifference to race relations while advancing the notion of citizenship were at the center of the Negro problem, as explicit democracy was never realized for this minority population. In a demonstration of what the Black Americans found to be hypocritical, the U.S. government eagerly announced its involvement in the fight for democracy abroad, while neglecting this fundamental human right at home. Ultimately, a disposition of impatience and cynicism among Black Americans surfaced and had to be addressed. Nonetheless, and in spite of this social reality, Johnson, Shepard, and Mays become examples of how existing social and political trends inspired each to effect change for their race.

#### *Black Education, Uplift and Social Gospel*

The pre- and post-World War II era continued to be a period of racial consciousness and uplift for Black Americans. Thus, this research identifies an arrangement of factors in which the acquisition of Black consciousness was

achieved: Black education, racial uplift, and social gospel. Du Bois discusses his views of the origins and mission of Black education in his book, *The Education of Black People*. He theorizes that

The argument for the New England College, which at first seemed to need no apology, grew and developed. The matter of man's earning a living, said the college is and must be important, but surely it can never be so important as the man himself. Thus the economic adaptation of the Negro to the South must in education be subordinate to the great necessity of teaching life and culture. The South, and more especially the Negro, needed and must have trained and educated leadership if civilization was to survive. More than most, here was land and people who needed to learn the meaning of life. They needed the preparation of gifted persons for the profession of teaching, and for other professions which would in time grow. The object of education was not to make men carpenters but to make carpenters men. (Du Bois, 1973, pp.63-64)

From this ideal, one might conclude that the purpose of education is civic in its origins and, thus, designed to create a population of skilled, trustworthy, law-abiding community members at individual, group, and institutional levels. This ideal is much like the ideals of rhetorical education, namely rhetoric for social change. As such, the use of rhetoric, language and grammar by race leaders was essential to racial uplift, as Logan (Glenn, Lyday and Sharer (2004) references the many generations of "black rhetorical activists" working on behalf of those who were silenced (p. 45).

Operating as a noteworthy aspect of education that gave voice to the silenced, Jordan (2005) examines how forensics and debate were used in the acquisition of racial uplift. Jordan explained that "dramatics, oratory, and debate called upon the rich oral traditions and communal rituals of Africa and the slave past. Just as importantly, those performances drew on the distinctive preaching styles of the African American clergy" (p. 155). Enslaved Blacks were the first American Negroes to use rhetoric and its communal qualities to motivate members of the social order to critically think in an effort to exercise individual, group, and community choice. Additionally, "drama coaches and English teachers saw their efforts as a means of subverting racial stereotypes about Negro inferiority and to counter the prevailing representations of black people in the United States" (p. 154). During the 1920s and 1930s, Black colleges lobbied collegiate organizations at the national level so that their students could compete in "oratory contests and desegregated theater festivals" (p. 155). According to Jordan, "race leaders knew that the tactics of formal debate played into a broader civil rights strategy" and that debate was "one of the first places where the color line was breached during the interwar years" (p. 155). Johnson, Shepard, and Mays used their

experiences and prowess in debate to affect change in American race relations during the turbulent and often times deadly climate of Jim Crow. As visionaries, each of these men were a student of the spoken word and mounted their attack on discrimination with the tools to which they were introduced from childhood through college graduation-- substantiating the significance of debate as an effective educational tool to prepare Black youth for teaching, ministry, and other public service and leadership roles. As a cultural forum, Winthrop (2005) describes debate in the following way:

Intercollegiate debate stood out from other activities Unlike the touchdown or 100 yard dash, for instance, formal debate could not be discounted by those who strove to link White supremacy with exalted notions of Western Civilization. Strictly bound by time limits and longstanding rules of argumentation and rebuttal, this brand of disquisition ultimately showcased the talents of African American collegians in terms of discipline and logic as well as oratorical skill. (Winthrop, 2005, p. 155)

According to Bell (2007), "Unlike contemporary debate practice where there is one subject per year selected by the forensic fraternity Pi Kappa Delta, in the 1930s there were a number of possible topics. The two coaches would agree on a subject prior to a debate, then flip a coin to see which team would begin with the affirmative side, which with the negative" (para. 12). In light of this structure,

a rigorous preparation routine was necessary so that debaters would be well-versed on all possible topics. In an article for W.E.B. Du Bois', *The Crisis*, champion debater Hobart Jarrett stated,

Our debate squad reads hundreds of magazine articles and scores of books on government, economics, sociology, history and literature. Then we must learn to handle our knowledge with readiness and poise growing out of mastery of the platform...groping for words or an error in grammar is an unpardonable sin. Sometimes our coach will put a debater on the platform during practice and cross-examine him for an hour. The debater must escape from the most perplexing dilemmas and antinomies. (Bell, 2007, para. 13)

The introduction of interracial debates created an exciting challenge for both Negro youth and white debaters. It was also seen by those such as celebrated Wiley College debate coach Melvin Tolson as "a breakthrough in the troubled race relations of the country" Bell, 2007, para. 25). Tolson was instrumental in Wiley College's emergence on the national intercollegiate scene after it had "won victories, not merely over local rivals, but in competition against some of the best debate teams in the entire United

States" (Jordan, 2005, p. 156). According to Bell (2007), Hobart Jarrett, a member of the Wiley debate team, reflects on the long-standing belief among Whites that their "superiority lies in his brain power," though these debates proved to reveal "a direct clash on intellects" (para. 27). In Jarrett's opinion, "There was a time when white colleges thought that debating against a Negro institution was mental dissipation, but that view has passed forever. Negro teams have shown that they were as capable as their white opponents despite the library handicaps that limit research" (para. 27). It can be argued that the indoctrination of Black youth to the science of argumentation and deductive reasoning enabled a generation of Black leaders and activists working to change the racial status quo in America. Thus, debate as a form of civic engagement and political discourse aligned with the rising Black consciousness present during the pre- to post-World War II era. All three subjects of the research operationalized some form of debate, oratory or preaching during their youth and throughout their pathway to higher education. As a result, Black college presidents situated themselves as change agents and, thus, were in a position to observe and evaluate the social order of the 1930s and 1940s and further liberate and uplift their race via their

participation in radio addresses. As race leaders, social gospel as an instrument of social reform is used by Johnson, Shepard and Mays throughout their leadership continuum on behalf of Black Americans. According to Golden, Berquist, and Coleman ((1976), "The purpose of rhetoric, says Plato, was to make the will of God known. Aristotle not only listed ethics as one of the major subject areas for rhetoric but suggested that one of the function of rhetoric was to make truth and justice prevail" (p. 2). One can assume that the ideals and thoughts of Plato and Aristotle influenced the subjects of the research, as the ideals of rhetoric, ethics, and Christianity are put into practice by each subject of the research.

According to Carter (1998), "Mays's theological orientation was influenced by the Social Gospel theology of the 1920s and 1930s" (p 7). Mays used social gospel to specifically address the needs of Black Americans as inferior, according to dominant discourse. Mays's 1934 dissertation topic examined his own understanding of God which did not "advise leaving events in the hands of God. It found in God values that needed to be infused into the human situation, and human beings were expected to



participate in that transformation. Sometimes that meant transforming the lives of individual persons and sometimes it meant changing the larger social, political and economic structures which order human life" (p. 7). In many ways, Mays's ideals about race relations in American and his role as an agent of change are tied to Christian principles that encourage meaningful transformation. In particular, "Mays grappled with the effects of poverty and discrimination" in the South and "researched the meaning of the African American experience through the black church" (Carter, 1998, p. 36).

Johnson also implemented tactics of social gospel while serving as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Charleston in West Virginia. According to McKinney (1997), Johnson began leadership of the church in 1917 and used the opportunity to deliver sermons emphasizing democracy and the welfare of American citizens while expanding his service to the church by reaching out to the state of West Virginia and the social ills its citizens faced. According to McKinney (1997), "Throughout World War I...Johnson never hesitated to call attention to the basic issues involved. He cited discrimination and segregation in the armed forces and in governmental agencies in the nation's capital" (p. 40). In fact, Johnson's commencement address when receiving

his Master of Sacred Theology from Harvard University in 1922, dealt with social gospel by attaching Christian principles to America's social problems. Entitled, "The Faith of the American Negro," Johnson addressed the faith of Negroes before World War I and how it gave them hope that one day they would be treated in a fair, equitable and humane way by their country. However, Johnson noted three factors that diminished their faith:

First was the stark brutality perpetuated against African Americans, especially that directed against the returning African American and carried on by whites who feared that those who fought 'to make the world safe for democracy' would try to enjoy some of it at home;

Second, the erosion of faith had roots in young African Americans who had lost their confidence in capitalism, which they felt had 'no fundamental good will for Negroes or any sort of laborers;'

Third, a larger group, he said, believed 'in religion and the principles of democracy, but not in the white man's religion or the white man's democracy. (McKinney 1997, p. 46)

Shepard also enlisted social gospel and the ideal of a responsible society. However, he was steadfast in holding the Negro accountable for his actions and assimilation into the greater society post-slavery. According to Faggett (1949), In Boston, Massachusetts, at the Shawmut Avenue church, "Dr. Shepard delivered an address quite shocking in its general implications" (p. 484). Those implications were that "Negroes are not quite ready for complete equality

with the American white man, citing instances of race riots in the Northern and Western areas, where Negroes recently from the South had sadly misused the liberties of a new and comparatively unrestricted environment" (p. 484). Shepard was a firm believer that Negroes and Whites both had a mutual task to fulfill in terms of racial reconciliation. Just as the White man is required to behave in a socially civil, fair and just manner when dealing with Negroes, Negroes also had to take full advantage of education, employment, and any other available avenues of opportunity. Shepard challenged Negroes to not expect instantaneous acceptance from Whites, but rather to "prove their social equality to the White man" (p. 485). In Shepard's mind the Negro would achieve this equality at an eventual pace. According to Faggett (1949), Shepard stated that "the white man is willing to grant proper recognition to Negroes who have proved their social equality, but that he (the white man) has often found it necessary to discriminate against the few who are ready to enjoy fully the benefits and privileges of American citizenship in order to exclude the least desirable of the masses who are not ready (p. 485). Though his sentiments raise questions of his allegiance and appear to hold the Negro most accountable in the race relations equation, one could argue that Shepard's

understanding of the Southern White man in North Carolina is the driving force behind his inflexibility for the accountability of his own race. For Shepard, this may have been the optimal strategy to secure equal opportunity, inclusion and civic engagement--as violent revolts and similar behaviors would only cause the White man to continue to withhold these humanitarian commodities.

Theologically, Mays, Johnson and Shepard sought to balance "rebellion" with "the responsible society" (Carter, 1998, p. 7). The overwhelming task of imploring Americans' obedience to God's intention for man's salvation was a tall order in Jim Crow South. Though religion was a touchstone during slavery--used by the slave master himself, religious teachings still could not penetrate the power of discrimination and the misguided notion by Whites that the American social order was equal for all of its citizens.

#### *Mainstream Radio and American Listenership*

Sterling and Kittross (1990) make the case that, "All in all, radio was a common household device by 1926. Although serious technical interference and economic problems existed, its potential for supplying entertainment to the American public was evident" (p. 100). According to Sterling and Kittross (1990), "Only one important precedent

emerged as radio spread over the country: Broadcasting in the United States essentially was to be privately owned and commercially supported" (p. 102). Only a few stations emerged as front-runners of the medium, yet radio adopted a revolving programming schedule of 15- and 30-minute segments. Sterling and Kittross (1990), also maintain that the medium "began as an evening medium and slowly spread into daytime hours as the audience increased and program material and advertising support became available for music, variety, and talk" (p. 102). An outgrowth of this shift in radio format was government-sponsored programming.

According to Hilliard and Keith (1992), the history of mainstream radio dates back to September 15, 1921 when WBZ in Springfield, Massachusetts was granted a license by the Department of Commerce. In November of that same year, station 8XK in Pittsburg, (later KDKA), was granted its license. Initially, nine stations were licensed and of the nine, Westinghouse owned four (KYW in Chicago and KDKA; WBZ; WJZ, in Newark, New Jersey). RCA owned station WDJ in Roselle Park, New Jersey. De Forest Radio Telephone Company owned station WJX in the Bronx, New York (p.26). Hilliard and Keith (1992) found that, "The race was on to sell radio receivers and broadcasting components as many of the stations were owned by the manufacturers of radio

equipment. In fact, many of the early stations were owned by the manufacturers of such equipment" (p. 27). Hilliard and Keith (1992) argue that the end goal was to promote and move the products off the shelves and also generate a demand for the construction of more stations in cities where owners manufacturing plants existed. In terms of the financial characteristics of radio sets Westinghouse produced a state-of-the art set costing \$60; a price-point that was affordable for the middle and upper class, yet considered very costly for the working class.

Alternatively, for those falling within this particular income bracket, sets costing \$10 could be purchased. As a result, radio sets were accessible to a large majority of middle to upper income families and perhaps a significantly lower number of working class families. Nonetheless, according to Hilliard and Keith (1992), "The public continued to buy sets almost as quickly as they could be manufactured. Some estimates put the sales of receivers in 1925 at as much as 2 million, and by the end of the year one out of every six homes in America had a radio set" (p.45). "The number of radio sets in use continued to increase. By 1930 an estimated 40% of America's homes had radios. Considering the state of the economy, that was a large number" (p. 61). In response to

the growing number of radio sets in the country, upon being inaugurated on March 4, 1933, President Franklin D.

Roosevelt "began the first of a series of radio talks to the nation that over the years would become known as FDR's 'fireside chats'" (Hilliard and Keith, 1992, p. 69).

Through these chats, Roosevelt was able to establish and make evident radio's political power. According to Hilliard and Keith (1992) by 1934 "More than 60% of the country's homes had radios and radio sets could be found in more than 1.5 million automobiles" (p. 72). Additionally, "More than two out of every three homes had radios in 1935" (p. 75). Hilliard and Keith (1992) conclude that, "The decade of the 1940s began with radios in more than 80% of American households; 50 million-plus sets were in use" (p. 91).

According to Craig (2004), "America's phenomenal radio boom was primarily experienced in the cities of the North and West" (p. 179). Craig (2004) also maintains that, "Early radio stations were usually built near urban centers where signals could be received by the maximum number of affluent consumers" and "by 1928, there were 28 stations broadcasting in the New York City metropolitan area, 36 in Chicago, and 24 in Los Angeles" (p. 179). Craig (2004) found that in 1928, "Atlanta had only three radio stations, New Orleans had seven. For the 44% of Americans who lived

outside the cities, service was spotty or non-existent" (pp.179-180). Although the radio phenomenon was on the rise for those living in the urban parts of the country, many living outside of that demographic were experiencing an economic crisis. Consequently, there was little interest to build stations in these parts and, thus, widespread radio adoption was affected (p. 180).

Craig (2004) states the findings of the U.S. Census data as the following:

The U.S. Census data from 1930, 1940, and 1950 present a picture of radio ownership in relation to three major variables: Geographic region (Northeast, North Central, South, or West), whether located in an urban or rural area, and for 1930 and 1940, by race of the head of household. (Craig, 2004, p. 182)

Tables 1-5, found in Appendix A, illustrate the percentage of U.S. households with radios the years 1930, 1940, and 1950 by the following categories: Geographic region; "nativity and race of head of household; race and nativity in selected cities of 100,000 or more; race in urban and rural areas; and average cost of U.S. radio receivers" (Craig, 2004, pp. 182-186).

Table 1 of the Census report showed "consistent patterns in all three Censuses that radio adoption occurred at different rates in different parts of the country" (Craig, 2004, p. 182). Not surprisingly, rates of radio



adoption were fastest in the Northeast, followed by other regions and the South predictably in last place. The pattern was anticipated that urban Northeast regions would surpass the rural South in their adoption of radio as a medium. Table 1 illustrated that in 1930, 56.9% of households in Northeast urban areas had radio compared to 9.2% of households in the rural South. In 1940, the rate of ownership in the same regions rose to 96.2% and 50.9%, respectively. In 1950, the percentages of households having radio continued to rise, to 98.5 and 88.8 respectively (p. 182).

TABLE 1

Percentages of Urban and Rural U.S. Households with Radio by Geographic Region in 1930, 1940, and 1950

	1930			1940			1950		
	Urban	Rural	All	Urban	Rural	All	Urban	Rural	All
Northeast	56.9	48.1	55.0	96.2	88.2	94.4	98.5	96.6	98.1
N. Central	53.8	39.1	47.8	94.6	82.2	89.7	97.9	95.8	97.1
South	28.6	9.2	16.4	78.8	50.9	62.1	94.4	88.8	91.7
West	50.9	33.0	44.0	92.2	81.5	88.9	97.4	93.3	96.3
U.S.	50.0	26.9	40.3	91.7	69.6	82.8	97.2	92.7	95.7

Note: Calculated from data in U.S. Bureau of Census (1933, Vol. VI, p. 53) U.S. Bureau of Census (1943, Vol. II, Pt. 1, pp. 38-39), and U.S. Bureau of Census (1953a, Vol. 1, Pt. 1, p. 1-9). The data used to produce this and other tables are available on request from the author.

Table 2 of the Census report showed "radio adoption occurred at different rates among different racial and ethnic groups based on data from 1930 and 1940" (Craig,

2004, p. 183). Table 2 also showed that radio adoption was faster among Whites than Nonwhites and that along racial and ethnic lines in the rural South, Nonwhites were much slower to adopt radio than any other group. Table 2 reported findings of the nativity and race of households having radio in 1930. Of those who identified as White, 59.9% had radio in the Northeast while only 2.2% of the radio owners in the South identified as Negro.

TABLE 2

Percentages of Families Having a Radio in each Region by Nativity and Race of Head of Household (1930)

	Native White, Native Parentage	Native White, Foreign or Mixed Parentage	Foreign Born White	Negro	All Families (a)
Northeast	59.9	65.0	45.4	30.1	55.0
N. Central	47.3	55.7	43.5	23.1	47.8
South	20.2	38.5	30.9	2.2	16.4
West	46.7	51.9	40.1	30.8	44.0
U.S.	39.9	57.3	43.6	7.5	40.3

Note. Calculated from data in U.S. Bureau of the Census (1933, Vol. VI, pp. 52-53).

(a) Includes "other races."

According to Craig (2004) Table 3 of the Census report showed "The percentage of families owning radio sets in selected large cities in 1930" (p. 184). Selected cities representing each of the four regions in the U.S. include Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York. In Atlanta, 37.2% of White families had a radio compared to 3.2% of Negro families. Chicago reported 73.6% compared to 42.6% of

the same demographic; Los Angeles reported 63.8% compared to 46%; and New York reported 71.7% compared to 40.1% (p. 184).

TABLE 3

Percentages of Families Having Radio Sets by Race and Nativity in Selected Cities of 100,000 or More (1930)

City	Native White, Native Parentage	White, Foreign or Mixed Parentage	Foreign Born White	Negro	All Families (a)
Atlanta	37.2	52.4	40.6	3.2	26.0
Chicago	73.6	74.6	54.1	42.6	63.2
Denver	53.4	56.4	43.9	25.8	50.8
Detroit	67.0	69.8	49.9	29.6	58.0
Los Angeles	63.8	64.9	55.9	46.0	58.8
Memphis	42.4	51.5	41.8	3.7	26.2
New Orleans	29.7	29.7	23.2	3.3	21.0
New York	71.7	73.5	50.6	40.1	59.2
St. Louis	55.7	59.7	41.7	18.5	50.2
Washington, D.C.	63.5	66.8	54.4	25.2	53.9

Note. These cities were chosen as the most populous in each of the four regions. For complete data on all cities of 100,000 population or more, see U.S. Bureau of the Census (1933, Vol. VI, p. 70).

(a) Includes "other races."

Craig (2004) concludes, "The overall adoption rates closely follow the patterns of the regional urban data reported in Table 1, and ownership patterns of the various White parentage groups are generally consistent with the regional data in Table 2" (p. 184).

In Table 4, the percentages of households in the Northeast having a radio set by race appear comparable. By 1940, Whites reported 94.7% of households compared to 87.4% of Nonwhite households in the Northeast. Other regions with

comparable percentages include North Central and the West with 90.1% of White households versus 78.9% of Nonwhite households and 89.7% of Whites versus 65.1% of Nonwhites, respectively. The South reported more substantial differences with 71.9% of White households compared to 29.8% of Nonwhites (p. 185). Craig (2004) concludes, "By 1940, the overall U.S. radio adoption rate of urban White families was approaching saturation at 94.4%. Among rural Whites, the rate was 75.7%, and only 19.8% among rural Nonwhites. In the South, the rural Nonwhite rate was even lower at 16.8%. These findings are consistent with the patterns found in 1930. In the United States as a whole, only 43.3% of Nonwhite families owned radios by 1940" (p. 185).

TABLE 4

Percentages of Households Having a Radio Set by Race in Urban and Rural Areas, by Region (1940)

	Urban	Rural	All
Northeast			
White	96.5	88.5	94.7
Nonwhite	89.1	69.3	87.4
All	96.2	88.2	94.4
N. Cent			
White	95.3	82.6	90.1
Nonwhite	83.3	50.4	78.9
All	94.6	82.2	89.7
South			
White	88.1	61.1	71.9
Nonwhite	48.6	16.8	29.8
All	78.8	50.9	62.1
West			
White	93.9	82.9	89.7
Nonwhite	82.2	41.3	65.1

All	93.5	81.5	88.9
United States			
White	94.4	75.7	86.6
Nonwhite	64.6	19.8	43.3
All	91.9	69.6	82.8

Note. Calculated from state data in U.S. Bureau of the Census (1943, Vol. 2, Pt. 2-5).

Table 5 reported the average cost of U.S. radio receivers decreased from \$83 in 1925 to \$26 by 1950. According to Craig (2004), "During the 1920s and 1930s, radio was a luxury many families felt they simply could not afford. Yet, as with most new technologies, the average cost of a radio set fell dramatically as time went on. Receiver design also improved rapidly. Tubes and batteries that lasted longer were developed, making set maintenance cheaper and easier" (p. 186). Additionally, it was during this time frame that the invention of the television and the first television licenses were issued.

TABLE 5

Average Cost of U.S. Radio Receivers, 1925-1950 and Adjusted to 2004

Year	Avg. Cost	2004 Dollars
1925	\$83	\$889
1930	\$78	\$845
1935	\$55	\$749
1940	\$38	\$506
1945	\$40	\$416
1950	\$26	\$205

Note. The costs of receivers came from Sterling & Kittross (2002, p. 862). Currency equivalencies were calculated using the January, 2004 Consumer Price index.

Craig (2004) suggests the following in his discussion of the Census report findings:

The findings indicate that the introduction of radio into American homes was a process that took place over a period of about thirty years, with clear and consistent differences in adoption rates among the three major variables: geographic region, urban or rural, and race. Although 40.3% of all U.S. households had purchased radio receivers by 1930, most of these early adopters were in urban areas of the North and West. It was not until 1950 that national penetration reached 95%, but even at that late date, radio ownership in the rural South remained under 90%. (Craig, 2004, p. 186)

The U.S. Census data from 1930, 1940, and 1950 reported that Nonwhites in the rural South were the last to adopt radio. Since the term Nonwhite correlates to the Negro population during that time period, one would assume the last to adopt radio were Black Americans. Many did not have a radio set until well past the period of examination for this study. Thus, the implications for this study are that potential Black listeners of radio addresses delivered by Johnson, Shepard, and Mays were diminished due to access to resources that would afford them the means to purchase a radio set during the 1930s and 1940s. This circumstance makes it difficult to successfully track audience demographics for their 14 broadcasts.

*The Production of Political Discourse*

In terms of the production of political discourse, Hilliard and Keith (1992) assert that "some of the most dramatic advances in radio programming came in the field of politics" (p. 38). The authors assert that

The right-wing backlash following World War I had made the United States isolationist, the country even refusing to join the League of Nations, while much of the rest of the world was seeking continuing peace through international cooperation. On June 23, 1923 President Warren G. Harding made a speech about the World Court that was heard by an estimated 1-million-plus people--a remarkable number for that period and, according to some historians, the true beginning of a politician simultaneously reaching and influencing a huge segment of the public. (Hilliard and Keith, 1992, p. 38)

Still, the fusion of politics and radio generated its own brand of controversy.

According to Sterling & Kittross (2002), "Section 606 of the Communications Act of 1934 gives the President power to control operations of telecommunications facilities in time of war or other national emergency. Many broadcasters feared that the government would take over radio completely as it had in World War I, thus silencing commercial broadcasting for the duration" (p. 235). Though the United States invoked the Communications Act, according to Hilliard and Keith (1992), the administration also decided against "a dictatorial takeover of the communication

industries, or even of the radio medium alone" (p. 96). Instead, the United States "decided to seek radio's cooperation through voluntary means, perhaps with a little assistance and persuasion" (p. 96). To this end, the in June 1942, President Roosevelt established the Office of War Information (OWI). According to Sterling and Kittross (2002), OWI was intended to meet "three needs of audiences in the United States and abroad: the need for news; the need for information as to what the public should do and when and how to do it; and the need for truthful explanations of war issues, the enemy and our allies, and, especially, the role of work and war production at home as well as the sacrifices war forced on everyone" (p. 235). As an entity of the OWI, the Radio Bureau was assigned to communicate important "war-related messages efficiently to radio listeners" (p. 325). Additionally, OWI "sometimes prepared scripts and even produced several programs on matters that were considered essential, and offered them to the radio industry" as well as "coordinated the release of all news announcements and decided on priorities for what should or should not be said over the air" (Hilliard & Keith, 1992, pp. 97-98). In terms of the government's campaign to address race relations in America, the OWI and the War Department also engaged in efforts to "mount a



limited public radio campaign to lift African American morale and build greater racial tolerance among Americans" (Savage, 1999, p. 106).

In terms of reaching the intended African American population, Schull (2005) asserts that, "By 1940 over ninety-six percent of the American public listened to the radio an average of four hours a day. The majority of wartime radio messages were incorporated, almost seamlessly, into established commercial programming. Access to radio receivers was common among most Americans, therefore, government-sponsored programming was believed to have successfully reached a racially-mixed, national audience" (p.87). According to Savage (1999), "At the end of the 1930s, officials in the U.S. government used radio to construct and popularize an expanded narrative of American history that acknowledged the contributions of immigrants, African Americans, and Jews" (p. 21). Improvements in race relations were advanced under the guise of public education through radio programming.

Examples of government-sponsored programming include *Americans All, Immigrants All*, a 26-week series sponsored by the Office of Education and airing on CBS in 1938 and 1939. The premise of the series was to feature a different ethnic group each week, educating the American public about

a minority group's history, culture and contributions to the country. Despite the intent of the series, Savage (1999) concludes that episodes about immigrant groups "were characterized by glaring omissions and other clumsy efforts to make subtle distinctions among popular stereotypes" (p. 31). Savage also suggests, "Attempts to construct a unifying theme could not overcome the reality of the historical oppression of certain groups" (p. 32). According to Savage (1999), W.E.B. Du Bois and philosopher Alain Locke served as unpaid consultants to the series and, in particular, its episode featuring the Negro and "worked with some success to improve the worst aspects of the script rather than launching a general attack on it" (p. 39). Despite their revisions, Roy Wilkins and George Murphy of the NAACP New York offices "harshly condemned the script for stressing 'unduly the slave period and the Negro as a worker' and, as a result, making the narrative, in their view, 'not fair interpretation of the Negro's contributions to American life'" (pp. 39-40). Walter White, executive director for the NAACP, settled the issue by finding the aspects of the episode that provided an opportunity to contrast the Negro from the "standard radio fare" (p. 40). Regardless of the program's acceptance or criticisms, *Americans All, Immigrants All* generated dialogue about the

Negro and his very significant, yet often overlooked contributions to America.

A second example of government-sponsored programming was *Freedom's People*, which aired in 1941 and 1942.

According to Savage (1999), the program aired

At a moment in U.S. history when blacks were experiencing a period of heightened race consciousness and increased political activity ; when the federal government's apprehension about African Americans approached a level unseen since Reconstruction, and when radio broadcasting remained an inaccessible political medium for the expression of dissident views, especially on race. (Savage, 1999, p. 64)

A nine-part series on NBC, *Freedom's People* "made a compelling political argument for equal opportunity and racial justice on a medium that had appropriated and exploited that culture and on a show that was sponsored by a primary target of black protests: the federal government" (Savage , 1999, p. 64). Despite becoming the national medium during the 1930s and 1940s, radio during its Golden Age had not yet found a way in which to bridge the American racial divide. Savage (1999) echoes Frazier (1942) in maintaining the vested interest America had in the war outcome based on "African American participation in a unified home front and in the war abroad "(p. 106). Hence, the birth of government-sponsored radio programming.

According to Savage (1999), ambivalence among Black Americans toward the medium of radio and its programming was attributed to "the lack of equalizing access for African Americans to national radio and the political disadvantages of having no control over the images and representations of the race" (p. 8). Savage (1999) maintains that, "Race and racial stereotypes are a deeply implicated part of radio's history, as was the case with earlier media forms. A fascination with African Americans and African American culture permeated radio's early programming and spurred the medium's popularity, coloring it with race like all American institutions and media forms" (p. 10). On the other hand, and because the general radio audience was overwhelmingly White, networks and advertisers were likely not eager to introduce the topic of race relations for fear of White backlash. Instead, they opted to frame the invitation as inclusive dialogue alongside the Negro voice. Savage (1999) clearly outlines the dilemma of federal officials: "build up black morale by integrating a more visible 'Negro' into the public sphere of patriotic rhetoric" without endorsing the "racial reforms blacks sought for fear of offending whites, especially southern congressmen" (p. 107).

Despite the olive branch of racially conscious programming extended by the federal government, the relationship between Black Americans and mainstream media remained tense because of its long and troubled history. According to Savage (1999), "The creation of the Black press in the nineteenth century was a response of African Americans to the political problem of having their race and racial issues represented in white-controlled newspapers that refused them access" (p.9).

### *The Black Press*

From the publication of the first African American newspaper, advocacy for social justice and equality has remained a core value for the American Black Press. According to Oak (1948), the first Negro newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*, was launched in 1827 by John B. Russworm and Samuel E. Cornish as an "abolitionist organ in the struggle to eradicate slavery" (p. 21). According to Rovaris (2005), "While there were perhaps several before him, John B. Russworm is credited by some as having been the first Black to graduate from college" when he received his degree from Maine's Bowdoin College in 1826" (p. 41). In the struggle for racial equality and social justice, Oak (1948) maintains that, "Wherever one finds the Negro

newspaper, whether its editorial policy is militant, accommodating, blatantly radical or conservative, one will find a medium of special advocacy of human rights" (pp.20-21). The movement of the Black press can be seen as a way in which the acquisition of Black consciousness was achieved, as it arose out of the "dire need for racial leadership, and hence, it is natural that it should be largely racial in its outlook" (Oak, 1948, p. 35).

There existed mixed feelings among Black Americans in terms of their level of support for World War II. According to Savage (1999), "continuing racial injustices provided the backdrop for the formal inauguration of the *Pittsburgh Courier's* 'Double V' campaign in February 1942" (p. 91). The slogan stood for victory over the country's enemies both at home and abroad and the competing interests Black Americans faced at that time. "Capturing perfectly the paradoxical sentiments of African Americans in World War II, the slogan quickly spread into popular use" (p. 91).

In the same way, during World War I, the Black press not only supported the war effort, but also positioned itself as a platform for discourse to advocate the right of Black Americans to criticize the country's attitudes on race. Neither the Black Press, nor Black citizens felt an overwhelming sense of duty to support the war, given the

fact Black soldiers were forced to serve in segregated units. According to Washburn (1986), "By the time the United States entered World War I, black editors were adamant in demanding an end to discrimination" (p. 15). The reasons for this demand included "reader approval," and the death of Booker T. Washington which signaled an end to his "conciliatory approach to race relations," (p. 15). In many ways the climate in America in regards to race and social justice no longer tolerated repression of the Negro voice. According to Savage (1999), the U.S. military policy of "racial inequity, segregation, and exclusion were at the center of the contest between federal officials and African American activists" (p. 91). The irony and hypocrisy of the situation seemed impossible to ignore. How could the country expect Black citizens to fight in a war to preserve a democracy that they themselves were not afforded on American soil? How could America invest in a conflict overseas when it was unwillingly to extend the same to men and women in the South who were routinely subjected to Jim Crow laws of inequity, torture, and death by mob? According to Washburn (1986), the Black press believed the "'Wilsonian rhetoric about world democracy' and saw nothing incongruous in criticizing injustices toward blacks while overwhelmingly supporting the war effort and emphasizing

that blacks would gain equality more rapidly by fighting Germans" (p. 15). The Black press was seen as critical of the country's use of propaganda while at the same time solicited support for the war among Black citizens. Serving as an intermediary between the needs of Black citizens and the needs of the country, Savage (1999) asserts the following about the Black press:

Most black leaders and the black press urged blacks simultaneously to help fight the war and to continue to fight at home against discrimination. In contrast to their acquiescence to pleas to close ranks during World War I, Black leaders and newspaper publishers refused to make the claim for racial equality secondary to the war effort or to postpone its pursuit. Their aggressive editorial campaigns and the perception of their growing influence over black public opinion made black newspapers and activists the cause of much consternation among federal officials. This apprehension prompted federal investigative agencies to continue to subject black leaders and publishers to surveillance, open harassment, and the threat of sedition charges. (Savage, 1999, p. 71)

When the United States entered World War II in 1941, Washburn (1986) maintains that mainstream media overwhelmingly supported the war effort. Conversely, support among members of the Black press was less obvious due to discriminatory practices in the United States. As was the case during World War I, the federal government investigated the Black press during World War II (p. 11). In actuality, the birth of the investigations of the Black Press "was not brought about solely because of a sudden,



strong surge of antilibertarian feeling" (p. 11). In reality, the investigations originated from 1917 to 1921. According to Washburn (1986), during this period "wartime sedition laws were passed and applied vigorously on a large scale, and the principal law, the Espionage Act, was still in force during World War II" (p. 11). The Act "limited freedom of expression during wartime by declaring it unlawful to make false statements that interfered with the military" (p. 12). The Sedition Act of 1918 amended the Espionage Act with to include the infractions

Speaking, writing, or publishing any 'disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language' about topics ranging from the government to the flag to the armed forces. Also prohibited were writings or statements intended to result in 'contempt, scorn, contumely, or disrepute' of the government, the Constitution, the flag, and even the armed forces' uniforms. Penalties for those convicted were identical to those under the Espionage Act. (Washburn, 1986, pp. 12-13).

In the end, the Black press was called into question because of its so-called unpatriotic stance as well as having the audacity to challenge the United States government during a time of war. According to Wolseley (1972), "Such attitudes led to charges of sedition and disloyalty by the Department of Justice; particularly directed at the leftist magazines" (pp. 52-53). Inasmuch as leftist views employ measures to bring about change in the

established political order so that equality for all citizens may be achieved, it can be argued that the term leftist and the enduring ideology of Black America are similar. Representative of a significant members of the social mass during the period of examination, the Black Press sought to challenge the status quo and create a new political, economic, and social order in America.

*The Agency of Black College Leadership During Wartime*

Historically Black colleges and universities have "evolved as institutions of higher education that share an interdependence with its unique audience and community' (Rovaris, 2005, p. 64). The cultivation and realization of a desire to learn despite a dominant narrative that said the Negro was unteachable; Black higher education is described by Rovaris as follows:

The traditional black institution has weathered the storms and survived not because it had a few wealthy benefactors, not because it had the top students, and not because it was located in a warm and receptive community. All of these, when and if they existed at all, have helped, but the traditionally black institution, like other institutions, had been able to survive because of a basic business concept. It has been able to endure because it has been able to produce a quality product at an economical price. (Rovaris, 2005, p. 64)

Rovaris (2005) points out that the return on investment for Black colleges can be easily measured by evaluating the "number of graduates and their subsequent levels of success" (p. 64). The quest for education among Black Americans is a testament to their relentless desire to uplift and advance the sphere to which they had been assigned upon being brought to the United States and enslaved.

Gasman (2007) maintains that after White northern missionary societies founded Black colleges such as Fisk University and Spelman College, an "entirely different type of Black college was established with the help of the federal government in 1890" (p. 12). The increase and gains made in Negro education has been little less than miraculous, given the harassing, violent and deadly consequences faced as Negroes pursued knowledge from slavery to the *Brown v. Board* and Civil Rights era.

Anderson (1988) asserts

The great efforts blacks made to establish schools for their own children soon after the (Civil) war and to establish state-supported systems of public education for all children reflected both their self-reliance and distinct educational and social philosophy. These ideals had been cultivated in large part during their long ordeal of slavery. (Anderson, 1998, pp. 15-16)

Anderson (1988) also acknowledges that universal education was certain to become a reality in the American social structure, not because ex-slaves were motivated by child-like, irrational, and primitive drives, but because they were a responsible and politically self-conscious social class (p. 15). Thus it can be argued that the idea of Black education as a form of racial uplift and collective advancement emerged as a grassroots effort on the part of enslaved ancestors and has become a mainstay of the Black experience in America. Gasman (2007) maintains

An entirely different type of Black college was established with the help of the federal government in 1890. In the second Morrill Land Grant Act, Congress provided additional funds for expanding education. Because Whites benefited from the Morrill Acts funds, Congress demanded that Blacks benefited as well. However, states were permitted to provide education in separate institutions. Determined to maintain a segregated system of education, southern and border states established public Black colleges. In practice, none of these institutions was equal to its White counterpart with regard to facilities and resources. Through the 1890 Morrill Act, seventeen Black institutions were funded. (Gasman, 2007, p. 12)

Thus, positioning themselves strategically was advantageous for Black colleges in the long-run.

In his article, "The Survival and Function of the Negro College in Changing Social Order," Boykin (1943) surveyed 75 Black colleges and each was asked to submit and report statements or evidence of the effects of the war on

their institutions. Forty-one responded and shared the following:

1. The decrease in male enrollment as a result of Selective Service and acceptance of employment in defense and war industries by male students.
2. Budget difficulties and uncertainty of adequate financial support resulting from decreases in students' fees, decline of revenue from gifts and other philanthropic sources, and failure of state legislatures to increase appropriations.
3. Low morale among male students expecting to enter the Armed Services and unrest among students, in general.
4. Staff difficulties and faculty changes due to acceptance of government and defense positions and entrances into the Armed Services
5. Curriculum revisions and adjustments to meet the demands of the war situation.
6. Aggravated social problems, particularly in colleges near Army training centers. (Boykin, 1943, p.590)

Though predominantly White colleges maintained their share of social problems, as Point #6 specifically indicates, "Black colleges essentially performed a dual function of finding remedies for many prewar injustices as well as preparing to manage postwar struggles that arose as a result of the effects of the impact of the war. It was apparent that appropriations for Black higher education would be affected favorably or unfavorably by state and national postwar conditions; therefore, Black colleges could not afford to fail to capitalize on the rising tide and spirit of adventure which would permeate the postwar world" (Boykin, 1943, p.594).

Despite the significant role Black higher education assumed for the members of its race in the pre- to post-World War II era and other areas of American social history, "too little historical study has been conducted on Blacks in higher education and particularly the Black higher education administrator" (Rovarlis, 2005, p. 13).

According to Rovaris (2005)

Not enough is known about the educational leaders of the traditionally Black colleges, and further, not enough research is conducted on major Black educators' contributions not only to Black higher education, but also to the larger field of American higher education. Instead, such noted higher education historians as Brubaker and Rudy, Hofstadter, Rudolph, and Veysey have chosen to concentrate and re-concentrate their efforts in American higher education on the study of either major universities or the most notable leaders of those institutions. Charles W. Eliot at Harvard, Andrew D. White at Cornell, Henry Philip Tappan at Michigan, and William Rainey Harper at the University of Chicago are examples of the more prominent figures in higher education that have been extensively studied and interpreted (Rovarlis, 2005, pp.13-14).

Historically, the study of Black college leadership has been largely ignored. However, that trend in research is changing as biographies of Black college presidents are becoming more frequent as the study of black colleges as an institution type has enlarged. Gasman has conducted extensive research on Charles S. Johnson, American sociologist and first Black president of Fisk University and also studied Frederick D. Patterson, president of what

is now Tuskegee University and the founder of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF). In order to expand our body of knowledge about these leaders, this research examines the leadership and tenure of three Black college presidents in the South during the World War II era.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### AGENTS OF CHANGE

##### *Who Were the Presidents?*

The three subjects of this study are Mordecai Wyatt Johnson, president of Howard University in Washington DC for 34 years; James Edward Shepard, founder and president of North Carolina Central University in Durham for 37 years; and Benjamin Elijah Mays, president of Morehouse College in Atlanta for 27 years. Though their paths did not cross until much later in life, their childhood experiences and parental interactions and support ran parallel on many levels. Each of these men used leadership and forensic skills to advance the cause of not only their race, but also human dignity and social justice.

##### *Mordecai Wyatt Johnson*

Richard McKinney (1997) chronicles Mordecai Wyatt Johnson as the eleventh president and first African-American to preside over Howard University from 1926 until 1960. Johnson, the first and only child born to his



parents, came into this world on January 12, 1890 in Paris, Tennessee. Johnson was given his father's first name, Wyatt, but for a very significant reason his parents chose Mordecai for his middle name. McKinney explains, "The biblical Mordecai, a leader of the colony of Jews living in Susa, demonstrated a profound concern for the welfare of his people. Doubtless, the story of the biblical Mordecai's dedication and concerns for a persecuted minority, as well as his mother's account of her belief about her son's destiny and this ancient hero, became an subconscious and sometimes very conscious factor in Mordecai's own sense of mission" (pp. 6-7). Carolyn Johnson believed her son's calling to be parallel to the biblical Mordecai's legacy among his people. According to McKinney (1997), while Carolyn Johnson was gentle and quite nurturing when it came to matters of her son, Johnson's father believed in discipline, assigned chores, and corporal punishment. Mordecai recalled that, unlike his mother, his father never formally engaged in the effort to educate him and that his father's "greatest ability was generally applied from the rear" (p. 7). McKinney (1997) maintained that these ideals

of parenting presented a challenge for father and son to enjoy a closer relationship. It was "not until Mordecai was in college was he comfortable having a one-on-one conversation with his father" (p. 7). Despite Mordecai's strained relationship with his father, both Reverend Wyatt Johnson and his wife recognized their son's educational potential and capacity for leadership. Additionally, Miss Nora Porter and Benjamin Sampson, committed teachers during Johnson's youth, inspired him on his educational and life journey.

In 1903 Wyatt and Carolyn Johnson sent Mordecai to Roger Williams University in Nashville, Tennessee to begin high school. He was thirteen years old. According to McKinney (1997), "The school had become a thriving institution and attracted a sizable student body and some outstanding teachers. Among the teachers early in the 1890s were John Hope, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Brown University, and Samuel H. Archer Sr., an alumnus of Colgate University. Both men later served as presidents of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, and were great influences on Mordecai. Archer, in particular, made a lasting impression on Mordecai and the two developed a close relationship that endured for years" (1997, p. 10). During Mordecai's third year at Roger Williams, a fire

destroyed its buildings and his mother was left to decide where Johnson would continue his studies. She settled on Howe Institute in Memphis, though Mordecai "only stayed for one semester--citing dissatisfaction in its academic curriculum" (pp. 11-12). He next enrolled in The Atlanta Baptist College which was affiliated with the Baptist church. This affiliation reassured his parents, as they preferred to find a "Baptist-affiliated institution that offered a high school and a college curriculum" (p. 12). Not to mention, Mordecai's mentor, Samuel H. Archer, was also at Atlanta Baptist College. According to McKinney, "While at Atlanta Baptist College, Mordecai honed his speaking, writing, and analytical skills as a varsity debater and co-editor of the student newspaper" (p. 13). He also was afforded "significant contact" with Professor Benjamin Brawley, a renowned scholar in English whose "instruction had a 'creative effect' on Mordecai's use of the English language and on his speaking" (McKinney (1997, p. 14). As his senior year came to a close, Johnson earned and was awarded a scholarship for the highest grade point average in the class. McKinney (1997) maintains Johnson also "won three of the five other prizes for excellence in debate, in English composition, and in Scripture reading" (p. 19). In 1911, Johnson graduated with high honors before

being hired by John Hope, president of Atlanta Baptist College (eventually Morehouse College), as an English instructor. In addition to being an instructor, Johnson also served as an interim Dean while Benjamin Brawley was on leave for one year, taught economics, and coached the debating team. According to McKinney (1997), "For many years the institution was part of a five-member college debating consortium that included Fisk University and Talladega College. Under Mordecai's tutelage his teams won honors in intercollegiate competition" (p. 21). During his time at Atlanta Baptist College, Johnson began taking classes at the University of Chicago toward a second bachelor's degree in Divinity. It was during this period, in the fall of 1913, that the trustees of Atlanta Baptist College had the institution's charter altered and changed its name to Morehouse College "in honor of Henry Lyman Morehouse, dedicated secretary of the American Baptist Home Mission Society under whose auspices the College operated" (p.26).

In the fall of 1912, Johnson's mother died and this life event provided a clear vision of what his life's purpose was to be: service to the disadvantaged. According to McKinney (1997), this realization of his life's calling "doubtless reminded him of his mother's vision of the Old

Testament Mordecai and the implication that he had a destiny to fulfill" (p. 30).

Johnson's commitment to his race dates back to his experiences as a young boy. According to McKinney (1997), "Throughout his life Johnson had to deal with the issue of race. He was ever mindful of the injustice of slavery endured by his own father and was keenly aware of the discrimination that still hindered the advancement of black people. He was committed to a mission to make a difference in society, in whatever ways were open to him: as a pastor, on the public platform, or as an educator" (p. 31). In 1913, a year after his mother's death, Johnson received a second bachelor's degree from the University of Chicago and next set his sights on Newton Theological Institution in Newton Centre, Massachusetts. After being denied admission to Newton "as was the case for several other promising Black men including Benjamin E. Mays," (pp. 30-31), Johnson applied for admission and was accepted to Rochester Theological Seminary.

Professionally, Johnson was pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Mumford, New York while attending seminary. Johnson was, on occasion, invited to speak at Young Men's Christian Associations (YMCA) conferences to an audience of students and other youth in Rochester. It was

through this exposure that Johnson was recruited for the position as the Southwest Region student secretary of the International Committee of the YMCA. Though only serving in this capacity from 1916-1917, Johnson traveled extensively and "shortly after assuming office, he conducted a survey of the African American colleges in the Southwest, a study that resulted in the reorganization of the student conference of the YMCA's Southwest Region" (p. 35). Despite his success at the YMCA, an incident occurred that led Johnson to depart ways. "He expected the YMCA to take a bold stand against American racism, but there was no evidence of this occurring" (McKinney, 1997, p. 36). According to McKinney (1997), "Conference planning officials for a YMCA meeting in Atlantic City submitted to 'blatant' discrimination in which Black staff were not allowed to register for rooms or eat in the conference hotel where meetings were being held" (p. 36). He found their silence in response to racism intolerable and felt he "could not tolerate this violation of the basic Christian principle of brotherhood by a nominally Christian organization" (p. 36). As a result, Johnson resigned as a show of protest, despite the fact he was a newlywed and he and his wife, three months pregnant, were expecting their first child. Johnson then became pastor of the First

Baptist Church of Charleston, West Virginia in September of 1917. This position was another step in fulfilling his career objective as a "moral and spiritual engineer" (p. 38). Wanting to further his religious training and scholarship, Johnson enrolled in the Harvard Divinity School in September of 1921. While at Harvard, his father died during the spring of 1922. In 1923, Howard University presented to him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity and in 1926 he was appointed president of the University by a unanimous vote of the Board of Trustees.

Johnson possessed great concern for and commitment to Black higher education and a clear vision for Howard University's purpose and future. According to McKinney (1997), "He wanted facilities and a faculty that would compare favorably with any liberal arts university in America. He was convinced Howard was the place where young Black men and women could be trained for effective service and become the standard for of excellence in multiple disciplines" (McKinney, 1997, p. 61). According to Thompson (1960), "During the first year and a half of his administration, Dr. Johnson made a thorough study of the needs and prospects of Howard University. He concluded that the Federal government had a moral obligation to the Negro minority which could be met only b the development of the

University in a first-class institution, and that Howard University should be made in fact, as well as in name, 'the Capstone of Negro Education'" (p. 409). To Johnson's credit, this ideal has proven a reality for Howard University , its undergraduate curriculum and graduate and professional programs. Johnson firmly believed in the social responsibility of higher education and how all institutions types, but Black colleges specifically could lend themselves to solving social ills. During his inaugural address Johnson affirmed, "I want my country to conquer all of the inhibitions connected with blackness and all of the fears connected with blackness, but I want the original blackness there, and I want this blackness to be unashamed and unafraid" (as cited in McKinney, 1997, pp.62-63). For a Black college president--or any Black leader in the South, this is a racially progressive statement of pride, given the climate around race relations during the period of examination. Johnson was known as a very powerful speaker and outspoken race leader, therefore, the repression of his voice when he later participated in government-sponsored radio addresses yielded an interesting affect in the arrangement and deliver of his speeches. As discussed later in the research, "the Office of War Information officials took a heavy-handed approach to



controlling the content of the shows and particularly the text of featured speeches" (Savage, 1999, p. 122). As a result, Johnson was unable to discuss race relations in his usual candor and likely opted to use more flowery language in an effort to create space and overcome the restraints imposed by the OWI. At the time of his inauguration at Howard, however, Johnson is free to communicate his ideals, as he understood the aims of racial uplift and the importance for all Black Americans to adopt a strong sense of self, despite the dominant narrative to the contrary.

His vision for Howard is evident in the many progressive initiatives, projects, and appointments he endorsed. In terms of faculty development, during his 34-year tenure, Johnson "appointed an impressive cohort of nationally and internationally known scholars, including Charles Drew, a specialist in hematology; E. Franklin Frazier, sociologist and president of the American Sociological Society in 1948; Charles Hamilton Houston, Harvard-educated litigator and first Black editor of the *Harvard Law Review*; Rayford W. Logan, Harvard-trained historian, Ralph Bunche; political science professor and eventual Nobel Peace Prize recipient; and John Hope Franklin, world-renowned historian. Already on the faculty when Johnson assumed office were Alain Locke, the Harvard-

educated philosopher and the first African-American Rhodes Scholar; Ernest E. Just, cell biologist; and Benjamin Brawley" (as cited in McKinney, 1997, p. 75). Despite Johnson's commitment to increase the university's reputation as a leader in higher education for Blacks, criticisms of his experience and fitness as a president began almost immediately. "Some felt that his lack of experience as a college administrator would hinder the progress of the university" (McKinney, 1997, p. 79). Among faculty members with whom he experienced conflict were Ernest E. Just, Alain Locke and E. Franklin Frazier. According to McKinney (1997), several faculty members would "meet on Saturday nights at Ralph Bunche's home to trade critiques of Johnson and his administration. They complained that he was a preacher and not an academician, that he appeared to have a 'Messianic complex,' that he was heavy-handed in dealing with the faculty, and that it was difficult for those opposed to him to make him persona non grata to the trustees of the university" (p. 83). Johnson's conflict with faculty, coupled with comments about American capitalism and Russian communism, resulted in a congressional investigation of Johnson and the institution itself to "determine whether communist teachings were taking place" (McKinney, 1997, p. 87). Ultimately, no

evidence to that effect was found and Johnson also managed to maintain the support of many influential persons. He especially came to rely on correspondence sent to him from John Hope, his mentor while at Morehouse College. According to McKinney (1997), in a letter dated August 12, 1928, Hope shared words of encouragement and reminded Johnson that

"There may be some things that you will have to do that will be unpleasant to do. They may be so unpleasant to do that you may find yourself attempting to accomplish them on impulse. I warn you against impulses. You will have to use the greatest calmness in the handling of some situations that might almost crush you to go through with. All of that goes with the job, my friend. This will have to be your guide and assurance: the welfare of Howard University as Howard is to administer in the best possible way to the group to which it is especially committed, namely Negroes." (Mc Kinney, 1997, pp. 77-78)

Though Johnson had his share of critics while at Howard; he remained diplomatic, was commended for his ability to find common ground in the wake of opposition, and concentrated his energies on the expansion of Howard. "One faculty member attributed Johnson's success as president to this kind of willingness to overcome

differences" (as cited in McKinney, 1997, p. 82). Johnson certainly experienced opposition from many of his constituents during his 34 years of service, yet he maintained the consistent support of the university trustees. Despite the calls for his dismissal, Johnson proved to be insightful and forward-thinking in his leadership and organizational development of Howard University.

According to McKinney (1997), "In March 1941, on the fifteenth anniversary of Johnson's presidency, university officials planned the seventeenth annual Charter Day as a testimonial to him" (p. 94). The program was an opportunity for students, faculty members, staff members, alumni and alumnae, and trustees to express their appreciation for all of Johnson's accomplishments by detailing six areas of his contributions:

1. You have revolutionized the physical plant of the University.
2. You have placed the University on a sound financial basis.
3. You have improved the quality of the teaching staff and the conditions for teaching.
4. You have been in the vanguard of the Negro education in advancing security and tenure of teachers.
5. You have increasingly insisted on high standards of scholarship.
6. You have consistently promoted the highest academic standards in all branches of the University. (pp. 94-95)

The list concluded with the following words:

But in our judgment, the greatest achievements which you have made at Howard University have been these:  
 You have instituted and developed democratic practices in the internal administration of the affairs of the university, and in the face of criticism and pressure and at great personal sacrifice, you have at Howard University maintained academic freedom—the very lifeblood of a university in a democracy. (p.95)

Resistance toward Johnson and his vision began to diminish after the Charter Day ceremony and the "remainder of Johnson's tenure was what university historian Rayford W. Logan referred to as 'the golden years'" (p.97).

According to Thompson (1960), "most of the foundational work necessary for building a first-class university had all but been accomplished (p. 409). McKinney (1997) describes the significant growth Howard experienced between 1952 and 1958, as plans to construct eight new academic and administrative buildings were implemented. Additionally, during 1941-1960, thirteen national honor societies were chartered and the establishment of the Ph.D. program was initiated (pp. 99-100). Despite the conflict he experienced with faculty and the "hysteria about communism," probably the "greatest contribution, certainly one of the greatest contributions, which President Johnson made to the development of the first-class educational

institution at Howard was the establishment and maintenance of academic freedom" (Thompson, 1960, p. 410). McKinney (1997) explains that in 1955 Johnson was sixty-five years old and had reached the institution's mandatory retirement age. Trustees were not prepared for his retirement, nor was Johnson eager to bring to a close his leadership of Howard University. Since university regulations did not prohibit rehiring a former employee, the trustees voted to retire Johnson as of June 30, 1955 and then reappointed him for an added five-year term (p. 100).

Outside of his role as president, Johnson's private persona was that of a man with a sense of humor and complete dedication to his wife and five children. He showed great love for his family and set aside quality time with his children whenever official duties did not require his attention. The family enjoyed such activities as eating their meals together, reading poetry, gathering around the piano while his wife played and he sang, attending Sunday service, and discussing a variety of topics from religion to economics. The Johnson household was always frequented by high profile figures and a place where the Johnson children could meet and interact with individuals such as Eleanor Roosevelt and John Hope (McKinney, 1997, pp. 100-101).

Prior to the completion of the 1958-1959 academic year, Johnson announced his retirement on June 30, 1960 (p. 104). According to McKinney (1997), in a show of their appreciation, the trustees, "appointed a committee of distinguished persons to plan a testimonial dinner to recognize Johnson's contributions and to commemorate his retirement" (p. 105). Johnson was further rewarded for his service in the form of a life pension, a house, health benefits, and secretarial service. The title of President Emeritus was conferred on him and later in 1973, the newly constructed administration building was named after him (pp. 104-106).

Though nationally recognized for his leadership of Howard University, Johnson also proved to be controversial because of his outspoken nature and fierce determination to challenge discrimination as a race leader. According to McKinney (2000), "Along the way, he used leadership and forensic skills to advance the cause of the human dignity and justice among the oppressed peoples of the world. In the process he was sometimes maligned by those with conflicting interests" (p. 99). Nonetheless, Johnson triumphed over numerous stumbling blocks, including plots to embarrass and diminish him. In spite of the challenges faced, Johnson always believed it was his calling and

life's purpose to bring about change and found his arena of change at Howard University. An editorial in the campus publication, *The Hilltop*, stated:

"Dr. Johnson was a scholar among scholars, a president among presidents, a man among men—but even more important, he was his own man. He was not slow to criticize slovenly standards, racism, imperialism, or any species of intolerance or injustice. He held up to withering scrutiny Black as well as White leadership in civic, religious, and economic life. Dr. Johnson rejected the view that the University ought to avoid critical analysis of social and economic issues." (as cited in McKinney, 1997, p. 134)

Johnson died in his sleep on September 10, 1976 at the age of eighty-six. He was preceded in death by his wife of fifty-three years in 1969. His funeral was held in the Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel on the campus of Howard University where he was eulogized by Dr. Benjamin E. Mays.

#### *James Edward Shepard*

James Edward Shepard was a pharmacist and political activist as well as the founder and first president of North Carolina Central University (NCCU); he was president from its founding in 1910 until his death in 1947. Lesser known and researched than the other subjects of this research, I was not able to find existing published research on Shepard. According to Henry Louis Suggs, retired Clemson University professor and NCCU alumnus,



Shepard was perhaps "one of the most essential leaders of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in African-American education and race relations." The eldest of twelve, Shepard was born in Raleigh, North Carolina, November 12, 1875 to Hattie Whitted Shepard and Reverend Augustus Shepard. Shepard's parents were very active in the church and the Freedmen's Bureau. Shepard was particularly close to his mother, a former schoolteacher who tutored him as a young boy. Mrs. Shepard shared his vision of becoming a great leader and spokesperson for his race. His relationship with his mother was one in which she maintained a strong influence on his life and education. His mother was rooted in the ministry and encouraged her son's spirituality and sense of integrity. His father, a Baptist minister who was formerly enslaved, was also instrumental in Shepard's college attendance as well as shaping his career. Shepard, like his father, was also a Baptist minister and one could make the assumption that the senior Shepard was a precursor to his son's desire to train ministers in his latter years. Augustus Shepard was pastor of White Rock Baptist Church in Durham and was known and respected by the Durham community. In many ways, Shepard followed in his father's footsteps and was skillful at positioning himself to build his own

following and network of ministers—both Black and White—to help him start his training school (Suggs, H.L., 2005).

Shepard attended Shaw University in Raleigh where he graduated with a pharmacy degree in 1894. He wed Annie Day Robinson on November 7, 1895 and to this union were born two daughters, Marjorie and Annie Day. The newlyweds moved to Washington D.C. in 1889 where Shepard worked as a comparer in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds with Henry Cheadle. Shepard returned to North Carolina to serve as deputy collector of internal revenue in Raleigh from 1899-1905. In 1905, Shepard took the position of field superintendent of the International Sunday School Association (ISSA). He continued in this position until 1909, after which he served on the executive committee from 1909-1914 (ASALH, 1948).

According to Suggs (2005), "As a disciple of Booker T. Washington Shepard carried a railroad pass and was able to travel to places such as New York and Boston, seeking philanthropic support." This role proved very useful to Shepard when he later established his school, as he met many influential people throughout his travels. Early in his career, Shepard became involved with the Chautauqua Movement. This movement sought to bring learning, culture, and later, entertainment to the small towns and villages of

America during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Hailed as "arguably the most important period in the development of what we know today as adult education," the Chautauqua education movement grew out of summer Sunday school gatherings held at Lake Chautauqua, New York (Maxwell, 2000, para. 10). According to Suggs (2005), the gatherings at Lake Chautauqua brought together prominent politicians, authors, artists, and scientists. It was Shepard's involvement with this movement that inspired him to open a college for the education of Negroes. By the turn of the century, many communities had formed their own Chautauquas (unrelated to the New York institution) that paid lecturers and performers to participate in their local events (Suggs, H.L., 2005). Scott (1999) asserts

From the 1870s to the 1930s, a variety of Chautauquan formats and notions spread across the United States, Canada, and other parts of the world. The general public and education, alike, continue to respect the "Chautauqua Idea." Yet, academia has never fully acknowledged its debt to Chautauqua for historical innovations in adult and university education. (p. 389)

According to Scott (1999), "Chautauqua University, (in existence from 1883 to 1892), was a forerunner in correspondence and summer courses as well as the university press in the United States. Thus, Scott argues that this institution served as William Rainey Harper's model for

organizing the University of Chicago in 1892" (p. 390). Though the influences of the Chautauqua movement were far-reaching, it appears Shepard gravitated to the movement because of its evangelical foundation and engagement in social justice as well as its similarity to the International Sunday School Movement for which he worked. According to Suggs (2005), "For philanthropic purposes, Shepard added the name Chautauqua (National Religious Training School and Chautauqua), as most of his supporters were in the Northeast. Thus, Northern ministers were also in favor of this strategy to energize the school and gain support."

In 1907, Shepard traveled to Rome, Italy as delegate and the only Negro spokesman at the World's Sunday School Convention. Upon his return, he decided to establish a school to train ministers. According to Suggs (2005), "Though Shepard was not a formally trained theologian and during this period Baptist ministers were often self-trained, he was 'appalled and disgusted' at the quality of preaching in Baptist churches and felt one of the best ways to change this was to teach ministers the gospel and train them to preach." His father and grandfather were ministers, so his calling was ministry. His father was pastor of White Rock Baptist Church—one of the largest in Durham;

therefore, it was easy for Shepard to negotiate his way through the leadership structure. Additionally, members of the White community appreciated him more because he was a minister and they were also familiar with his father's travels throughout the state of North Carolina as a part of the Baptist State Convention (Suggs, H. L., 2005). Suggs (2005) maintains that Shepard "modeled his school after Tuskegee Institute, for had he challenged Washington, he would have never gotten the school off the ground."

After organizing his Board of Directors and becoming chartered in 1909, North Carolina Central University opened its doors to students in 1910 as the National Religious Training School and Chautauqua. It is also recorded that the school was founded as the National Training School for the education of Christian workers and teachers (ASALH, 1948, p. 118). According to Suggs (2005), "Its early years were characterized by a wealth of enthusiasm and high endeavor, but a shortage of money. Funds came from private donations, the Duke family, and student fees; however, Shepard spent much of his time raising additional funds for the fledgling college." Shepard experienced substantial support from the Duke family in the founding of the school, as there existed a history between the Duke family, Trinity College, and Shepard. According to Chambers (2006), Duke

University was once Trinity College and located in Randolph County, North Carolina. Upon moving to Durham in 1887, the school grew with the support of Washington Duke and Julian S. Carr, respected Methodists who built their wealth through the American Tobacco Company, the largest tobacco company in the world. Later, James B. Duke established The Duke Endowment; a \$40 million trust fund shared with Trinity College. Hence, Trinity president, John C. Kilgo, renamed the school Duke University in 1924, as a memorial to Washington Duke, James B. Duke's father and patriarch of the Duke family. The relationship between Shepard and Kilgo dates back to when Duke was Trinity College and Shepard was involved with the school. To this end, the American Tobacco Company needed a facility in which to educate and insure workers so they supported Shepard's vision to found NCCU and also created North Carolina Mutual Life, respectively (Suggs, H. L., 2005).

As the founder and visionary for what is now North Carolina Central University, Shepard's leadership style was often criticized and questioned by his constituents, though many defended and understood his methodology. According to Faggett (1949), "A more or less objective review of the educational theories of Dr. Shepard should reveal the justice, and possibly injustice of his disparagement" (p.

484). The most common criticisms were that Shepard was a "dictator" and that he had to 'Uncle Tom' to get what he wanted" (p. 484). Though the criticisms mirror those assigned to Booker T. Washington, both men "left a living monument standing to defend his name, thereby rendering mere words in this respect idle attributes indeed. In terms of the greatest cultural and material benefit for the greatest number of Negroes, there can be no denying that the race stands everlastingly indebted to schools like Tuskegee and North Carolina College, and to men the stamp of the late Dr. James E. Shepard" (p. 484).

Faggett (1949) outlines four tenants of Dr. Shepard's educational philosophy as

1. Educate for equality;
2. Make the best use of all available resources;
3. The end- -complete acceptance of the Negro minority- -justifies the means;
4. Democracy in Negro colleges is an ultimate result, the goal of many years' unstinted effort, rather than a basic principle of administration at the present time. (p. 484)

According to Faggett (1949), "At his regular week-day chapel exercise in the B.N. Duke auditorium, Dr. Shepard continuously urged his students to take advantage of every educational opportunity. He acknowledged the lack of adequate facilities for the education of Negroes, but he also preached, 'Make the best use of whatever you have

before you start begging for more'" (p. 485). In terms of race relations in the South, Shepard whole-heartedly believed a segregated educational system would persist for several generations, as he did not envision immediate change. He also believed that "sudden abolishment would prove disastrous" (p. 485). Shepard's concern was two-fold: 1) Could Whites and Negroes co-exist amidst the enduring racial tensions in the South? 2) What would become of Negro educators if schools and colleges no longer existed?

Shepard's tactics for fundraising and cultivating donors is described as a combination of "diplomatic pressure with co-operative manipulation, the method of a Southern clergyman, expert in the art of 'respectable begging" (as cited in Faggett, 1949, p. 486). Nonetheless, his efforts and commitment to advancing the education of Negroes "earned him the deepest respect of Southern white politicians. He convinced them that the Negro was one of the weak links in their chain of progress and that when they helped him they helped themselves" (p. 486). To this end, Shepard was credited with being "uniquely gifted with a profound knowledge of the Southern white man, or of any American white man" and had a reputation for gaining their support by knowing when, how, and who to solicit financial backing (p. 486).



Faculty relations were simply a matter of course for Shepard. Rather than employing an "elaborate system of investigation," he opted to hire faculty on the merits and trusted that "good or bad teaching would reveal itself in time" (p. 487). Shepard attempted to foster an academic environment in which the development and success of the institution as a whole superseded that of any individual department. There was a shared responsibility expected of all campus faculty and administrators, so much so that he called for faculty to "eliminate the indolent and disinterested" and "advised the withdrawal of every student who failed to maintain at least average grades" (p. 487). Shepard's standards for his students were very high. His philosophy was that "students came to N.C. College in order to receive instruction--not necessarily to instruct" (p. 487). Simply put, Shepard was not a champion of student input and insight on matters he deemed were the responsibility of administrators. For instance, "Student government existed for the purpose of promoting the integration of administrative faculty-student relationships--under the supervision of Dr. Shepard" (as cited in Faggett, 1949, p. 487). Shepard also insisted that male students to respect female students and for females to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of such respect, as

discipline and self-respect were attributes he endorsed. According to Faggett (1997), "Dr. Shepard's Victorianism was due largely to his training for the ministry and to a conviction which he preached: that since Negroes are only a few generations removed from slavery, they will need strong disciplinary guidance, preferably by Negro leaders until they have acquired a deeper and more lasting sense of moral responsibility, and appreciation of the true Christian ideals, and a higher cultural development" (p. 488). One may fall on either side of Shepard's argument on the destiny of the Negro post-slavery. One fact remains, his commitment to the advancement of his race is the backdrop of an assessment or position he took while attempting to affect change in the arena of higher education.

As the landscape of Black higher education in the South was concerned, "there were dozens of schools in the state of North Carolina during this period of time that were industrial, normal or training schools. With the exception of the land-grant institution (North Carolina A & T), all historically Black colleges and universities bore the name of the city, region, or person rather than the State" (as cited by Suggs, 2005). In 1923, the National Religious Training School and Chautauqua was of suitable progress and expansion that "funds were appropriated by the

North Carolina state assembly to purchase the college as the Durham State Normal School" (ASALH, 1948, p. 118). Two years later, with Shepard still acting as president, the institution was reorganized by the State and named North Carolina College for Negroes. This transition made the institution the first state-supported liberal arts college for African-Americans in the nation (Suggs, H. L., 2005). Shepard was the all important factor in these developments from the very beginning up to his death as head of this institution throughout its various changes (ASALH, 1948, p. 118).

On October 6, 1947, James Edward Shepard, a life member of the Association for the Study of African-American Life and History, passed away in Durham, North Carolina. His obituary affirms,

Shepard was otherwise useful to his community and nation. In Durham where the Negroes of that urban area have made rapid strides in business he was an important figure also in this sphere. He was director of Mechanics and Farmers Bank. Trustee of the Masons of the State of North Carolina. He continued his interest in Sunday School work and attended conventions of this order in this country and abroad. (ASALH, 1948, p. 118)

*Benjamin Elijah Mays*

Dereck Rovaris (2005) and Lawrence Carter (1998) present compelling narratives about Benjamin Elijah Mays, the sixth president of Morehouse College, who served from 1940 until 1967. Mays as described and known by many as a race leader and agent of social change for nearly half a century. Fittingly, the epitaph on Mays' crypt reads, 'Born to Rebel Against Ignorance, Oppression and Social Injustice'" (Carter (1998, p.30).

Like his contemporaries examined in this study, Mays was born in the South to former slaves. On August 1, 1894, Hezekiah and Louvenia Mays welcomed the last of their eight children, Benjamin Elijah Mays. According to Rovaris (2005), Hezekiah was a farmer whose heavy drinking led to spousal abuse. Mays picked cotton with his father and could only attend school three months out of the year. The rest of the year was dedicated to working in the fields. Nonetheless, Mays loved school and worked hard during his limited schooling period to become the number one student in his class, despite the annual interruption to his study that extended his graduation from high school. According to Rovaris (2005), Mays described his desire to learn:

...I had a hankering for an education. It was almost like a call to do something. And I had a burning desire. I used to plow to the end of the row and hitch

the mule to the tree and go down and pray. And, the only thing I was praying for was to ask the Lord to make it possible for me to get an education. I used to go out at night in the light of the moon and do the same thing- -praying for God to help me get an education of some kind. (Rovaris, 2005, p. 23)

Nonetheless, Mays remained motivated to learn. His heroes as a child were Black leaders such as Frederick Douglas, Booker T. Washington, and Paul Laurence Dunbar and it was their success that convinced Mays of his ability to do the same (Rovaris, 2005, p. 21). In contrast to Mays hopes for a future as a leader, his "earliest recollection is that of a lynch mob that stopped him and his father. The mob, traveling on horseback and carrying rifles, made his father take off his hat and bow before them. Terrified by the mob, Benjamin began to cry; his tears just as well could have been falling for his father's loss of dignity and the treatment to which they had been subjected as from fear" (Rovaris, 2005, pp. 20-21). Though only four years old, this event left an indelible impression on the young boy.

Similar to Johnson and Shepard, Mays enjoyed a close relationship with his mother and she inspired his religious convictions. According to Carter (1998), "His mother was deeply religious, oriented to a serious prayer life, and encouraged Bennie to go to school" (Carter, 1998, p. 1). Though neither of his parents were literate, his mother

fully believed in and supported Mays' ambitions to learn and excel in school. She was a deeply religious woman who had faith that her son's calling was for greatness. Hezekiah, on the other hand, had little sympathy for his son's educational desires and discouraged Mays from his ambition to obtain an education in favor of becoming a farmer. Rovaris (2005) attributes his attitude toward education to "having been born into slavery and forced to do manual work all of his life" (p. 23). Thus, Mays' father believed an education "went to one's head and made him a fool and dishonest" (p. 23). Despite his father's lack of support, Mays left for Orangeburg, South Carolina to begin the eighth grade at State College High School, where he graduated as class valedictorian in 1916.

Carter (1998) discusses Mays's pursuit of his collegiate goals, attending Virginia Union as a freshman before transferring to Bates College in Maine because he "wanted to compete with white students" (p. 2). Mays proved to be an outstanding student in and out of class. He excelled at football and volleyball and was also an exceptional member of the debate team, racist attitudes; however, resulted in Mays feeling that he had been "unfairly treated by the debate squad when he was the only returning member forced to try out with the new students.

He protested and was successful in having his 'unnecessary' tryout cancelled" (Rovaris, 2005, p. 24). According to Rovaris (2005), though Mays encountered financial challenges and incidents of racism while pursuing his undergraduate degree, he was one of the first three Blacks to graduate from Bates and did so with honors in 1920.

According to Rovaris (2005), having been licensed for the ministry in 1919 and ordained in 1921, Mays set his sights on pursuing a doctorate in either philosophy or religion. Although Mays had just married Ellen Harvin and she was scheduled to be in South Carolina for a teaching position, he applied to and was accepted at the University of Chicago to study religion. Before completing his first year of study, John Hope, president of Morehouse College, offered Mays a teaching position in mathematics for an annual salary of \$1,200 (p. 25). Mays accepted the offer and also an offer to pastor Shiloh Baptist Church in the city. He juggled both jobs until he decided to return to the University of Chicago to complete his graduate degree in Divinity (p. 25). According to Carter (1998), "During Mays's third year at Morehouse, he met his most esteemed mentor, Mordecai Wyatt Johnson; then pastor of the First Baptist Church of Charleston, West Virginia. Johnson had been invited by president John Hope to speak in Chapel" (p.

3). The mentorship and friendship between Mays and Johnson would last until Johnson's death in 1976.

According to Rovaris (2005), in 1924, Mays returned to Chicago to complete his studies after the death of his wife, Ellen, a year earlier. Upon receiving his M.A. in 1925, he taught English at South Carolina State College and also met his future wife, Sadie Gray. In 1926, both returned to the University of Chicago to begin graduate work and also wed. However, Mays and his wife moved to Tampa, Florida where he served as Executive Secretary for the Urban League from 1926 to 1928 (pp. 25-26). Mays delayed the pursuit of his Ph.D. to speak out against "forced segregation and other racially discriminatory practices" (Rovaris, 2005, p. 26). Specifically, Mays wrote an article for the *Tampa Bulletin*, entitled, "It Cost Too Much" that "protested the treatment of a predominantly black audience during a pageant staged by an all black high school" and "the way blacks were forced to sit and stand in the segregated balcony of the auditorium while most of the main floor remained unoccupied" (p. 26). Taking this position on the issue and not feeling the need to apologize for speaking the truth in order to save his job, Mays left his post. According to Rovaris (2005), "Over the year, Mays would go on to write many controversial articles and



deliver many speeches and sermons in the same vein" (p. 26).

Mays ultimately accepted positions in which he could affect religious, educational, and political and social change. Among these positions was as the National Student Secretary for the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in 1928. According to Carter (1998), "From 1930-1932, Mays directed a study of Negro churches in the United States under the auspices of the Institute of Social and Religious Research in New York City" (p. 5). Mays collaborated with fellow minister, Joseph W. Nicholson and the findings of this study were published in the book, *The Negro's Church*, published in 1933. The study examined "609 urban and 185 rural churches in twelve cities and four rural areas" (p. 5). According to Rovaris (2005), Mays and Nicholson concluded that the "origin of the Black church was its most distinguishing feature" and also identified "five underlying forces as contributing to that origin: growing racial consciousness in varied periods; group and individual initiative; splits and withdrawals from established churches; Negro migration; and missions of other churches" (p. 26). According to Rovaris (2005), upon completion of the study for the Institute of Social and Religious Research and after a ten-year deferment, Mays

worked toward the completion of his doctorate at the University of Chicago. Leaving Chicago in 1934, Mays accepted the position as Dean of the School of Religion at Howard University in Washington DC; however, in March 1935, Mays was conferred the Ph.D. in religion (p. 28).

Mays's career included a professorship of English, pastor, Executive Secretary for the Tampa Urban League, and National Student Secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) before his appointment as Dean of Howard's School of Religion. Following his position as Dean, Johnson was offered the presidency at Morehouse College in 1940 and thus began the pinnacle of his professional, educational, and life's journey.

According to Carter (1998), Mays was a man who "overcame odds similar to those of Booker T. Washington and, ironically, found himself as a black educator, often in situations parallel to those of the African-American leader many reverently called 'The Wizard'" (p. 335). Mays never subscribed to the dogma of Jim Crow South and strived to become a leader while also developing future leaders. Carter (1998) also chronicles Mays's success as a champion debater and captain of his team while at Bates. This role served him well when he later successfully coached undefeated debate teams at Morehouse for three years.

Throughout his life and leadership, forensic activities lent itself to Mays becoming an effective agent of change for his and all people. According to Carter (1998), Mays delivered "over 800 public addresses on the topics of "segregation, politics, and religion, education and democracy" spanning from the 1940s to the 1970s (p. 17). Mays believed in the mission and the need for Black colleges and expected Morehouse men to do well not only while in school but also in life. He assigned a unique purpose and utility to the Black college mission.

Mays's leadership as President of Morehouse was very much influenced by Mordecai Johnson, president of Howard University and though it was a thoughtful process that led to Mays's acceptance of the position of Dean of the School of Religion in 1934, his high regard for Johnson as a principled man and leader was among the many variables he considered. In later years Mays wrote:

I was eager to go to Howard for several reasons. I felt the challenge to make the School of Religion outstanding, to lift it, if possible, from its stepchild role to a place of respectability in the institution. Moreover, I had great admiration for Mordecai Johnson. I had more than a casual interest in Mordecai Johnson's success at Howard. I am basically a 'race' man. I believe in the Black man's ability, and my heart leaps with joy when a Negro performs well in any field. For me it was imperative that the first Negro President of Howard University be an unqualified and triumphant success. I had watched Howard's growth during Johnson's first eight years there; and I was

eager to help him build a great university by making the School of Religion a first-rate institution." (Rovaris, 2005, p.29)

One could argue that Mays's understanding of the role of Black college leadership was a precursor to his success at Morehouse. It was apparent that he was committed to his race and found fulfillment and purpose in serving his community via higher education administration. Mays revered Johnson, a graduate of Morehouse College, and studied his administrative and leadership style. Nonetheless, Mays's leadership of Morehouse was of his own arrangement.

According to Rovaris (2005), Mays's first order of business as Morehouse president was to make the institution fiscally solvent. The institution "no longer enjoyed its beneficiary relationship with the American Baptist Home Mission Society, which had contributed to its operations since its beginning. After making a sizable contribution to Morehouse's fund drive in 1934, the Society then relinquished control of the college a year later, and Morehouse was able to elect its own Board of Trustees. While this granted the institution greater autonomy, it left it without a major financial contributor" (p. 70). As a result, Morehouse College made the transition from being a "church sponsored" institution to merely "church related" (p. 70). This loss compounded the existing issues the

College was facing as it attempted to rebound from the "economic fallout" experienced during the Depression (p. 71).

Avery (2003) asserts that a new beginning in Black education occurred on April 1, 1929 when John Hope, president of Morehouse College, signed a "revolutionary educational undertaking" into history (p. 1). Present at the signing and as a gesture of solidarity, standing behind him were Florence M. Read and Myron W. Adams, presidents of Spelman College and Atlanta University, respectively.

According to Avery (2003),

Atlanta University, Morehouse College, Spelman College were now affiliated institutions. This event marked the beginning of a center for black higher education. According to John Hope, the decision to affiliate was a 'fateful hours in the history of Negro higher education with circumstances favoring cooperation that might not occur again for 100 years.' Granted a charter from the State of Georgia for this university plan, Atlanta University offered graduate and professional courses, while Morehouse College and Spelman College offered undergraduate courses leading to a bachelor's degree. This affiliation was an example of philanthropists, college presidents, and other individuals interested in sustaining and improving black higher education, pooling their resources together to ensure higher education for blacks in the South. (Avery, 2003, p. 2)

When Mays assumed the position as president, as part of the Atlanta Affiliation, Morehouse administration did not have financial control of the institution. Mays

discovered that severe problems plagued Morehouse, including its endowment of just over \$1 million was "not only millions of dollars behind the other members of the Affiliation, but it had witnessed a \$25,000 endowment decrease between 1938 and 1940" (Rovaris, 2005, p. 74). According to Rovaris (2005), "In 1942, Mays made the last of several formal requests to have financial control returned to the Morehouse administration" (p. 75). Mays' request was approved by the Board of Trustees of Atlanta University--the governing body of the Atlanta Affiliation.

How Mays felt about faculty development is best communicated in his April 10, 1948 annual report to the Board of Trustees:

I said in last year's report and I repeat it here. Morehouse College may never equal some other colleges in endowment, buildings, costly equipment, and land; but Morehouse can and must equal or excel other colleges and universities in having good teachers, consecrated men, sound scholars, and inspiring personalities. In these areas, we need not apologize to the great Harvard or the University of Chicago.

(Rovaris, 2005, p.99)

Mays proved to be a consistent advocate for faculty development and academic freedom. All that was asked for in

return from faculty members was good teaching and scholarship, coupled with good morals that the student body could emulate. Additionally, he championed salary increases and "initiated a rank and tenure program that had an ascending salary scale. It included the following ranks in succession: instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor. These ranks provided a means of distinction for faculty with advanced degrees and for those who provided meritorious service" (Rovarlis, 2005, p. 103). At times, Mays's desire to stay abreast of all academic matters led to the perception that he was "overly involved in day-to-day affairs" when there was an Academic Dean in place to handle those matters (p. 104). In spite of his meddling, Mays was committed to the College and wanted Morehouse to compete with all institution types and emerge as a leader in higher education. With this goal in mind, Mays set forth to brand the Morehouse man as morally correct--using the example of selective faculty. As a result, the College faculty turnover rate "averaged less than four a year" (p. 102).

According to Rovarlis (2005), Mays implemented a remedial reading program during the 1940s in response to the "low literacy level" that plagued many Morehouse students. The program was a form of intervention and

retention (p. 109). To further exercise and enhance reading skills while indoctrinating new freshmen, a handbook was prepared and distributed. The handbook was designed to help incoming students learn more about Morehouse. "Originally called *The 'M' Book* and published by The Student Activity Committee, the handbook was later renamed *The Companion* and was published by the Morehouse College Faculty." (p. 110). The handbook was to be carried by all freshmen at all times, as it provided initial instruction on becoming a Morehouse Man. The handbook also assisted veterans taking advantage of the G.I. Bill following the war. Rovaris (2005) asserts that the "combined effectiveness of all these programs enabled Morehouse to take good students and make them better. But just as importantly, it enabled Morehouse to take weak to marginal high school students and help them to succeed in college, eventually allowing many to do well in a graduate or professional school program" (pp. 111-112). This great potential is found in several notable alumni, including over twenty college presidents. These college presidents include: Mordecai Johnson and James Nabrit, both of Howard University; Albert W. Dent and Samuel DuBois Cook of Dillard University; as well as three Morehouse presidents—Mays' successor, Hugh Gloster;



Gloster's successor Leroy Keith, Jr.; Walter Massey; and the current president, Robert Franklin (p. 112).

According to Rovaris (2005), "Mays was effective at motivating and inspiring his students. Though the creation of the 'Morehouse Man' predates the Mays administration, he is often given credit for the infusion of life into this concept" (p. 117). The concept itself was originated by John Hope in 1905 as he tried to get his students to believe they were inferior to no one. The college slogan, "A Morehouse Man cannot fail," reminded students that they were, indeed, "men" and treated as such (p. 118). Mays simply took the original idea to a level of excellence. In a show of unwavering confidence in and support of Mays, an advertisement appeared in the 1948 Homecoming football program. It was written as an apparent reply to talks of Mays' departure from the College:

"Morehouse College needs a president of Dr. Benjamin E. Mays's caliber. Under the leadership of Dr. Mays the College has become well known on the nations and international scenes. Our endowment has been increased by leaps and bounds during his administration. Recently the College received an A rating by the American Association of Schools and Colleges. This is the highest rating an American college can receive. Morehouse graduates can now enter any standard American graduate school without an examination. These and many other blessing have come to Morehouse College during the tenure of our president, Dr. Benjamin E. Mays. As students we have many times disagreed with Dr. Mays. We shall perhaps disagree with him in the future. But we respect the man. We admire his stature, his conduct

and the way he has conducted the business of Morehouse College. We want his to remain here. The school is now entering an era which will demand strong, clear-headed leadership. Dr. Mays can give the school that leadership. Seven hundred and fifty strong, we, the students, cry out for Dr. Mays to REMAIN AT MOREHOUSE. *Sponsored by the Student Committee to KEEP MAYS AT MOREHOUSE.*" (as cited in Rovaris, 2005, pp. 115-116)

Mays enjoyed a positive and fulfilling relationship with the student body and this letter serves as a testament to their appreciation of his leadership and example.

Rovaris (2005) describes Mays's administrative style "centralized" in which "all major decisions were funneled through the president's office" (p. 138). Mays's organizational model routed all major decisions through his office--a common hierarchical model "necessary for survival for many traditionally black institutions and many white institutions as well" (p. 140). Like his contemporaries examined in this study, Mays wanted to be privy to all aspects of the institution's operation and was considered the final decision-maker. According to Rovaris (2005), Black institutions were no exception to having "strong presidents shaping, building, and redirecting their respective institutions" (p. 140). Leaders such as Booker T. Washington, Mordecai Johnson, and John Hope also personified this leadership style (p. 140).

Rovaris (2005) describes Mays as a God-fearing man who understood the purpose God had for his life and service to mankind. In this respect, his role as president and Christian were able to co-exist. Those who supported his vision did so because of the quality of his character and sincerity in what he believed. Mays' accomplishments never reflected a need to boast and take credit. They were simply a by-product of his purpose (p. 143). By the time Mays retired in 1967, he had transformed Morehouse from a fledgling college into a respected and renowned institution of higher education. According to Rovaris (2005), "he originally planned to resign in 1966, but was requested by the Board of Trustees to stay on another year so that he could serve during the College's centennial anniversary year. Upon his retirement, he was named President Emeritus of Morehouse" (p. 152). In the years that followed, Mays accepted the post of visiting professor at Michigan State University from 1968-1969. Serving the city of Atlanta as the first Black President of the Atlanta Board of Education from 1969-1981, Mays believed the city of Atlanta played an integral role in the country's quest for improving race relations. In this capacity, Mays "urged young people to have a great love of learning, a burning desire for excellence, and a genuine compassion for humanity (p. 152).

Benjamin Elijah Mays died of pneumonia on March 28, 1984 in Atlanta. In 1995, he and Sadie, who preceded him in death in 1969, were given the "posthumous honor of having their remains re-interred on the Morehouse campus" (Rovarlis, 2005, p. 152).

CHAPTER FOUR  
A CONVERSATION ON RACE IN AMERICA

*Radio Address Excerpts and Analysis*

The subjects of the research, Mordecai Johnson, James Shepard, and Benjamin Mays, personified the racial uplift and consciousness of many Black citizens during World War II. Each of these men continually sought ways in which discourse might achieve an effect on inhumane social customs, trends, norms, and behaviors in America. The arena of activism they chose was education; however, their oratory skills afforded them a tool that buoyed their circle of influence and effectiveness in communicating to and with both Black and White America.

According to Berlin (1987), "language is arbitrary and enters into meaning only after the truth is discovered" (p. 9). Black Americans understood the truth of discrimination despite the country turning a blind eye to it time and time again. Race leaders who also knew the truth of discrimination and committed themselves to advocating on behalf of their people, accepted the invitation to

participate in government sponsored radio programming so that they could share the truth of American race relations with listeners--Black and White. Each subject was a qualified observer of that truth and also a credible rhetor of that truth. To follow are excerpts from speeches delivered by rhetorical activists inspired to engage in political discourse during the 1930s and 1940s: James E. Shepard, Mordecai W. Johnson, and Benjamin E. Mays.

An example of the social, political, and educational radio addresses delivered by Black college leadership during the war is that of Mordecai W. Johnson, President, Howard University and broadcast over WOOK Radio, Washington D. C., Saturday, May 15, 1948 from 12 Noon to 12:30p.m. This address was part of the "American's All" program, sponsored by the Institute of Race Relations. Dr. Johnson was discussing the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) and had just named all member institutions. The following is an excerpt from that address:

It was in these colleges that higher education for the Negro people first began. It was in these colleges that the first generation of Negro leaders was

nurtured and brought to maturity. It was in these colleges that the first Negro teachers first became members of faculties of higher education. It was in these colleges that for the first time we saw educated and mature Colored men and women working with mature Christian White men and women in the same faculty in a great brotherhood of the spirit transcending race and color, building up the life of our people. The colleges and universities which have united in this common appeal to the American people were each and every one of them founded by Christian men and women. They were founded for a purpose which is as practical and necessitous as bread, namely, to provide an intelligent and trustworthy group of leaders for that tenth of our population which had been slaves for two hundred and fifty years, and which, being segregated in the states where they lived, were standing at every turn of the road in the deepest need of intelligent and trustworthy leaders to guide them. (What is the United Negro College Fund? [1948.] )

Dr. Johnson clearly understood the influence and relevance that Black higher education offered freed slaves who desired formal education and the opportunity to serve

their people with the knowledge and relationships established via the sphere of higher education. The inventory of leaders produced by the Black college was not lost on Johnson and he appealed to listeners on the significance of United Negro College Fund member institutions and Black education as a whole. Johnson asserted that each of the UNCF institutions is "a holy place and a sacred heritage of the Negro people" (What is the United Negro College Fund? [circa 1948]). Johnson's address chronicled Black college training of leaders in the fields of education, health, theology, agriculture, sociology, law, and politics. At the same time, he acknowledged leadership as an essential part of society. Though only accounting for a tenth of the population, Johnson stood in awe of how Negroes came as far as they had with so little in the way of leadership--attributing their survival to high character, dignity, and the trajectory of possibilities their human spirit possessed.

Because Johnson saw his people as sheep without a shepherd, his speech reflected his determination to provide them with a leader--a shepherd. With the end of slavery, former slaves no longer could rely on the individualized, primarily agricultural manual labor system of the South. Instead they needed to migrate to the cities and learn to



navigate complicated human relationships to which they were not previously exposed. He sensed the need to fill the leadership void among his people and believed they needed and deserved "more intelligent shepherds and a greater diversity in shepherding if they are to live and survive in our modern industrialized city and civilization" (What is the United Negro College Fund? [circa 1948]).

A second example of a social, political, and educational radio address was delivered by Dr. James E. Shepard, President, North Carolina College for Negroes; broadcast over WDNC Radio and Associated Stations, Durham, North Carolina, Saturday evening, January 13, 1945. The following is an excerpt from that address:

My outspoken praise for the many achievements of the white and Negro people of North Carolina, my unswerving loyalty to, and pride in my state, by no means indicate that I am blind to our shortcomings. I do not believe that North Carolina is the best of all possible states in the sense that I am fully satisfied with our present level of attainment, and desire no further progress. The facts are that I am keenly aware of every shortcoming of our state. I am highly sensitive to every injustice perpetuated upon any person in this state. Like all good citizens, I have a

proper and righteous indignation against the denial to any person of the rights and privileges guaranteed to him by our Federal and State Constitutions. In the same measure as I, as a member of this commonwealth, rejoice in every forward step taken by the State of North Carolina, I am also personally embarrassed and ashamed of any backward step taken by us in any area of human relations. (Inter-racial Progress in North Carolina, [1945.])

Dr. Shepard argued in his appeal to the people of North Carolina and beyond for the need for interracial progress. Shepard recognized the shortcomings of North Carolina, especially, the unequal rights and privileges of its Negro citizens. Integrated throughout his address, these rights included voting, educational provisions, equal pay for school teachers, and access to adequate healthcare. Additionally, Shepard believed the United States, in partnership with his beloved state, should take proper aim at long-range postwar objectives under consideration. These objectives consisted of economic security for Negroes, preparation for postwar unemployment, the educational needs of returning military personnel, and a broader acceptance of the moral obligation of law and order. In Shepard's

opinion, meeting these responsibilities with fairness and equity was how Americans could demonstrate its spiritual consciousness for needed social, political, and economic adjustments (Inter-racial Progress in North Carolina, [circa 1945.]).

A third example of a social, political, and educational radio address delivered by Black college leadership during the war was delivered by Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, President, Morehouse College, and broadcast over Station WSB, Atlanta, Georgia, February 15, 1947 from 5:15p.m to 5:30p.m. This address was delivered on the occasion of Morehouse College's Eightieth Anniversary. The following is an excerpt from that address:

The greatest crisis confronting man today is not political. It is not economical. It is not social. It is not even war. The greatest crisis confronting the world today is a moral crisis—in that men know more than they do. They know what is good, just, and right but lack the moral courage to do what is good, just, and right. We know what democracy requires. But we fear the consequences of democracy. We know what the Christian religion demands. But we are afraid to walk in our religion. It is not bigger and better atomic

bombs that we need. It is bigger and better men. It is not supremacy in the air, but supremacy in justice, integrity, and social vision. It is not even more skills in the natural sciences what we need, but more skills in how to live together—the United States and Russia, management and labor, black men and white men, yellow men and brown men, in the commonwealth of Georgia and the world. The task confronting every educational institution is the same, and that task is how to improve life and make men better. If the church and the school cannot make better human beings, nothing else matters. (Mays, Radio Address for Anniversary. [1947])

Like his contemporaries, Dr. Mays appealed to the social mores of equality and a collective commitment to justice and racial equality. His focus on morality, as well as domestic and global unity, also reflected the Christian way of life that he, Johnson, and Shepard so valued. Mays possessed a parallel belief that the Black college was an equally important agent of change—a co-laborer in the fight for social justice.

Mays held the belief that Morehouse College should be dedicated to "the proposition that the end of all education is to improve life and to make men better (Radio Address

for Anniversary [1947])." Mays shared similar ideas as his contemporaries that the Christian faith and a commitment to morality would yield fruitful results in terms of the social order. The visions that Mays, Johnson, and Shepard demonstrated reflect the level of devotion and allegiance to the Black race and their steadfast desire to use their individual and institutional agency as a means of liberation for an oppressed people and a duplicitous country. All three men leveraged their invitation to speak on broadcast radio so that they could advance a message of the social, political, and educational relevance and of Black college leadership and education.

For the study, an analysis of all 14 radio address was conducted across all 14 collectively as well as in silos based on the individual subjects' messages. Through the radio addresses, I am able to examine their social positioning along with the role they played in raising Black consciousness and the collective advancement of Black Americans.

There are a total of four addresses delivered by Mordecai Johnson. Because Johnson was located in Washington D.C. his addresses were typically broadcast nationally on stations such as CBS and NBC. From the outset, the Office of War Information (OWI) took a heavy-handed approach to

controlling the content of the shows and particularly the text of featured speeches (Savage, 1999, p. 122). Savage illustrates an example of how this affected Johnson's address on the first episode of *My People*

The draft of Mordecai Johnson's comments was subjected to significant revision. A veiled reference to the American Red Cross policy of segregating black and white blood supplies was deleted altogether. Johnson's draft statement included the sentence: "It is not surprising that when voiced in all sections are raised in support of freedom and democracy, negroes should become more conscious than ever of the discrepancies between the declared purposes of the war and the conditions with they must themselves face when called upon to do their part in behalf of VICTORY." But the revised script substituted the sentence "Negroes have responded willingly to the aims and purposes of the war as they have been set forth by the leaders of the United Nations." (Savage, 1999, pp. 122-123)

Johnson's encounter with making revisions to his intended message appeared to have resulted in his alternative use of metaphors and analogies so that he might illustrate his message without interference. Johnson's point of view seems less forthright than Shepard and Mays, suggesting some level of uneasiness or the tentative nature of his relationship with the OWI. Common themes found among his four addresses include access to education, disparities in the American educational system, public school expenditures, the Christian faith, spiritual unity in the world, and the United Negro College Fund. Johnson's

addresses were usually brief and he used metaphors and analogies to describe his point of view and perhaps entertain the listener. In his 1938 address entitled, "A Brief Glimpse at a Great Adventure," Johnson compares the life of the Negro to "the most thrilling of American adventures" (Johnson, circa 1938, p. 1). By all accounts the life of the Negro through 1938 was hardly an adventure in the traditional sense; however, Johnson describes the adventure from the perspective of access to education. He discusses the Negro's enduring thirst for knowledge, for the denial of that right was a matter of law. Johnson explains,

During the days of slavery the Negro became aware of a philosophy which indicated that life at its best was a matter of ordered thought and mature spirituality, based upon reading and reflection. He was aware also of the wide-spread conviction that Negroes as such were inherently incapable of developing into such mature and cultivated human being, because they were inherently incapable of think such thoughts and of mastering such subjects. To an intense degree there arose in the Negro's bosom a desire to become acquainted with these higher levels of thought and to master these subjects with underlay life at its best. (Johnson, circa 1938, p. 2)

Johnson also discusses the great opportunity when missionaries from the north came to the South to establish colleges and universities. He likens the wide spectrum of bachelors, master's, and doctoral degrees as a way in which

Negroes could "engage in a great adventure" and "cleared the atmosphere of the doctrine of intellectual inferiority and had laid the foundation for a great future in which the Negro could advance as a man among men" (p. 3). Johnson was also fond of the subject of spirituality and the Christian faith. In his speech entitled, "Is There Bias for Spiritual Unity in the World Today?" Johnson compares man to an animal and chronicles his search for an understanding of how to live in unity with other men and lead a meaningful and significant life. This address is much more lofty and elevated in its message as Johnson maintains

The first appearance of such a world community occurred in the eighth century before the Christian era when a few prophets among the Hebrew people broke away from the belief that their race and nation were the favorite children of God and announced that all men of the earth were under the dominion of the sole Ruler of the Universe and that he cared of the life of every one of them with a holy regard. They concluded, therefore, that there was only one way for any man to please him, namely, to deal justly and mercifully with each and all of his fellow human being and to stay away from lordly arrogance of every kind. (Johnson, circa 1942, pp. 1-2)

Johnson's message focuses on the creation of a "consenting community of human beings with a world-embracing radius" (p. 3). He implores listeners to arrive at the notion that the "the very existence of such a community is the basis for spiritual unity in the world today" (p. 4). The task of all Americans was to commit to this idea and realize the



establishment of such a community. One of Johnson's addresses was aired in 1947 on the "Americans All" program which was presented in cooperation with the Institute on Race Relations. Entitled, "Public School Expenditure for Negro Youth," the address discusses the disparities found in American primary and secondary school systems along racial lines. Johnson argues the segregated school system has resulted in "35.5% of the Negro registrants...could not pass the Army's standard minimum intelligence test" (Johnson, circa 1947, p. 3). A similar observation is shared by James E. Shepard in his "Our Tasks" address in 1946. Johnson also questions the regional allocation of educational funding in his statement

We catch a glimpse at the other big taproot of our diseased segregated system when we see the average (median) white child in the South receives an annual expenditure per classroom which is about one-half the annual expenditure on the average child outside of the South. (Johnson, circa 1947, p. 4)

Johnson's solution to the problem was not one of philanthropy, but rather he declared "the time has come for the Federal Government, the agent of all the people of all the states to take the leadership in a program of constructive remedy" (p. 5). Johnson's second address on the "Americans All" program was broadcast in 1948. This address answered the question and was entitled, "What is

the United Negro College Fund?" Johnson gave an overview of the 32 private member institutions and how they are training future professionals in the areas of education, healthcare, religion, agriculture, social work, law. He applauded the necessary leadership of these institutions and calls for the financial support of the UNCF by all.

Johnson insisted

The sum of \$1,400,000 sought in this campaign is no luxurious extravagance. It is the minimum bread which these institutions must have if they are to live. They have never had enough money at any time in their 80 years of existence, to do their work at anything approximating the level of efficiency characteristic of the best American institutions. The per capita expenditure within them as a group today is scarcely three-fifths as good as the accepted minimum requirement for first-class education. (Johnson, circa, 1948, p. 5)

Despite their financial constraints, Johnson acknowledges that each institution is accredited as "worthy instruments of higher education" (p. 6). As the Washington headquarters of the UNCF are located at Howard University, Johnson closed his address with information on how listeners might obtain literature or donate.

There are a total of five addresses delivered by James Shepard. Common themes found among all addresses include full citizenship for Negroes, access to quality education and healthcare, economic security, individual and racial

self-respect among Negroes, moral obligation for law and order, and school funding, and interracial progress.

Shepard always made it a point to close his addresses with a Bible verse. He was bold in his social critique of the state of North Carolina and the United States alike. During one radio address he discussed the economic imperative of consumerism and how an "unjust distribution of our national income has proved to be the procuring cause of a stupendous national depression" (Shepard, circa 1945, p. 9). That same address, delivered January 13, 1945 and entitled, "Inter-racial Progress in North Carolina," opened with a statement included in a letter written by one of the most distinguished White citizens of the state (that individual was not identified). The statement pointed out that while the White southerner was a fairly decent citizen who wants to do the right thing, he cannot be coerced into a course of action however right. He was described as stubborn, proud and utterly allergic to threats (Shepard, circa Jan. 1945, p. 1). The address appealed to the citizens of North Carolina in surprisingly candid ways, given the racial climate in Jim Crow South. In his radio address entitled, "The Case of the Southern Negro," Shepard praised the Negro's belief in America and their service to this country wherever accepted. Shepard's address was delivered to the

Board of Charities and Public Welfare in Raleigh and recognized that "their stake in the present struggle gives them a sense of belonging; they are fighting for justice and a chance to live and to hope, and more than any group in America, they know what it means not to have it" (Shepard, circa Apr. 1945, p. 1). Because Negroes had sought democracy, justice, and equality for so long, they understood all too well the ideologies of World War II. Shepard spelled out the hypocrisy of the war, maintaining that "such world leadership is not possible, however, if the people of the world see the contradictions between the professed ideals of the leader and the practices in everyday life of that leader" (p. 3). Thus, Shepard's address gave voice to the very sentiment the federal government set out to silence. During the same address, Shepard discussed the irony that surrounds the fear Whites have of the Negro, despite the intimacy and interdependency which actually existed between them. He found this fear to be altogether inconsistent when "both Negro men and women work with and for Whites all over the South and almost never is there any intimation or suggestion of faithlessness or disloyalty on the part of the Negro" (p. 2). Broadcast over the state-wide radio system February 16, 1946, "Our Tasks" continued Shepard's discussions on the

Negro as America's most loyal citizen. This particular address expresses, verbatim, the point-of-view shared throughout his "The Case of the Southern Negro" address delivered just one year earlier in 1945. As the address continued to unfold Shepard got to the heart of his position that "nothing is more without foundation than the claim that greater justice for the Negro and increased respect for the Negro as a human being will result in the annihilation of racial integrity" (Shepard, circa 1946, p. 3). Shepard acknowledged that in the eyes of Whites, social justice was synonymous with intermarriage and made the case for the achievement of justice over social equality by illustrating how one achieved "deliverance from a caste" (p. 4). According to Shepard,

Social equality is not the ladder by which a member for a caste climbs toward justice. Justice, economic and political, is the first step toward obtaining respect for the entire group; and even after the group obtains justice, there is no road that leads directly to the situation which the South seems to tread most. If we could somehow clothe our points of views in a garment of reason, the fetish of social equality would at last appear in its true light—merely an emotion with no more reality than a ghost, which stands as a deterrent to amicable race relations. (Shepard, 1946, p. 4)

This address also discussed many other topics including justice within the court system as well as in the print media, fledgling institutions of higher education for

Negroes, advocacy to not "enlarge jails and penitentiaries rather than build new school houses" (p. 10), segregation, and even issues of what we now recognize as affirmative action. In his address entitled, "Race Relationships in North Carolina," Shepard applauds the state for leading the South in areas such as having five state-supported institutions for the education of the Negro but also used the occasion to petition for increased annual appropriations. He also recognized the state's care for the insane and how "The State of North Carolina gives the same appropriations to the white orphan as it does the colored orphan asylum" (Shepard, circa 1944, p. 2). Shepard next mentioned the erection of the Home for Delinquent Girls. Despite being under-funded, he expresses hope that the state will "remedy the defects" (p. 3). Shepard also advocated for economic freedom in which both Black and Negro men are held by the same standard in terms of being extended fair and equitable employment and wages. He cited the editor of the Richmond Dispatcher and his call for the abolition of Jim Crow laws in Virginia on public carriers. Shepard characterized segregation by stating

The greatest evil of segregation is not that it sets the Negro in one part of the town, in one compartment of the bus, or in ill-kept and poorly-equipped railway coaches—thought these are evils enough. The greatest evil of the system is segregating as African one who

is truly American; it is discrimination in work opportunities and unequal compensation for equal work; it is the discrimination which denies the Negro equal educational opportunity and then imposes upon him unequal compensation after. In spite of all his obstacles, he has met the exacting standards. (Shepard, circa 1944, pp.5-6)

Shepard delivered the radio address entitled, "America and the Race Problem" before the Inter-Church Council at Guilford College in Greensboro in 1945 and again in Detroit, Michigan in April of 1946. Shepard opened his address by establishing that he was "not here to talk to you about the war." Instead, he revealed,

I come this afternoon, however, to talk to you solely about us, about ourselves, about our race, about our country, about our sanity, about our fears, and, finally, about our hopes triumphant over our fears. (Shepard, circa 1945, p.1)

Shepard felt strongly that the ills in society were an outgrowth of the "race problem in America" (p. 5). He maintained that access to education resulted in the Negro becoming a more useful citizen. Shepard drew parallels between access to education and better jobs and the rate of criminal activity committed by Negroes and argued that the "education of the Negro has become a sound financial investment" (Shepard, circa 1944, p. 8). Finally, Shepard recognized the Negro family as once "a great factor in the

rapid progress of the race" (p. 9) that appeared to be waning. He challenged Negro youth to strive for self-respect, respect for others, and to make up their minds to be successful and proficient at whatever goal they set for themselves. Shepard believed so deeply in the inherent justice of his home state, he seemingly used the invitation to speak as a means in which to channel heart-felt appeals to his fellow North Carolinians to conduct themselves as the "great civilized and Christian community" he believed them to be (p. 8).

There are a total of 5 addresses delivered by Benjamin Mays. Common themes found among all addresses include morality, the Christian faith, humanity, the state of Morehouse College, support of the UNCF, post-war enrollment, leadership, and citizenship. All of Mays' addresses appear in the Morehouse College Bulletin, absent a formal title, and the scope of each focuses on Morehouse College and its mission to develop engaged, Black male citizens. Entitled, "We Drive Toward the Stars," Mays' 1945 address was broadcast for the 78<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Morehouse College. Mays opened the address by stating

We, here are Morehouse, have but one central aim: to improve the quality and quantity of our work to the end that our graduates will improve the quality of their leadership in their respective communities.  
(Mays, circa 1945, p. 1)



Mays insisted that Morehouse should "strive to produce men superior in poise, social imagination, integrity, resourcefulness, and superior in possessing an all embracing love for all people irrespective of race of color" (p. 1). Mays outlined three ways in which each listener could assist. They included recruitment of a high school graduate to attend Morehouse, pledge to raise \$100 toward the endowment by May 1, and to solicit \$100 or more from friends. Mays closed the address by reminding listeners,

We shall continue to improve our work. We will provide as soon as money is available homes for teachers, new dormitory, gymnasium, and other urgent physical needs. As we drive toward the stars, we will need the moral and financial support of students, alumni, faculty, and friends. (Mays, circa 1945, p. 1)

In his radio address broadcast over Station WGST in Atlanta February 18, 1946, Mays gave a history of the founding of Morehouse College. Mays asserted,

In establishing Morehouse College, William Jefferson White was refuting the beliefs of the leading scientists, contradicting the convictions of eminent statesmen, disproving the arguments of religious leaders who expressed the view that the Negro could hardly make it. But the record of the Morehouse man alone is amazing. (Mays, circa 1946, p. 9)

Mays noted the contributions of the Morehouse man in the fields of religion, education, business, journalism, law,

medicine, race relations and good citizenship. He dedicated Morehouse College to the development of technical skills as well as spiritual skills of living in harmony and extending good will. "We Face a Dilemma" was broadcast over Station WGST in Atlanta in April 1946. The address gave a report on the state of Morehouse College--specifically the post-war enrollment of veterans v. non-veterans. Mays maintained,

Morehouse met the crisis of the war by judiciously planning ahead and we shall meet in part the enrollment crisis by wisely looking ahead. In anticipation of an increase in enrollment, we had one duplex house ready for student occupancy when school opened in September. We house twenty-six men in this duplex. We succeeded in having a second duplex house twenty-eight or thirty men in the second duplex. We have succeeded in having allotted to Morehouse thirty units of Federal Public Housing. These should be ready by September--sufficient to house sixty men. As inadequate as these are, we will be in a position to house 114 more men than we were able to house before the war or at any time previous. (Mays, circa April 1946, p. 1)

Mays also appealed for Morehouse men to contribute to the UNCF third-year campaign. As one characteristic of the Morehouse man has been to assume leadership in the community, Mays expressed his expectation that they would lead the charge in giving toward the goal of \$1,800,000. Broadcast over Station WSB in Atlanta, Mays' "Radio Address for Anniversary" in February 1947 echoed the ideals of his previous address. According to Mays,

The greatest crisis confronting the world today is a moral crisis—in that men know more than they do. They know what is good, just, and right but lack the moral courage to do what is good, just, and right. We know what democracy requires. But we fear the consequences of democracy. We know what the Christian religion demands. But we are afraid to “walk” our religion. (Mays, circa February 1947, p. 9)

As Morehouse celebrated its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Mays argued that America did not need bigger bombs or mightier men, or supremacy over others. Instead he called for “supremacy in justice, integrity, and social vision” (p. 9). Mays also saw the charge of every educational institution to improve life and become humane members of society. In his address entitled, “Our Needs Are Great,” Mays gave an inventory of the growth of Morehouse College and the impact of that growth on its future needs. Mays stated,

The student body is almost doubled. The number of teachers is greatly increased. The quality of the work done is being improved all of the time. Physical facilities are expanding and need to be expanded more. For the benefit of our friends we set forth our needs below and call upon them for their continued support. (Mays, circa March-April 1947, p. 1)

The needs include more faculty and salary support via an increased endowment, a new science building, the addition of two dormitories, a gymnasium, an infirmary, eight additional faculty homes, and an increase of land from its current 11 acres.

Each of the three subjects of this research frames his

messages in very distinct ways. For example Johnson was the only Black college president among the three to address a national audience. His initial encounter with extensive revisions of his intended message resulted in his use of metaphors to perhaps illustrate his point of view in a more palatable way for his target audience. At first glance, one might suspect Johnson was not as passionate about racial uplift and collective advancement of his race; however, his access to national broadcasts appeared to have influenced the approach he ultimately chose when delivering his messages. Conversely, Shepard reached a state-wide audience in North Carolina and seemed to have found his voice as he gave social critiques of his beloved state and the nation, in general. His direct approach and sense of urgency for change is somewhat unexpected, given the laws of Jim Crow. His delivery style is also unparalleled by his contemporaries for reasons not uncovered in this research. Perhaps his work throughout the state and connections through his father afforded him some level of consideration or freedom of expression with Whites. Lastly, Mays reached the Morehouse and Atlanta communities. His addresses also focused mainly on the state of Morehouse College and were largely broadcast during the occasion of an anniversary of the institution. Mays is apparently an unintentional blend

or compromise of Johnson and Shepard, as he gave critical social critiques coupled with a certain level of diplomacy. Though he also discussed the urgency for change in America, his messages were framed with the intent for that change to emerge through the character and charge of the Morehouse man.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

#### *Implications and Conclusions*

Frazier (1942) describes a "striking" contrast in the impact of World War II in comparison to World War I (p. 372). "When the decision to support the democratic nations failed to include Negroes in the defense program, a march-on-Washington was organized by A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping-Car Porters" (p. 372). According to Frazier (1942), Executive Order 8802 was signed by President Roosevelt on June 25, 1941 and the march-on-Washington was cancelled. For Black Americans, the victory of legislation designed to protect their rights and provide post-war employment opportunities was realized. Despite skepticism among some Negroes, "Executive Order 8802 was generally hailed as the most significant declaration by the federal government concerning the Negro's status in American life since the Emancipation Proclamation" (pp.372-373). Essentially, Negro citizens

were hopeful that Executive Order 8802 was a covenant which would guarantee social equality and legitimate democracy as a part of the federal government's aims post-World War II. Frazier (1942) argues that "the traditional relationship of loyalty to whites has been destroyed, and race consciousness and loyalty to race have taken its place. In northern cities he had enjoyed a greater degree of civic equality, he has learned to use his political power, and during the depression he learned the power of mass struggle. A new leadership with more education and sophistication has come into existence" (p. 375).

Black college leadership and the federal government shared a similar and somewhat simultaneous belief that the social and political climate in the U.S. during World War II created a rhetorical situation. As a result, an unintended inter-racial alliance between the commercial radio industry, the U.S. government regulatory agencies, and Black America was achieved. The presence and effects of mainstream, racially conscious radio programming during the 1930s and 1940s mirrored ideas associated with creating rhetorical discourse or a rhetorical situation. In the case of the U.S. federal government and Black college presidents, the circumstances surrounding race relations created a condition in which some form of political and

social participation occurred. Rising Black consciousness in American gave Black citizens the motivation and authority to seek access and inclusion as part of the democracy the government was promoting. Though many felt a sense of entitlement all along, their sentiments had not been presented as a part of any public discourse.

Radio addresses delivered by Black college presidents not only provided an opportunity for Black America to participate in a national conversation on race, these addresses were also instrumental in increasing White America's basic understanding of race relations, in particular. Though their immediate task was to plot a course for success and longevity on behalf of their respective institutions while developing and educating young minds, Black college presidents often felt an undeniable responsibility to the Negro race as a whole. The subjects of this research personify this pursuit. Remarkably, their lives virtually paralleled one another in terms of childhood experiences, close relationships with their mothers, devotion to their race, religious influences, and years of service as college president. Johnson, Shepard, and Mays believed their purpose and destiny was to lead their race and serve as agents of significant and meaningful change (McKinney, 1997; Rovaris,



2005; & Suggs, H. L., 2005).

In many ways, Du Bois' evolving educational thought parallels the lifelong missions of Johnson, Shepard, and Mays. All were concerned with the advancement of their people and the availability of resources designated to their educational, economic, and political success. Agreeing to deliver radio addresses on government-sponsored radio program may not have been an easy proposition to consider at face value, as the entire enterprise could have been perceived as no more than a symbolic gesture on the part of the government to influence the allegiance of the Black community while the country was at war. Nonetheless, Black college leadership took full advantage of the invitation and formed an inter-racial alliance with the federal government in an effort to advance their agenda of social equality. The social and political role of Black college presidents during the 1930s and 1940s as radio orators illustrates how radio was used as an apparatus for both individual and institutional agency. Social, political, and educational factors influenced federal government policy around the war effort that resulted in propaganda and the strategic placement of messages around the issue of race relations and the status of Black citizens in America.

In this study, I have identified two exploratory concepts in which the interrelationship between education, politics, and society can be further researched: the nature of change agency and rhetorical education. As Bourdieu (1998) maintains, "the cognitive structure which social agents implement in their practical knowledge of the social world are internalized, 'embodied' social structures" (p. 468). Had the subjects of the research conformed to the social order of the 1930s and 1940s, their vision for change and understanding of rhetoric, civic engagement, and participation in political discourse would not have been undertaken and accomplished. Studies on change agency among Black college presidents can increase the understanding of the logic and motivations associated with Black college leadership. Their presence in the Negro community is directly responsible for the insistence on a critical democracy in which a commitment to question the authority of political and institutional systems exists. Black college presidents examined in this study were situated in, and were a part of, their respective environments. Based on their biographies, they each observed and were affected by their environment over time and made a conscious decision to pursue an agenda of change to affect what they anticipated for their race's collective future (McKinney,

1997; Carter, 1998; Rovaris, 2005; Suggs, H. L., 2005).

Ultimately, the nature and logic of change agency among Black leadership can realize a greater appreciation as a result of further study on the phenomenon. Specifically, further study on Black college leadership and the significance of local, state, and national institutional public relations can influence the way in which history, education, race, and mass media are examined and evaluated. A consciousness of the merit of radio has also emerged from this and other studies. This research extends the limited discussion of radio and college presidents. Outside of this research, Robert Maynard Hutchins, president of the University of Chicago from 1929-1950, has been studied for establishing a public presence and identity through his radio addresses on the University Round Table program.

"During his years at

Chicago, Hutchins epitomized the college president as publicist, a role rarely played by his contemporaries. He articulated a vision of American democracy and higher education's place in it that emphasized a citizen's responsibility to be an informed participant in public affairs" (Guyotte, 2008, p. 33). Hutchins, like Johnson, Shepard, and Mays, used his position as a publicist to comment on many issues, including World War II. Previous to

the cohort of Black college presidents examined in this research, Booker T. Washington used the medium of his day, photography, to craft his public image and assist in the support of the institution he founded and led, Tuskegee Institute. According to Bieze (2003), Booker T. Washington elected to use photography as a medium because of its economical and wide-reaching potential to attract much needed funding and support. As the face of Tuskegee, "Washington built one of America's first great educational marketing networks. Most of Washington's speeches and articles were quickly made available in the form of offset printings by the Tuskegee Press" (p. 6). In many ways, Washington used photography as a dimension of rhetoric, alongside traditional speeches aimed at White and Black audiences. As Bieze (2003) points out, Washington's media image was "created in the midst of white America's most concerted effort to create racist stereotypes within popular culture" (p. 6). As a race leader, Washington was ever-mindful of the strategies in which he needed to appeal to Whites, given the overwhelming resistance for Black education in the South. Unlike Johnson, Shepard, and Mays, Washington did not live long enough to have been extended the invitation to speak about race relations in American, nonetheless, all four race leaders appeared to have

succeeded in navigating the issue of race using speech mechanisms and modes of communication accessible to them and permitted by the dominant culture. To this end, the case is continuously being made to acknowledge and support America's ultimate struggle for a diverse and democratic media.

A second exploratory concept to be further researched is the significance and affects of rhetorical education on the development of civically engaged Black college leaders. The history of rhetoric makes clear that the teaching of rhetoric was an instrumental part of the development of the civic persona, the "citizen," whose skills were at the service of the community (Glenn, Lyday, Sharer, 2004, p. 3). Berlin (1987) contends that rhetoric and writing as a social activity, develops within a social context and carried social consequences after the onset of the Depression. The social implications of rhetoric during this period signaled a "return to collectivist alternatives to solving the nation's problems and an increasing opposition to individualism in both the economic and social realms" (p. 81). This dissertation illustrates the assumption of the responsibilities of citizenship in a democracy embodied by Johnson, Shepard, and Mays. Throughout history, Black leaders have used available social spaces to communicate

with their masses; albeit social spaces alternative to the mainstream. The ancient links between rhetoric, civic life, and democracy lend themselves to the circumstance in which Black college leaders were extended the invitation to participate in a national conversation on race in America. Further study on how rhetorical education influenced and informed racial uplift during the first half of the twentieth century could reveal a relationship between this period of examination and the post-*Brown v. Board* as well as Civil Rights Era.

The creation of a rhetorical situation among Black college presidents, the U.S. federal government, and the potential listener demographic documented in the 1930 and 1940 census reports remains an unparalleled example of the power and influence of radio on a nation. Black college presidents were permitted to articulate an unprecedented, at times national, social critique of a country that fully understood the skepticism held by the Negro citizen against the wartime rhetoric of democracy and unified citizenship. To this end, Black college leaders found a social, political, and educational space in which they might influence change: national radio addresses. No matter how symbolic the intentions of the radio address program, tangible change was achieved--most significantly, the

ability for a repressed "Negro voice" to be heard by the masses without the usual threat of unbridled retaliation.

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## APPENDIXES

## Appendix A

TABLE 1

Percentages of Urban and Rural U.S. Households with Radio by Geographic Region in 1930, 1940, and 1950

	1930			1940			1950		
	Urban	Rural	All	Urban	Rural	All	Urban	Rural	All
Northeast	56.9	48.1	55.0	96.2	88.2	94.4	98.5	96.6	98.1
N. Central	53.8	39.1	47.8	94.6	82.2	89.7	97.9	95.8	97.1
South	28.6	9.2	16.4	78.8	50.9	62.1	94.4	88.8	91.7
West	50.9	33.0	44.0	92.2	81.5	88.9	97.4	93.3	96.3
U.S.	50.0	26.9	40.3	91.7	69.6	82.8	97.2	92.7	95.7

Note: Calculated from data in U.S. Bureau of Census (1933, Vol. VI, p. 53) U.S. Bureau of Census (1943, Vol. II, Pt. 1, pp. 38-39), and U.S. Bureau of Census (1953a, Vol. 1, Pt. 1, p. 1-9). The data used to produce this and other tables are available on request from the author.

TABLE 2

Percentages of Families Having a Radio in each Region by Nativity and Race of Head of Household (1930)

	Native White, Native Parentage	Native White, Foreign or Mixed Parentage	Foreign Born White	Negro	All Families (a)
Northeast	59.9	65.0	45.4	30.1	55.0
N. Central	47.3	55.7	43.5	23.1	47.8
South	20.2	38.5	30.9	2.2	16.4
West	46.7	51.9	40.1	30.8	44.0
U.S.	39.9	57.3	43.6	7.5	40.3

Note. Calculated from data in U.S. Bureau of the Census (1933, Vol. VI, pp. 52-53).

(a) Includes "other races."

TABLE 3

Percentages of Families Having Radio Sets by Race and Nativity in  
Selected Cities of 100,000 or More (1930)

City	Native White, Native Parentage	White, Foreign or Mixed Parentage	Foreign Born White	Negro	All Families (a)
Atlanta	37.2	52.4	40.6	3.2	26.0
Chicago	73.6	74.6	54.1	42.6	63.2
Denver	53.4	56.4	43.9	25.8	50.8
Detroit	67.0	69.8	49.9	29.6	58.0
Los Angeles	63.8	64.9	55.9	46.0	58.8
Memphis	42.4	51.5	41.8	3.7	26.2
New Orleans	29.7	29.7	23.2	3.3	21.0
New York	71.7	73.5	50.6	40.1	59.2
St. Louis	55.7	59.7	41.7	18.5	50.2
Washington, D.C.	63.5	66.8	54.4	25.2	53.9

Note. These cities were chosen as the most populous in each of the four regions. For complete data on all cities of 100,000 population or more, see U.S. Bureau of the Census (1933, Vol. VI, p. 70).

(a) Includes "other races."



TABLE 4

Percentages of Households Having a Radio Set by Race in Urban and Rural Areas, by Region (1940)

	Urban	Rural	All
Northeast			
White	96.5	88.5	94.7
Nonwhite	89.1	69.3	87.4
All	96.2	88.2	94.4
N. Cent			
White	95.3	82.6	90.1
Nonwhite	83.3	50.4	78.9
All	94.6	82.2	89.7
South			
White	88.1	61.1	71.9
Nonwhite	48.6	16.8	29.8
All	78.8	50.9	62.1
West			
White	93.9	82.9	89.7
Nonwhite	82.2	41.3	65.1
All	93.5	81.5	88.9
United States			
White	94.4	75.7	86.6
Nonwhite	64.6	19.8	43.3
All	91.9	69.6	82.8

Note. Calculated from state data in U.S. Bureau of the Census (1943, Vol. 2, Pt. 2-5).

TABLE 5

Average Cost of U.S. Radio Receivers, 1925-1950 and Adjusted to 2004

Year	Avg. Cost	2004 Dollars
1925	\$83	\$889
1930	\$78	\$845
1935	\$55	\$749
1940	\$38	\$506
1945	\$40	\$416
1950	\$26	\$205

Note. The costs of receivers came from Sterling & Kittross (2002, p. 862). Currency equivalencies were calculated using the January, 2004 Consumer Price index.

## Appendix B

### TIMELINE

*Mordecai W. Johnson - Born (January 12, 1890)*

- 1903- Attended Roger Williams University, Nashville TN
- 1906- Attended Howe Institute, Memphis TN
- 1906- Transferred to Atlanta Baptist College (ABC)
- 1911- Graduated and hired to work as English Instructor
- 1912- Mother's Death
- 1913- Received second Bachelor's from University of Chicago
- 1913- Admitted to Rochester Theological Seminary
- 1914- Pastor of Second Baptist Church, Mumford NY
- 1915- Ordained as a Baptist Minister
- 1916- Wed Anna Ethelyn Gardner
- 1916- Secretary, International Committee of the YMCA
- 1917- Pastor of First Baptist Church, Charleston, West Virginia
- 1921- Enrolled in Harvard Divinity School
- 1922- Father Dies
- 1922- Received master of Sacred Theology from Harvard
- 1923- Received Honorary Doctor of Divinity from Howard University
- 1926- Appointed President, Howard University, Washington DC
- 1938- Radio Address, "A Brief Glimpse at a Great Adventure"
- 1941- 15th Anniversary of Presidency and 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Charter Day
- 1941- Start of "Golden Years" of Johnson Presidency (through 1960)
- 1942- Radio Address, "Is There a Basis for Spiritual Unity in the World Today?"
- 1947- Radio Address, "Public School Expenditures for Negro Youth"
- 1948- Radio Address, "What is the United Negro College Fund?"
- 1955- Formally Retired and Reappointed as President for a 5-year Period
- 1960- Retired from Howard University
- 1960- Conferred President Emeritus
- 1973- Named Newly Constructed Administration Building after Johnson
- 1976- Johnson Dies at 86

*James E. Shepard- Born (November 12, 1875)*

- 1894- Graduated from Shaw University in Raleigh NC
- 1895- Wed Annie Day Robinson
- 1889- Comparer in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds,  
Washington DC
- 1899- Deputy Collector of Internal Revenue Service, Raleigh NC
- 1905- Field Superintendent of the International Sunday School  
Association (ISSA)
- 1909- Executive Committee (ISSA)
- 1883- Chautauqua University Established  
Late 1800s-Early 1900s- Chautauqua Education Movement  
Began
- 1907- Traveled to Rome, Italy
- 1909- National Religious Training School and Chautauqua  
(NRTSC)became Chartered Durham NC
- 1910- National Religious Training School and Chautauqua Opened  
Trinity College Founded
- 1923- NRTSC renamed Durham State Normal School
- 1924- Trinity College renamed Duke University
- 1925- Durham State Normal School renamed North Carolina College  
for Negroes
- 1925- First State-supported Liberal Arts College for African-  
Americans
- 1944- Radio Address, "Racial Relationships in North Carolina"
- 1945- Radio Address, "The Case of the Southern Negro"
- 1945- Radio Address, "Inter-racial Progress in North Carolina"
- 1946- Radio Address, "Our Tasks"
- 1946- Radio Address, "America and the Race Problem"
- 1947- Shepard Dies at 72

*Benjamin E. Mays- Born (August 1, 1894)*

- 1913- Atlanta Baptist College renamed Morehouse College
- 1916- Graduated valedictorian of State College High School
- 1916- Enrolled at Virginia Union College, Richmond VA
- 1917- Transferred to Bates College, Lewiston, ME
- 1919- Licensed for the Ministry
- 1920- Graduated from Bates College with Honors
- 1921- Ordained for the Ministry
- 1921- Married Ellen Harvin

- 1921- Accepted at University of Chicago to Study Religion  
Offered a job at Morehouse College Teaching Mathematics
- 1924- Mays first Meets Mordecai Wyatt Johnson
- 1924- Pastor Shiloh Baptist Church, Atlanta GA
- 1924- Ellen Harvin Mays Dies
- 1924- Returned to Chicago to Complete His Studies
- 1925- Received Masters in Religion from the University of  
Chicago
- 1925- English Teacher, South Carolina State College, Orangeburg  
SC
- 1926- Wed Second Wife Sadie Gray
- 1926- Returned to Chicago to being Doctorate Degree
- 1926- Executive Secretary for the Urban League
- 1928- National Student Secretary for the YMCA
- 1929- John Hope signs the Atlanta Affiliation between Morehouse  
College, Spelman College, and Atlanta University
- 1930- Institute of Social and Religious Research Study on Negro  
Churches
- 1934- Dean, School of Religion, Howard University
- 1935- Received his Doctorate in Religion from the University of  
Chicago
- 1940- Appointed President of Morehouse College, Atlanta GA
- 1945- Radio Address, "We Drive Toward the Stars"
- 1946- Radio Address, "We Face a Dilemma"
- 1946- Radio Address (No Title)
- 1947- Radio Address, "Radio Address for Anniversary"
- 1947- Radio Address, "Our Needs Are Great"
- 1966- Mays Plans to Resign, but is Asked to Stay on Another Year
- 1967- Mays Retires from Morehouse College
- 1968- Visiting Professor at Michigan State University,  
East Lansing MI
- 1969- Began serving 12-year term as President of Atlanta Board  
of Education
- 1984- Mays Dies at 90

#### *Additional Dates*

- 1890- American Tobacco Company Founded
- 1909- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
Founded
- 1910- National Urban League Founded
- 1914- World War I Begins

1827- *Freedom's Journal*- First Black Newspaper Published  
1939- World War II Begins  
1837- Institute for Colored Youth (later named Cheyney  
University) First Historically Black College  
1938 - *American All, Immigrants All* airs on CBS  
1941 - *Freedom's People* airs on NBC