THE DEMISE OF INTEGRATION

Competition, Diffusion, and Ethnographic Expertise in the Emergent Field of Higher Education, 1865–1915

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Abstract

Racial integration has been a tenet of educational equity for over fifty years. Despite this, U.S. higher education presents staggering rates of segregation. Strikingly, there is little scholarship to answer the question of how integrated colleges segregated? I interrogate the process of segregation over a fifty-year period through a comparative historical analysis of the broader field of higher education and case studies of three nineteenth-century colleges. Through analysis of independently collected archival materials, I show that local-level organization of racial contact fails to account for the success or failure of racial integration in schools. Instead, I show that the interaction between colleges—and the emergence of a competitive field of higher education—undermined even successfully integrated campuses. Mesolevel practices are important for revealing how organizational actors implement rationalized cultural ideas as well as how local-level ideas are negotiated in a situated field. The growth of intercollegiate college competition differentiated not only particular types of education but also consecrated groups of people. Further, this reveals the production of cultural meanings around race as a differentiation strategy in response to interorganizational competition.

Keywords: Higher Education, Race, Segregation, Elites, Organizations, Categorization

INTRODUCTION

At the end of the U.S. Civil War, the American Missionary Association (AMA), a national network of 'Anti-Caste' social reformers, shifted their abolitionist agenda to building a racially inclusive America. The Anti-Caste ideology was shared among certain abolitionist groups in the United States and across the British empire (Bressey 2013). Its adherents decried the use of race, class, and gender to circumscribe individual rights by drawing upon Protestant conceptions of the "universal brotherhood of man."

They promoted interracial 'coeducation' as the best path to national reunification after the Civil War. When the 39th Congress began its first session in December of 1865, Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner stipulated that in order for states to be readmitted they must achieve "the organization of an educational system for the equal benefit of all, without distinction of color or race" (U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774–1875). Local opposition quickly derailed efforts to institute integrated primary schools. The AMA viewed higher education as more promising because external donor support could buttress private colleges from conservative local opposition. The AMA backed eleven colleges and explicitly promoted their colleges—including Berea College in Kentucky—as replicable models: "let there be Bereas planted throughout the nation, institutions in which the youth of the land, White and colored, shall study together, play together, sing together, worship together, and there will be no war of the races" (American Missionary Association 1856, p. 42). The AMA emphasized strength in collaboration towards building a dense network of Anti-Caste colleges to reform the South.

This project offers a rare empirical exploration of nineteenth-century educational integration by focusing on three AMA-affiliated colleges—Berea College (KY), Howard University (Washington, DC), and Oberlin College (OH)—that sustained integration in practice and policy for over twenty years during the nineteenth century. Each made unprecedented strides towards interracial inclusion. Oberlin College faculty pushed for affirmative action style hiring in 1853. The Berea College Board of Trustees wrote into policy its acceptance of interracial dating and marriage in 1872. Howard University rejected substantial funds earmarked for 'freedmen's education' to maintain its public claim to a racially diverse campus. All enrolled both men and women and prioritized educating poor students. Berea, Howard, and Oberlin shared deep ties among leadership, faculty, and funding sources and were united through the American Missionary Association which organized annual meetings, published news magazines, and operated in over forty states and multiple countries. Other colleges espoused Anti-Caste beliefs, but Berea, Howard, and Oberlin were the most successful in maintaining integration over at least a twenty-year period, making the failure of integration in these sites especially notable.

The primary aim of Anti-Caste colleges was to serve a governmental interest rather than individual advancement. Berea's President Fairchild described the Anti-Caste position on White supremacy:

> It is simply a caste feeling, a prejudice of position. This feeling controls legislation, it blinds judges and juries, it corrupts executive officers, it biases witnesses…we can have no permanent peace…till the race prejudice, the caste feeling, the spirit of domination is eradicated…. There is nothing, in the absence of coeducation, which can secure the mutual regard, confidence and honorable deportment which must exist between the races, if we are to have a peaceful, intelligent and virtuous community (Fairchild 1875, p. 63).

Coeducational campuses were a preliminary effort in the AMA's mission of fostering integration—both political and social—in the South. The AMA reasoned that prejudices would diminish through interracial camaraderie and that alumni would carry Anti-Caste beliefs forward into their careers as teachers, preachers, and public servants for the South. In the words of Oberlin's president, colleges would generate "the widespread influence which these (Anti-Caste values) must exert in the family, the school, in the church, and in the State" (Fairchild 1875, p. 66). Founders appealed to the collective donor base of the international Anti-Caste community, with fundraising

trips to Europe and to the national level of the American Missionary Association. Most donations were modest and few donors were wealthy.

The present study examines how deliberately racially-inclusive colleges retreated from practices that placed racial integration at the center of their educational mission. By 1900, each college had segregated, albeit in different ways, and without being compelled by courts. Oberlin, Berea, and Howard each differentiated their campus as exceptional, and with a specific expertise in the broader field of U.S. higher education. Oberlin positioned itself as a college for White male "leaders." Berea departed from its equal enrollment of Blacks and Whites and launched a new cultural category, that of the Appalachian. Howard carved space for Black elites despite rising pressure to limit Black education to industrial training. The standard explanations for educational segregation fail to explain the segregation of Anti-Caste higher educational institutions. No laws were passed to segregate higher education in Washington, DC, Ohio, or Kentucky before the colleges began their internal segregation processes. To the contrary, each college had attained remarkable levels of interracial contact on campus.

We know little about the mechanisms that produce segregated higher education. Scholars studying pathways to educational *desegregation* often assume an initial state of segregation (Massey et al., 2003; Thelin 2004).[1] Segregation is most often understood as either an effect of legal-political decisions or individual-level homophily. At their core, the interrelated processes of integration and segregation are domains where social boundaries are contested. I use the term *integration* to refer to adjustments to demographic composition. A college might claim integrated status by the presence of more than one racial group. I use the Anti-Caste term *coeducation* only in instances where there is robust evidence that the speaker or organization committed to placing interracial cooperation and learning at the center of college life. The Anti-Caste practice of coeducation included attention to shared power in administrative decision-making. The dominant historical narrative depicts wholly separate emergence trajectories for a dual system of Black and White colleges, with little influence or interaction between the two.

A closer look at the historical record reveals early moments of educational integration that were only later replaced by full-fledged segregation. This historical inaccuracy has important theoretical consequences. In the early nineteenth century, small numbers of Black students enrolled at Middlebury, Amherst, Dartmouth, Yale, Harvard, Mount Holyoke, Brown, and other colleges. While these campuses could reveal much about the liminality of race during Reconstruction, most enrolled fewer than five Black students during the entire century. As Lawrence D. Bobo (2013) argues, the surge of research on the 'antinomies of race,' particularly moments of racial fluidity, often obscure more than they reveal. For this reason, this study focuses on deliberately 'coeducational' colleges rather than colleges with 'token' admissions of small numbers of Black students. Black students faced comparable obstacles to enroll at state universities. Few scholars even address the scant enrollment of these students, and if they do, their absence is most often attributed to either paucity of qualified applicants or direct exclusion of all Black students (Thelin 2004; Titcomb 1993).

This study examines a social movement effort to place interracial higher education at the center of peace-building efforts. Racial coeducation succeeded for more than two decades. Quite contrary to a 'parallel tracks' model of higher education expansion, this largely forgotten historical period reveals that segregation emerged due to competition over resources, including racial status. In this forgotten historical moment, we find the emergence of a competitive field of higher education where colleges and social movement organizations used educational accomplishment to challenge old status hierarchies. Most historical narratives include increasing diversity in higher

education enrollment among broader social movement triumphs. The case at hand documents a more nuanced story. In it, we see the logic of segregation produced by private, market-oriented forces. Understanding retrenchment, the erosion of progressive gains, is critical to a robust understanding of social change.

Responding to the emergence of new competitive field of higher education beginning in the early 1880s, Oberlin aligned with dominant practices for elite colleges while Berea and Howard created new hybrid organizational forms that linked their origins stories in order to adapt to changing resource streams. Hybrid organizational forms borrow from both historical and emergent models to increase their resources and legitimacy (Minkoff 2002). Understanding organizational creativity reveals the effects of diffusion, differentiation, and ethnographic expertise in segregating colleges despite their coeducational traditions. This corrects for analyses that fail to capture racialized status competition between organizations, shifting logics, and mechanisms for legitimating high status by providing empirical evidence of the mechanisms and processes that allow or undermine the racialization of educational organizations and yields important implications for current education policy.

It is sobering indeed that few selective universities today achieve the diverse enrollment that Oberlin College once had, and lag far behind either Howard University or Berea College. Unlike Anti-Caste colleges, no colleges today place interracial cooperation as the cornerstone of campus life. Segregated schools have become a taken-for-granted feature of the American education system. Though education has been regarded as "the guardian and cultivator of a democratic and egalitarian political culture in the U.S." (Katznelson and Weir 1988, p. 8), the majority of students attend intensely segregated schools (Darby and Saatcioglu, 2014; Orfield 2001). This is especially true of higher education. Today we see a dramatic increase in college enrollment and a deep fractionalization by race and class in the *type* of higher education students attend. Between 1995 and 2009, freshman enrollments increased for Black students by 73%. Despite this increase in enrollment, White and Black students attend dramatically different types of higher education. Roughly 70% of Black students entered open enrollment or two-year college programs while over 80% of White students entered the 448 most selective colleges in the United States (Carnevale and Strohl, 2013). In other words, we see dramatic success in increasing access to higher education but this occurs in a dual system of racially separate pathways. Rather than an overly simplistic straight-line argument linking the mid-nineteenth century to the early twenty-first century, my intent is to suggest that this historical case allows us to examine the power dynamics at work in facilitating interracial cooperation, particularly in higher education.

Theorizing the Place of Race in Higher Education Expansion

Few theories have been put forth to explain higher education expansion, as Evan Schofer and John Meyer (2005) note, because the virtues of higher education have largely been taken for granted. Most research focuses on the constraint of educational opportunities for particular groups and less on the logics and processes by which higher education expands. I argue that these are not unrelated questions, but rather that the expansion of higher education as a competitive field is a result of increasing openness. Colleges seem to teeter between 'conflict and consensus'—at times they are sites for radical innovation, while often reproducing the status quo (Rojas 2007). As both highly visible and contained communities, colleges become touchstones for progressive hopes. Yet, despite good intentions, increasing access resulted in the compartmentalization of higher education opportunities by race. Because scholars have largely

focused on identity and access, scholars have paid less attention to competitive perspectives among higher education organizations, though such explanations are pervasive in other literatures (Bonacich 1972; Olzak and Shanahan, 2003). Yet, as Max Weber (1978) postulated, as democracy takes hold, education poses both the potential for creating a merit-based bureaucracy *and* the potential for a new education-based caste system. I argue this is especially central for understanding how colleges segregated. Contemporary actors viewed the post-Civil War South as in transition from oligarchy to republican governance and, as such, Weber's focus on the place of higher education in political transitions is particularly salient.

This article makes four contributions to existing scholarship on racial integration and higher education. First, I examine the implementation of racially-inclusive higher education across multiple levels of analysis by investigating campus-level interaction, organizational decisions, and the political opportunity context. Integration and segregation are complex processes rather than a zero-sum binary, and actors create, coordinate, or abandon their practices around race and inclusion. These ideas are produced at various levels. For this reason, I respond to recent calls for scholarship to cross macro-meso-micro divides (Saperstein et al., 2013). This multi-level analysis explicates forces operating across different domains that produce segregationist practices.

Secondly, to understand the coeducation project, we need to consider the logics used to support or oppose coeducation. These logics shape how actors measure successes. While national-level organizational communication spread ideas about the purpose and measurement of coeducation, the practices of coeducation were designed locally. To assess practices at the campus level, I collected archival data in accordance with the measures established by Contact Theory scholars. Contact Theory remains the dominant theoretical account in the analysis of racial integration (Allport 1954; Goldsmith 2004; Moody 2001). G. W. Allport (1954) theorized that positive integration results from *equal status*, *authoritative support* and *cooperation and shared goals*. Research on within-school experiences of integration primarily focus on the K-12 level (Carter 2006, 2012; Tyson 2011) but resegregation at the K-12 level is most often explained by districts' release from court orders or residential segregation (Logan et al., 2008; Reardon et al., 2012). However, these are less applicable to higher education. Yet, the emphasis on legal and residential structuring point to the importance of analyzing the climate for interracial cooperation beyond the campus gates.

Third, I extend work on *how* educational organizations generate categories, allocate status, and influence group boundaries (Meyer 1977; Stevens et al., 2008), but I show that they do not always do so under conditions of their own choosing. Recent scholarship attends to the role of organizations in structuring racial and ethnic formation at the mesolevel, particularly within nineteenth century interracial labor cooperation (Gerteis 2007) and ethnonational identities globally (Lainer Vos 2013; Paschel 2010). As Dan Lainer-Vos (2013) highlights, the emphasis on imagined communities and ethnic identification has overshadowed mesolevel activities by which actors draw boundaries to establish hierarchies. By considering the education system as a political institution (Meyer 1977), it is possible to see the power of the educational system to contribute to racialization processes. John Meyer (1977) conceptualizes modern education as a "system of institutionalized rites transforming social roles through powerful initiation ceremonies creating new classes of personnel and types of authoritative knowledge" (p. 495). Scholars have underappreciated the extent to which Meyer's theory of personnel extends to racial classification and cultural categories.

AMA colleges, with their political commitment and international network of supporters, would seem the least likely to falter from integration. Yet the 'inhabited institutionalism' approach highlights the importance of human agency by focusing on

actors whose pragmatic decisions cause disjunctures between local level practices and macrolevel "myths" or "logics" (Binder 2007; Hallett 2010). These accounts suggest organizations may fail in their missions because of misalignment between the realm of local practice and the macrolevel ideals. Amy Binder (2007, p. 568) suggests attending to "creativity at the local level, as well as the rules of the game, to understand how organizations work." As the colleges segregated, they claimed exceptional knowledge about particular groups—what George Steinmetz (2008) terms *ethnographic capital*—as a strategy for securing status in the increasingly competitive field of higher education. These resource contests were not merely increases in funding, rather, sometimes colleges refused funds in order to pursue their status goals. This project places a historically-grounded analysis of the institutional logics at work within colleges to address mesolevel factors in segregation. Applying this to the three colleges discussed in depth here shows how the practices of integration—and sometimes co-education—were practiced and challenged.

Lastly, the post-Civil War period is an important era for understanding racial politics (Hochschild and Powell, 2008; Olzak and Shanahan, 2003), citizenship (Glenn 2002), the emerging American welfare state (Goldberg 2007; Skocpol 1992), and the transformation of economic organization (Ruef and Fletcher, 2003). Yet despite the period's deep consequences, sociologists have only rarely made it central to their understanding of education politics. Furthermore, with a few exceptions, scholarship often focuses on either the Reconstruction period (1865–1877) or Jim Crow (1896–1955), leaving major questions about the intervening period. During Reconstruction, Constitutional amendments and new State Constitutions for southern states promised equal protection under the law and these eroded during the 1880s.

While interracial coeducation was far from simple in any of these cases, I argue that the decisive processes took place at the interorganizational level as the colleges negotiated a changing political environment and the rise of a field of higher education. The motivational logics for expanding higher education shifted over the nineteenth century. First, reasoning that higher education fostered democratic governance, Anti-Caste leaders founded integrated colleges after the Civil War. Next, educational institutions became a site for intergroup competition where elites adjudicated the comparative merits by ascriptive groupings. In turn, colleges increasingly framed social comparisons and status competition along ethnic lines, colleges matched curricula with group characteristics. Despite initial commitments to interracial coeducation and faced for the first time with competitive pressures, Oberlin, Berea, and Howard responded and contributed to changing ethnic status groupings and resource demands in ways that reinscribed racial categories.

This paper proceeds as follows: After describing my data and methods, I first discuss the context and role of higher education reform movements after the Civil War before examining implementation practices of coeducation at the three schools, including analysis of shifts in the colleges' policies, and how these were practiced internally and communicated to external audiences. This leads to a closer examination of the intersection of resources and ethnographic experts work in producing racial categories. The emergent field of higher education produced ethnoracial expertise as a legitimizing strategy for the reversal of integrated education.

CASE SELECTION, DATA, AND METHODS

I explore the process of structuring integration and, later, segregation within colleges and across related organizations to provide a historically-informed account of processes

over time. I collected a range of archival and press materials from a total of six archives, including each of the three colleges, and press coverage from three national newspapers and more specialized press sources. This data connects the internal dynamics of integrated education, public perceptions of these colleges, organizational ties between colleges, and the relationship between these. By using a method of controlled comparison of historical cases (Beisel 1997; Skocpol and Somers, 1980), this analysis uses a narrative strategy of causal inference (Stryker 1996). This is a small-case comparison. I limited my selection to colleges that were deliberate in their pursuit of integration, evidenced through formal policy for over twenty years.

I first had to locate colleges that either offered non-discrimination clauses or admitted both Blacks and Whites between 1870–1900 (N = 117). This list was compiled through an exhaustive search of secondary sources, beginning with James Haley's *Afro-American Encyclopedia* (1895), W. E. B. DuBois's 1910 survey of Black college graduates, historical newspaper searches, college catalogues available through the Library of Congress, searches through individual college archive web-sites, and correspondence with archivists. This list includes historically black colleges and universities, public and private universities with explicit non-discrimination clauses (Illinois, for instance), and colleges that admitted and graduated Black students but lacked explicit non-discrimination language in their charter or policies. Around twenty colleges belonged to the Anti-Caste movement. I selected three colleges that varied compositionally: Oberlin enrolled a majority of White students; Berea enrolled equal numbers of students; and Howard enrolled a majority of Black students.

I collected institutional-level archival data to analyze administrative choices in implementing integration. The Anti-Caste principles of these institutions present certain data challenges. Many college administrations did not systematically record student demographic data, claiming their inability to visually ascertain race. At the archives of Berea, Howard, and Oberlin, I collected more than 8,000 pages of documents, including Board of Trustees minutes, speeches, enrollment data, fundraising materials, memorabilia, and correspondence. I collected data from the schools' founding (Oberlin in 1833; Berea in 1855; and Howard in 1866) through 1915 by which time *de jure* segregation was a *fait acommpli*. In order to piece together student and faculty experiences and assess change at the schematic level, I also collected personal letters, diaries, and memorabilia. I collected official and personal correspondence, expense reports and speeches for AMA leadership, field agents, and college administrators at the Amistad Research Center (Tulane University). I compiled all Annual Reports and issues of the AMA's *American Missionary Magazine* from its inauguration in 1847 to 1915. Supplementary data (circa 2500 pages) were gathered at the Rockefeller Archive Center, Bowdoin College, and the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture. Together, this yields well over 10,500 pages of original data to analyze institutional practices, colleges' self-representation and on-campus experiences.[2] I qualitatively coded these documents for emergent themes, ties between individuals, and variation in intra- and extra-organizational framing practices. When archival sources referenced important but missing documents, I located items through digitalized archives and private collectors whenever possible. I triangulated media reports, official organizational materials and personal, and private materials such as letters and diaries.

To reconstruct the public perception of these colleges, I examined all relevant articles in the *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *Washington Post* from 1865–1905 (N = 444), using the *Proquest Historical* database. Newspapers supplement archival information of the colleges' political participation, professorial public appearances, donations, student activities, and scandals. Contemporary journalism fused reportage

with opinion (Schudson 1978), providing a particularly rich source for analyzing claims-making. As it became clear that poor Whites were essential to this analysis, I created a database (N = 431) of media articles longer than four paragraphs in length to trace discursive shifts in the public perception and framing of "poor Whites." In total, this yielded 875 newspaper articles. I identified relevant legislation, political events, speeches, and reports to frame the political-legal context. Together, this provides a rich, detailed picture of individual experiences, organizational strategy, and macro-level political terrain.

BROAD SUPPORT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AFTER THE CIVIL WAR

Reconstruction occurred in three phases: Military—1862–1865; Presidential—1865–1867; Congressional—1867–1877. Military Reconstruction began when President Lincoln appointed provisional military governors to re-establish governments in Southern states recaptured by the Union Army. President Johnson's Reconstruction policy was characterized by leniency towards ex-Confederates. Following Johnson's impeachment, the Republican Supermajority in Congress endeavored to radically restructure race relations through new Civil Rights legislation, readmissions requirements for Confederate states, and increased federal control (1867–1877). Substantial support from the federal and state governments and the voluntary sector advanced the idea of democratizing higher education. Private organizations like the American Missionary Association (AMA) entered the field of Southern education, expanding school-building projects begun by Union officers in 1863 to the college level. The AMA was the largest of these organizations with operations in nearly every state and multiple foreign countries. The federal agency responsible for Reconstruction, the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (BRFAL), provided funds to the AMA colleges to support faculty and building expenses.

The 1862 Morrill Act had established the importance of higher education to building state capacity and, after the war, this same logic was applied to rebuilding the South. Republican elites and journalists contended that the South needed political, economic, and social reconstruction and promoted integrated higher education as the pathway to societal integration: "We have stayed and rebuked the spirit of Southern barbarism by military power, but the schoolmaster must finish what the sword has so well begun" (*Chicago Daily Tribune* 1865a). College expansion was a favored strategy to reform Southern society.

The post-Civil War attention to Southern education shaped higher education as a field, rather than individual schools operating according to their own unique designs. The production of the field grew out of efforts by the federal government to launch higher education as nation-building strategy, notably with the 1862 Morrill Act that established land grant colleges for the "laboring classes." The Morrill Act broadened higher education to include the 'useful arts' of engineering, mechanics, and agriculture as part of a mid-century effort to democratize higher education. Democratization was two-fold: it expanded access, and fostered public, nonreligious colleges. Previously public universities, particularly in the South, were accessible only to elites while religious denominations supported colleges for those of lesser means. Importantly, nineteenth-century college attendance was relatively rare but the majority of students enrolled in non-elite religious education (Reuben 1996). Whereas the first hundred years at Protestant-founded schools like Dartmouth, Harvard, and even Princeton were largely centered on religious piety, these mid-century changes increased student enrollment and decentered religion from the college experience for Whites.

The National Bureau of Education (NBE) was a short-lived federal education agency that began and ended during Reconstruction. In 1873, the NBE published the first comprehensive list of higher education institutions nationally. NBE Commissioner, General Eaton, described the new list's importance as "giving a view of the influence upon the community of the colleges as a class; whereas now each college is looked upon measurably as an institution standing by itself alone" (*New York Times* 1873). While these lists allowed for a survey of existing colleges, they did not initially include any evaluative component. Mapping is, of course, different from ranking. This first federal effort surveyed college locations to plot college access by geographic proximity.

The Civil War pushed college expansion with enrollment increasing by 278% between 1869–70 and 1899–1900 (NCES 1993). Some of this growth can be explained by understanding the influence of expanding educational opportunities for Black students. By Reconstruction's end in 1877, at least forty-three colleges were founded that were open to Blacks and Whites, though many predominately enrolled Blacks.[3] By 1900, another seventy-four colleges described their admissions policy as "open to all," and with no barriers by race. The founding of Anti-Caste colleges occurred during this time of tremendous expansion in higher education. By 1890, the second Morrill Act was passed in recognition that the public universities established through the 1862 Morrill Act failed to offer Black students reasonable access. Congress stipulated that no federal funding could be awarded to colleges organized "where a distinction of race or color is made in admission" but if States "equitably divided" funds between White and Black colleges then Morrill funds could be applied to religiously-organized Black colleges (*The Second Morrill Act of 1890*). It was in the 1890 Act that the term 'historically Black colleges and universities' entered the lexicon, as many of these colleges were "open to all" but largely educated Black students. Next we turn to how coeducation was realized by examining its ideological foundations and organizational capacity.

The Political Logics of the Anti-Caste Education Movement

The AMA's Anti-Caste mission aligned with international political activism around ending caste hierarchy as part of the nation-building surge underway in the mid-nineteenth century globally. The wave of revolutions in 1848 ushered in nationhood and republicanism, combating the vestiges of feudalism, including the abolition of peonage, slavery and monarchial rule. The revolutions of 1848 in Austro-Hungary, Brazil, France, Germany, Hungary, New Grenada[4], and elsewhere rejected caste barriers as inconsistent with modern state-building. Steven Hahn's (1990) international-comparative study reveals the international diffusion of abolitionism, when many European powers abolished colonial slavery, that has been undervalued in contextualizing post-emancipation politics. The internationalization of Anti-Caste discourse was consecrated in new constitutions—for example, Germany (1849; 1871), Italy (1870), Panama (1863; 1865)—bolstering Black rights as an important legitimatizing achievement for nation-states. The U.S. Anti-Caste movement reframed racial difference as a status distinction produced through the institution of slavery. They viewed inherited or ascriptive status hierarchies as inconsistent with the tenets of republican governance. Anti-Casteists relied on historical references to White bonded labor from the colonial-era and European feudalism to articulate slavery as a shared historical condition:

> Race after race, people after people, have had the chains of slavery stricken from their limbs…Fortunately, (Blacks) are so intermingled with men from every part

of the world, … so deeply imbued with the grand spirit of our liberty-making institutions, that a separation, an isolation like that spoken of is an absolute impossibility (Howard 1868).

This framing of linking Black inclusion to the rise of modern nation-states and universal male citizenship was consistent with changes internationally. British workers held hundreds of meetings across the country to support Black rights, including important addresses by John Stuart Mill and Karl Marx (DuBois 1935). In certain international circles, Black Americans were linked with European peasants in a shared plight of oppression, albeit of unequal proportion. The international context of the Anti-Caste movement structured political opportunities, and international interest in abolition was leveraged for military strategy. Lincoln strategically issued the Emancipation Proclamation, leveraging European class politics to block England and France from contributing troops to the Confederacy. Constituting a numerical majority in many southern voting districts, Blacks were the only republican force and constituted a formidable political resource in the South (Hogan 2011; Holt 1977).

Journalists and politicians frequently compared the Southern slave-holding class and French Bourbons, who overthrew post-Revolution republican governance with constitutional monarchy. For instance, in the 1866 Joint Congressional Committee on Reconstruction hearing, General Oliver Otis Howard crystallized the comparison when interrogating a former Virginia legislator: (White southerners) "are waiting and hoping for a restoration of the Bourbons…to take possession of the United States government" (39th U.S. Congress Joint Committee on Reconstruction 1866, p. 172). The clear threat was that if Blacks were not incorporated fully into the nation, a resurgence of Southern oligarchy would threaten American political and social stability.

The AMA located their motivation for Black inclusion as essential to national stability and lasting peace. At the AMA's 1867 national meeting, the AMA described its vision for post-war Black inclusion as: "a pastor of your churches, a president of your colleges, a leading partner of your great commercial houses, a President of the Republic" (AMA Annual Report 1867, p. 9). Contemporary actors made sense of the process *in temporis momentum*, and international comparisons helped make sense of an unsettled time. Anti-Casteites drew policy ideas from abroad in formulating higher education as a reunification strategy. Henry Ward Beecher addressed the AMA: "After the first Napoleon had crushed Germany like an egg shell, she did not commence fortifying by building castles and forts on her frontier; no, but a thorough and most extensive system of education for the people was soon inaugurated" (AMA Annual Report 1870, p. 71).

The Political Context and Private Colleges

After the U.S. Civil War, Radical Republicans gained Congressional control in December 1865, southern Whites were briefly barred from voting, office-holding, and were subject to federal occupation. Blacks gained unprecedented political power in the South (Hahn 2003; Holt 1977). During Reconstruction, the U.S. Congress and Senate had the highest level of Black office-holding until the 1970s. The most far-reaching of the Civil Rights Bills of 1875, guaranteed that publicly and privately, "full and equal enjoyment of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of inns, public conveyances on land or water, theaters, and other places of public amusement" (Civil Rights Act of 1875). Importantly, this short-lived measure legislated integrating private social life. The most widely-circulated American periodical, *Harper's Weekly*, championed the bill because it "forbids distinctions founded upon a system of caste

which the law has abolished. It prohibits making an American citizen a pariah because of his color" (*Harper's Weekly* 1871). Political representation was even more dramatic at the state level, particularly in South Carolina where Blacks comprised 60% of the State Legislature. In applying for readmission to the Union, former Confederate states extended citizenship rights, established public schools for all children and the maintenance of state universities, and frequently abolished property requirements for voting.

Yet, despite these political and legal advantages, the political climate remained hostile and opposition to empower Blacks remained rampant. Few Republicans had faith in fair democratic processes in the South, and the majority of southern Whites were staunchly opposed to Black equality. At best, access to state-funded higher education was uneven: For instance, while South Carolina's legislature created an interracial, tuition-free university in 1869, the University of North Carolina shuttered its doors from 1871–1875 rather than integrate, and later reopened as a White-only institution once federal oversight ended. The Anti-Caste movement felt that for legal rights to translate into durable, deeply-held beliefs, Whites and Blacks needed the supervised, shared experiences colleges could offer. The AMA launched a network of private Anti-Caste colleges outside the purview of public politics where they could adopt policies consistent with their agenda of interracial democracy-building. At a time when so few Americans attained higher education, colleges seemed an unlikely place to build an Anti-Caste future, but colleges—unlike primary and secondary schools—could draw upon far-away financial backers making them less dependent upon local political attitudes.[5] These colleges attracted donors from afar, as well as leadership, faculty and students who shared their ideological framework.[6] Raids by White supremacists could be leveraged as evidence of the political value of coeducational colleges and such events increased donations for Oberlin and Berea Colleges prior to Reconstruction's end.

The AMA had long claimed special knowledge about race relations. Former head of the BRFAL General Howard asserted that Anti-Casteists' deep abolitionist experience uniquely qualified AMA-affiliates to shape new institutions in the South. Later published in major media outlets, Howard gave an 1873 address titled "Educated Labor" to the 1873 national conference of American Missionary Association:

> We have been accustomed for half a century to hear it said by slaveholders – "You do not understand the negro." But what was about him so difficult to understand I never could discover…We judged the Black man as a man; he judged him as chattel. … We know him, and we know his aspirations, his capacities, his real worth to the country; what he might become to himself and to the nation, if the artificial pressure of the powerful hand of avarice were removed from him (AMA Annual Report 1867, p. 2).

Berea, Howard, and Oberlin claimed to have "ethnographic capital," that is a position of authority gained through specialized knowledge about a specific ethnic category (Steinmetz 2008). In Steinmetz's formulation ethnographic capital is a strategic move on the part of elite actors engaged in an "elite standoff" to claim jurisdiction on a particular domain of state policy. During the early years of Reconstruction, the AMA used their ethnographic capital to claim legitimacy for private groups to pursue extra-democratic institution building. Because southern voters largely refused interracial public education, the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands provided funds to assist in building private colleges. Often these colleges had lower schools attached to them. The AMA touted deep experience in anti-slavery campaigns, and used their interracial membership to claim expertise in building interracial cooperation.

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Anti-Casteists measured success by their ability to diminish the visibility of "race" as salient and important. Anti-Caste education proposed to dislodge racial oppression by teaching Southerners not to "see" race. A White school superintendent reported his success to the AMA, "I am daily learning to see more differences between individuals, and less between races" (AMA Annual Report 1869, p. 27). Addressing the AMA, Berea's President Fairchild affirmed that seeing race was a learned skill: "Should we undertake to separate the races, as we never shall, we should be obliged to apply to somebody more skilled in 'visible admixtures' than we are, to accomplish the task" (AMA Annual Report 1871, p. 22). Black students reported internalizing the colleges' coeducational mandate to expect fair treatment from Whites. Fanny Coppin Jackson (Oberlin 1865) reported how post-graduate life was a bruising experience: "I had been so long in Oberlin that I had forgotten about my color" (Jackson 1913, p. 14).

Despite their unwillingness to see race, Anti-Casteists pronounced education a legitimate competitive arena where Blacks could demonstrate their worth in a meritocratic democracy. While favorably describing an oration given by a Howard valedictorian, a journalist linked these goals: "whether the time is now at hand when it will no longer be thought necessary, in quoting a creditable performance, to state that the writer was of African descent…Give them a fair field and the freedmen and the freeborn who will start up to compete with the Anglo-Saxon… will vindicate man's common origin" (*Friends' Review* 1868). These assertions directly challenged the growing 'Scientific Racism' movement popularized by Harvard's Louis Aggasiz and others.

Journalists quickly declared these colleges successful. The *Chicago Tribune* applauded the effects of interracial education in reducing White prejudice: "Another almost immediate and marked influence of these schools is seen upon the White people in the lessening prejudice, in the admission of the African's ability to learn, and his consequent fitness for places in the world from which we have hitherto excluded him" (*Chicago Daily Tribune* 1865a). This enthusiasm enticed visitors in the 1870s and 1880s when special trains accommodated visitors arriving from New Orleans, Chicago, and New York to witness Berea's graduation ceremonies. The *Chicago Tribune* heralded that Oberlin had solved "the social problem" a mere five months after the Civil War ended (*Chicago Daily Tribune* 1865c). In 1880, a journalist declared, "Oberlin has clearly solved that knotty problem of the respective mental capacity of the races" (*The Independent* 1884). The same journalist described Berea nearly twenty years into integration: "Equality is achieved…What has been done there can be done everywhere in the South, and must be." The next section turns to the implementation of coeducation on campus at Oberlin, Berea, and Howard.

MAKING COEDUCATION A REALITY, 1837–1885

Founding stories of organizations provide resources as organizations navigate changing political and economic environments (Johnson 2007; Stinchcombe 1965). A. L. Stinchcombe argued that because foundings happen in different political and cultural contexts, their resources (particularly economic and technological) vary in durably important ways. Organizational survival, in his view, could largely be explained through one of three mechanisms: efficiency, inertial forces (vested interests, tradition), or the absence of competition. Oberlin integrated within two years of its founding, while Berea and Howard began as interracial schools. Students shared classrooms, clubs, dining tables, and boarding facilities. The towns of Berea and Oberlin were racially integrated communities, drawing families interested in interracial living. Oberlin, an important link in the Underground Railroad, attracted students committed to abolition

and racial equality (Baumann 2010). Berea was founded in 1855, when Kentucky was a slave state, by Oberlin affiliates with the goal of forcing the issue of slavery and Black rights. Berea codified its commitment to social equality in radical ways for the era. Administrators stipulated that Black and White students rotate in club leadership positions and equal numbers of Black and White students gave graduation addresses.

When Howard University was founded in 1866, its Trustees declared their intent to "make the Howard University a University indeed, as broad and catholic as it is possible for an institution to be – no less so than Harvard, Dartmouth, Yale" and "open to all persons without distinction of race, sex, or former condition" (*New York Times* 1867). While Black leaders had organized for integrated education since at least the 1830s, and locating in Washington, DC, Howard bypassed contentious State-level politics and gained federal funding by an Act of Congress. Howard's Congressional charter mandated it "serve youth" in Washington, DC without racial designation. General Howard refused substantial funds earmarked for educating freedmen to avoid racializing the college.

Enrollment demographics and admissions strategies varied at Oberlin, Berea, and Howard.[7] Though most students came from Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee, Berea students came from as far as Rhode Island and Oregon. Howard enrolled Native Americans and students from Japan, China, and unspecified African countries. Oberlin boasted alumni from every state and more than 100 countries, including Micronesia, Peru, and Austria (Jones and Harkness, 1909). Oberlin's President Fairchild boasted of its laissez-faire approach to integration: (one vote) "determined the policy of the Institution on the question of slavery, and no other action has been needed on the subject from that day to this" (Fairchild 1871, p. 23). This yielded a majority of White students, with Black student enrollment ranging between 5–10%. Berea maintained an explicit policy of enrolling equal numbers of Black and White students for over twenty years, which it accomplished through targeted recruitment (BCA Annual Reports of Faculty and Officers to Trustees 1880.). Howard invested in its physical infrastructure, assuming Whites would rationally choose the most "efficient" college, or the best-equipped college, with the lowest cost. The media lauded it as a "school so well mannered and so thoroughly furnished that the White youth in its vicinity would also seek its advantages" (Churchill 1870). Howard enrolled a majority of Black students with Whites concentrated in education, law, and medical programs. Many viewed enrollment data as a measurement of students' racial attitudes: "the caste feeling has been so conquered that two-thirds of the medical students are White" (*New York Evangelist* 1879). The enrollment strategies reflect the colleges' different operating logics. Oberlin and Howard operated on a model of "equality of opportunity" while Berea deliberately structured its enrollment policy to insure equal enrollment of ethno-racial groups.

The colleges also differed in Black representation among faculty and administrators. At Oberlin, there is no evidence of Black faculty or Board members, though Black graduates taught at the preparatory school. In 1852–1853, Oberlin's Board of Trustees considered a faculty petition to encourage hiring Black faculty members. The Board resolved, "that in the choice of Professors and teachers of all grades we are governed by intrinsic merit irrespective of color" (OCA: College General (RG:0)). Berea had only two Black faculty members but six Black Board members during the nineteenth century. General Howard, BRFAL Commissioner, was appointed Howard's President. Among Howard's Black Board of Trustees were political leaders, the first Blacks to pass the bar in New York and Ohio, Frederick Douglas, and Colonel Alexander Augusta, one of only eight Union surgeons during the Civil War. General Howard promoted a policy "of putting colored men in controlling positions in the University" though his

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successors were reluctant to match administrators and faculty to student enrollment demographics (*Zion's Herald* 1875). Still, Blacks consistently were Deans in the Law, Medical, and Theological Departments. While imperfect, the challenge of maintaining interracial contact at the campus level was a persistent concern.

Oberlin College: Educating Great Men

Oberlin transformed from a college known for radical abolitionism to a training center for elite male "leaders." More than a college, Oberlin was nationally known for its egalitarian beliefs and an important site for Republican political canvassing, with Presidential candidates making regular visits during the 1870s to demonstrate their commitment to Reconstruction. Generations attended Oberlin out of shared beliefs and "prided themselves on being a peculiar people" (Shumway and Brower, 1883, p. 85). Faculty described the atmosphere: "No man is above his brother… Nor does it matter whether the 'brother' is White or Black, for although Oberlin was not founded as a college for Blacks, yet there was never any 'color line'" (Shumway and Brower, 1883, p. 174). While Oberlin recognized and regularly communicated with other AMA-affiliated colleges, records of the Board of Trustees and diaries and letters of its presidents do not reflect competition with other colleges until the late 1880s.

It was not until the mid-1880s that students utilized market logic in selecting a college from a broader field of options, comparing schools on social networks, cost, and prestige value. As colleges came to compete with other colleges for funding, students, and status, administrators used market logics rather than educational or political discourse to establish their status. Administrators actively pitched their market niche by claiming appropriate pairings of race, gender, class and types of curricula. Many colleges required their own entrance exams and particular prerequisites. An Oberlin student in 1889, described that remarked that her high school prepared students to attend Yale, Harvard, Amherst, and Smith (*The Hartford Courant* 1889). In making these comparisons, students not raised in Anti-Caste circles viewed interracial colleges as inferior in social status. Fewer students enrolled in Oberlin's preparatory division which immersed students in traditional Oberlin values of interracial cooperation (OCA: College General (RG:0); Office of Admissions Records (RG:25)). The college increasingly attracted students who compared Oberlin to a range of other colleges, and challenged Oberlin's coeducational practices. Students arrived with new expectations for a college experience that was decidedly less political in character. At the turn of the century, Oberlin altered its entrance requirements, claiming "for years it has been more difficult to enter Oberlin than to enter Harvard or Yale, not because the standard was higher, but because the demands were not in harmony with the work of the best preparatory schools" (*New York Tribune* 1900). By 1900, the campus enrolled students from most states. In a different article, another Oberlin student denied the college's coeducation commitment, claiming that the Black student population was closer to "one-thirteenth" for the purpose of making comparable to elite schools (*Chicago Daily Tribune* 1891).

On campus, this resulted in challenges to Oberlin traditions. Four White Oberlin students protested sharing dining tables and dormitories with Black students. Alumni and faculty alike decried that bigotry was not in line with the "Oberlin principle," but these students reasoned that "at other colleges" in the North, they would not have to share social spaces. The Dean of Women mobilized support to maintain the Oberlin tradition of integrated dining and lodging (Baumann 2010). As Oberlin expanded its admissions outreach beyond the Anti-Caste core, students brought new expectations for college life. Importantly, student resistance to interracial cooperation, particularly

when communicated more broadly through newspaper articles in major presses, reflects the importance students attributed to colleges as status sorting mechanisms. Students' increasing described college as a status marker, and fewer identified with Anti-Caste beliefs.

As abolitionist-minded Trustees retired during the 1880s, they were replaced with industrial leaders. Changes in the field pressured Oberlin to align with one of two models for college enrollment: family-supported tuition or donation-funded "self-support." The Board pressured the college to pursue a tuition-based funding model. In debating a tuition hike, the Board of Trustees recognized that doing so would fundamentally change the character of the college. The Board majority selected expensive universities like Northwestern and University of Chicago as their ideal competition. In evaluating faculty salaries, Oberlin's Board solicited comparative salary information from Princeton, Chicago, Harvard, and Yale instead of coeducational institutions such as Knox, Howard, Hillsdale, Antioch, or Wittenburg (OCA: Annual Board Meeting Minutes 1895). President Fairchild recognized this would finalize their shift to the market-driven field of education: "We are going to be subjected to a good deal of competition. The average expense (of college) is very low. …If our tuition is put up we will have to compete with a much more active competition than in the past" (OCA: Board of Trustees Minutes 1895). The Board laid out the field by describing the range of choices available: students could attend a free college (the state university or private colleges with comprehensive scholarships), attend smaller schools like Denison ($30 annual tuition), or pursue a much more expensive education at the University of Chicago ($125). Oberlin's Board raised tuition the following year, deliberately deciding not to keep pace with free or low-tuition colleges but to pursue elite status. By 1898, the Board established its "class of competition"—Amherst, Williams, Cornell, Syracuse, and the University of Chicago,—and strategized price-setting: "people take you for what you hold yourself to be worth" (OCA: Board of Trustees Minutes, March 1898). In 1894, Oberlin aligned the degrees, certificates, and courses of study to match competitors offerings and, even voted to retroactively grant Bachelors degrees to students who completed outmoded "courses" to encourage alumni allegiance and donations (OCA: Board of Trustees Minutes, March 1898).

To increase tuition-paying student enrollment, during the 1890s Oberlin's Board of Trustees repeatedly drew on practices from Northern elite schools as guidelines for changing campus policies. In the early twentieth century, colleges increased their WASP male enrollment by adopting individual characteristics, like athleticism and character, as admissions requirements (Karabel 2005). As historians have documented (Reuben 1996), eastern colleges expanded beyond preparation for the ministry and teaching, a new emphasis on "college spirit" emerged. To attract this new type of college student, Oberlin made new financial scholarships available to "benefit needy and worthy young men" which were only awarded to Whites while letting tens of thousands of dollars designated for Black students to lie fallow (OCA: Minutes of the Oberlin Board of Trustees Meeting, June 1892). Although members of the town's Black community petitioned the Board of Trustees that the College was not fairly administering the Avery Trust for Black students, the Trustees refused to use the funds (OCA: Board of Trustees Minutes, March 1898). New facilities were built to encourage White male enrollment. Board Member Lucien Warner, an alumnus who made his fortune in women's corsetry, provided the largest single donation to date to build a new men's gymnasium.

The appearance of expanding college access masked deep inequalities in forms of higher education. When Oberlin's Black enrollment dipped to rates equal to its pre-War enrollment, the President attributed the shift to increasing educational

opportunities for Black students, rather than changing organizational practices. "Colored students find it possible to attend good colleges and universities to-day … and schools nearer the students' homes, by attending which a considerable saving of money is effected" (OCA: Annual Report 1899). Though more colleges opened for Blacks in the South, many offered industrial education instead of a liberal arts education. The college showed less concern for cost and proximity for other students, however, as it increasingly enrolled students from every U.S. state, and even Hawaii, China, and Micronesia. Oberlin launched a fundraising campaign to provide scholarships to "reward merit rather than premiums for poverty" (OCA: Annual Report 1899). Though the college never issued a formal statement of segregation, its practices demonstrated that coeducation was no longer at the center of its mission.

By 1899, Oberlin launched a campaign to position the college as a training center for "great men" to take on national and international leadership roles (Barrows 1904, p. 402). Oberlin's president, Dr. Barrows, articulated that the "old college" man of the nineteenth century focused on scholarship and religious piety needed to be remade for the times of "opulence and luxury…when great men are scarce" and "personality is more sacred than things and institutions" (*Chicago Tribune* 1899). Oberlin set forth crafting 'new college men'—Protestants who played football, jockeyed in debate tournaments, and possessed the moral fortitude to "handle" wealth (*Chicago Tribune* 1899). Oberlin drew on the traditions embedded in its organizational founding to legitimate and differentiate Oberlin as a college where students learned the arts of benevolent intervention and rule. Just as it had trained missionaries and aid workers for the Reconstruction South, the modern Oberlin would use these social capacities to train leaders for the colonial field and capitalist domestic endeavors that incorporated Progressive social welfare into mine camps and factory towns. In this way, Oberlin carried forward its logic of political education while moving into a rarefied sphere of elite colleges.

These changes in the field of higher education, including the rise of industrial colleges for Blacks, permitted Oberlin to retreat from its commitment to interracial education. Few Black students remained on campus and Oberlin administrators referenced racial coeducation as an historical artifact rather than the college mission. Reflecting on its changed strategy, Oberlin relayed in the Annual Report of 1900 that Oberlin had contributed:

> …an incalculable service for the higher life of the country…It opened its doors to students, irrespective of race, and was foremost in the Anti-slavery agitation which led up to the Civil War and the act of Emancipation…Oberlin rejoices in the increasing educational opportunities open to colored students of this country, and takes just pride in looking back upon the contributions which Oberlin College has been able to make to this great work (OCA Annual Report 1900).

Berea College: Industrial Education for Poor Whites

The post-emancipation era brought dramatic changes in migration. The 1870s saw a shift in demographics as new immigrants arrived from Southern and Eastern Europe and East Asia coupled with the first large-scale Black migration to the North and West. The demographic changes were interpreted as a status threat by White elites and resulted in changing resource streams for college budgets. Many Northern municipalities and states passed discriminatory codes and statues that reproduced many of the same civil rights violations as in the South. These demographic changes constituted a status threat to the old elite that resulted in changes in new institutions including art

museums and private boarding schools (Beisel 1997; DiMaggio 1982). Many donors had viewed integrated schools as an intervention in the 'Southern problem' but as new migration streams challenged Anglo-Saxon dominance, elites began to close ranks. In 1890, Berea hired a new President, former Oberlin Professor, William G. Frost, who experimented with a new hybrid organizational form that would attract donors interested in industrial education, while appeasing xenophobic fears. To do so, Frost blended Berea's traditional emphasis on self-sufficiency (including industrial training) with overtones of White American nationalism.

Frost initially seemed a conventional candidate for Berea's presidency. The son of two Oberlin alumni, he rooted his motivation for the presidency in his Oberlin "anti-slavery training which made me ambitious to prove that Berea which had taken the bold step of admitting colored students just as a Northern or European school would do could be made a real success on that basis" (Frost 1910, p. 88). Yet, he quickly faced financial pressures. Frost described his inaugural fundraising trip to points North—the "old abolitionist centers" of Cleveland and Cincinnati in Ohio; Utica and Syracuse in New York, and Boston—"where our best friends were supposed to be," but reported "a great disappointment to find that the old friends of Berea had almost entirely forgotten the Institution and become interested in Hampton Institute and other schools in the South… I there made up my mind that I must create a new constituency depending little upon the old one" (Frost 1910, pp. 88, 92–93). Whereas Oberlin changed its funding model, Frost changed the college mission to stimulate Northern donors with xenophobic fears of changing U.S. demographics. To attract new donors, Frost rapidly decreased Black enrollment and shifted the image of the college. White student enrollment quadrupled during the first decade of Frost's administration such that by 1903, African Americans constituted only 16% of Berea students down from 60% when Frost took office in 1892.

Despite the fact that when Frost arrived, there were slightly more Black students than White, Frost depicted its environs as an isolated monoracial region. Berea capitalized on increasing Northern hostility towards migrating African Americans and new immigrants, and won accolades by claiming "Appalachians" were an antidote to increasing foreign immigration, being of "pure English blood, the most interesting survivals of our time, of an earlier condition of a race from which we are descended"(Smith and Walton, 1901, p. 969). He campaigned to reclaim poor Whites, a group universally maligned after the Civil War (Smith 2016b). In donor campaigns, Frost rearticulated a region previously denounced as 'poor White trash' to a 'reserve' of Anglo Saxons deserving of social intervention. Frost "discovered" 'mountaineers' practicing domestic arts long abandoned, living close to nature, and speaking seventeenth-century English. Frost claimed ethnographic expertise, "No people need a friendly interpreter more than the American Highlanders, and as the President of Berea College I have had exceptional expertise and it has been my special duty to study their character, and all that can be known of their history" (*New York Times* 1901). A sociologist concurred with Frost: "Probably no other equal are in the United States has such a homogenous Anglo-Saxon population as this" (MacClintock 1901, p. 4).

Berea's new message resonated with Northern audiences, evidenced by increased enrollment, donations, and speaking engagements. Frost received invitations to lecture at Carnegie Hall and Cooper Union, and written endorsements from political figures, including Theodore Roosevelt, and support from key academics, including a Harvard anthropologist in the "Scientific Racism" (or polygenesis) movement, who bequeathed Berea $250,000. Frost launched an academic journal to secure a place for Appalachians as a legitimate social category for scientific study and social science journals, including the

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American Journal of Sociology, published articles citing Frost. President Frost published articles in *The New York Times*, *Ladies Home Companion*, *Outlook*, *Atlantic Monthly*, and *American Monthly Review*, among others.

By 1900, Berea represented itself as serving only White 'mountain' youth with no mention of its prior commitment to Anti-Caste education. The college was remade on the industrial model associated with Booker T. Washington: "This College now stands before the public as the representative school for the mountains, as Hampton and Tuskegee stand as the representative institutions for the colored people" (BCA Annual Report of Berea College 1902). Journalists echoed his zeal for offering poor Whites "uplift education," claiming that Whites were losing opportunities to Blacks: "The poor White boy of the South needs the same opportunity for industrial training which so many have gladly extended to the negro by such institutions as Hampton and Tuskegee" (*New York Times* 1900).

In 1904, Berea College was the only institution affected when the Kentucky State Legislature passed the Day Law forbidding the "coeducation of the races." One judge declared the legislation "a blessing to Berea College" (BCA: RG 3.03). The case moved on to the U.S. Supreme Court, however, Berea's commitment to integration had largely passed. There was strong opposition from Berea's Black and White students, alumni, and even Booker T. Washington wrote Frost to oppose the Bill (BCA: RG 3.03).

Championing Appalachian students as an underserved group proved popular and by the end of the nineteenth century, a new wave of benevolent agencies entered the emergent field of "mountain education." The number of students seeking admission to Berea was so great that "the trustees amended the Constitution to make the southern mountain region Berea's special field; and in 1915, the College ruled that students from outside the mountain region would be admitted in special cases only" (BCA: Board of Trustees Records 1915). The Russell Sage Foundation commissioned a survey in 1917 that certified 265 counties in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia as Appalachian.

Other schools quickly followed Berea's lead in investing in mountain Whites on the basis of Appalachia's "Anglo-Saxon stock" (Hall 1893). These included Alice Lloyd College, Lincoln Memorial University, Lindsey Wilson College, Morehead Normal School, University of the Cumberlands, and the University of Pikeville, among others. Most mountain colleges were founded between the late 1880s and the early 1900s. Some, like Alice Lloyd, grew out of settlement houses and most were funded through Northern religious organizations. Even former Bureau of Refugees and Abandoned Lands Commissioner and founding President of Howard University, General O. O. Howard helped establish Lincoln Memorial University, dedicated to mountain Whites.[8]

Frost's "invention" spurred a new cultural category and diffused an organizational form of donation-funded "mountain schools" to match.[9] As competition for funding increased, Berea not only deployed ethnographic expertise to construct a new cultural category, it spurred the replication of a new organizational form. During this time of instability, Frost aligned himself with the dominant moral logic to gain legitimacy. During times of organizational transformation, actors are most likely to borrow from familiar practices and transpose between organizational forms (Hsu 2006). While the mission of the college shifted from one of 'radical coeducation' to 'mountain education,' Berea, and the mountain colleges that emulated it, retained a donor-driven model rather than pursuing elite status and tuition-based funding.

Howard University: A Redoubt for Black Elites

Faced with increasing pressure from White industrial elites by the late 1880s, both in the North and South, predominantly-Black colleges were pushed towards including industrial education—carpentry, blacksmithing, and other trades—if not replacing their collegiate curriculum all together (Anderson 1988). However, few other colleges had matched Howard's diverse enrollment. As the field of higher education emerged in the 1880s, colleges increasingly specified their mission in terms of a match between student population and curriculum. Howard created a hybrid position by combining elements from multiple organizational forms (Minkoff 2002). By 1900, few White students attended Howard, yet, in the face of these rapid shifts in Black higher education, Howard maintained its status as an elite liberal arts university.

Coeducation at Howard was never threatened through direct legal action. Laws governing private integration impacted graduates' ability to join in important professional organizations. In 1883, legislation prohibiting discrimination by private organizations was overturned. As a result, the American Medical Association, a private organization, was legally permitted to refuse Howard medical graduates membership.[10] Howard lost its ability to enroll White students, who selected Howard for its modest tuition. If White Howard graduates were also denied certain professions, the primary motive for White students to enroll eroded:

> The White graduates have often been refused admission to the Medical Association and Society of the District of Columbia by reason of the negative vote of a sufficiently large minority…One effect of this antagonism has been to gradually reduce the proportion of White students—from 53 per cent in 1885–6, and 60 per cent in 1887–8, to 17 per cent in 1899–1900 (Lamb 1900, p. 15).

Howard established a local professional organization for its doctors, the Medico Chirugical Society of D.C. (1884), and later the National Medical Association (1895) for Black doctors nationwide. This reveals a strong relationship between the legal political context, the mesolevel of organizations, and educational integration.

Howard pursued a path of exceptionalism by defending space for Black elites in a field increasingly limiting Black educational opportunity to industrial education. When journalists compared colleges and universities, however, Howard was most frequently compared to elite schools. Howard was not mentioned in the same article with other majority-Black colleges until 1896 when a journalist praised the mobilizing efforts of Black students in forming a joint association to study racial injustice. If Howard failed to attract White students who might otherwise attend Harvard, Dartmouth, or Yale, as the founders hoped, its students found connections with Black students at those colleges (*New York Times* 1867). By 1884, Howard was anointed the "Negroes' Harvard" (*Washington Post* 1884). Howard students and alumni connected with Black students at other private universities, first to develop a common Sociology club and, later, Howard alumni joined with Black alumni from Atlanta, Fiske, Cornell, Howard, Oberlin, Wellesley, Williams, and the University of Pennsylvania to create a joint alumni association (*Washington Post* 1896).

After nearly two decades of relentless efforts to maintain White enrollment, Howard leaders shifted their strategy by the late 1880s. The Anti-Caste tenets were increasingly viewed as counterproductive because, by focusing on their success on contained campuses and within the AMA, Anti-Casteists failed to secure a strategy to counter the rising discrimination and violence Blacks experienced. At Howard, this narrow focus

was out of step with the reality administrators, faculty, students, alumni, and the local community faced and Howard retreated from its AMA affiliation.

Howard's administration and faculty claimed expertise in race relations. Unlike Berea or Oberlin, Howard had an arsenal of Black board members with deep political and social movement experience (see Logan 1969). After Howard aligned with the role the press and observers had long considered its rightful category, that of a Black university, Howard accessed the ability to address racial injustice by claiming expertise in race relations. Howard professors and administrators were regularly quoted as "race relations" experts. Major foundations saw Howard as a center for Black intellectuals, and the Rockefeller family supported Berea-educated Howard professor Carter G. Woodson in establishing the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History.

Howard faced internal challenges when administrators and Trustees challenged its tradition of academic rigor. In his 1904 Inaugural Address, President Gordon outlined his intention to defend Howard from pressures to convert to industrial education. Gordon declared Howard's purpose was to educate a Black leadership class (Gordon 1904). Within a year, as Gordon scanned the educational landscape, he advocated industrial education to increase donations. Gordon doubted that Howard could prevail as a predominantly-Black elite liberal arts college when educational forms were increasingly linked to racial categorization. This quickly placed him at odds with those who objected to the erosion of liberal arts at Howard. By the following year, seven hundred students walked out in protest during one of his speeches, and the A.M.E. church in support of Howard students and faculty who called for Gordon's immediate removal from office declared, "It cannot be emphasized too strongly that there is no objection to Dr. Gordon because he is a White man. We welcome all our White brethren…but there is no room in our schools and colleges for the 'Lily White' educator of the Gordon type who insults the manhood of the race" (*Washington Post* 1905a).[11] In 1905, the *Washington Post* endorsed a Black president for Howard on the justification that the university enrolled a majority of Black students: "Why should not the race have an unrestricted opportunity to assert itself and illustrate whatever virtues and capacities it may possess?" (*Washington Post* 1905b).

DIFFERENTIATION AND DIFFUSION IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION FIELD AFTER 1880

What do these historical cases tell us about the effects produced at the intersection of competition and integrated education? Each college went through a process of legitimacy-seeking in response to the diffusion new developments within higher education. Legitimacy is a collective process that resonates with the local community and depends on apparent, if not actual, consensus among local actors (Johnson et al., 2006). For the colleges studied here, the production of an educational field meant that the network of "local" actors broadened to include not only their own campus, or the alliance of AMA schools, but also distant colleges with whom they may have not had prior contact. This legitimacy of coeducation was undermined by attacks to Blacks social status, as evidenced by discriminatory professional organizations like the American Medical Association. Though local legitimacy mattered, the colleges were dependent upon broader cultural evaluations of group boundaries. Legitimacy-seeking involved both processes of alignment to the changing field of higher education and innovation in creating schemas of exceptionalism that were legitimate as worthy investments. Aligning to the emergent field of higher education altered not only ideas about specific

colleges but about the legitimacy claims of specific groups of people. This consecrated and coupled educational forms with specified groups.

As colleges faced competitive challenges, claiming ethnographic expertise shaped how colleges promoted their mission and signaled their status. These experts incorporated strategies of organizational imprinting, a process of cultural entrepreneurship whereby key actors draw on available organizational repertoires in building new organizations, thereby providing a foundation that can persist despite changing political conditions (Johnson 2007). This allowed administrators use historical narratives to further their claims for resources and legitimacy. Colleges independently assessed their competition. It was not until the dawn of the twentieth century that private organizations, such as Rockefeller's General Education Board and the Carnegie Foundation developed comparative metrics to evaluate educational quality as criteria for foundation giving (Smith 2016a).

The process of mimetic isomorphism, whereby colleges surveyed competitors and converged on particular models, thus had profound consequences. Colleges distinguished themselves as appropriate for particular groups of people in the 1880s. As college administrators decided how to define their position in the field, protests from Black constituents—alumni, students, faculty and administrators—were largely ignored. Further, because a range of models (industrial, liberal arts, and state universities) shared common outward appearances (the name 'college,' awarding Bachelors degrees), the deep inequality of educational opportunities available to different groups of people was obscured. Howard faculty and students paid keen attention to these differences, but many Whites failed to recognize amassing threats to hard-won legal rights. Support for Black concerns at Howard was largely drawn from Washington, DC's Black elite and the *Washington Post*, which frequently chastised Howard for its dismissal of Blacks' integration in positions of power. By contrast, the increasing population of Black colleges allowed Oberlin and Berea to retreat from coeducation.

Racial categorization is an interactional process and, by placing higher education diffusion into a field perspective, we see that institutional forms were developed in response to the changing racial order. This new competitive field of higher education pushed colleges to differentiate their missions while adopting bridging strategies to align with new competitors. These sets of relationships between racial groups, educational form and public evaluation illustrate the deeply co-constitutive nature of schemas and resources. As the field of higher education emerged and transformed in response to shifting demands, organizational actors balanced brokering new models with donors' shifting ideas about race, education, and social change. The Anti-Caste movement was dependent upon public representations of their constituency and ideology as legitimately worthy in order to translate ideological commitments into resources of networks and finances. The AMA, press, and others frequently compared Black and White achievement, constructed education as a field of deliberate racial competition. Social commentators positioned higher education in Washington, DC as a quasi-natural experiment to compare Whites and Blacks. Howard was favorably compared to Cornell: although Cornell attracted "the cream of the White race", and "yet Howard University has a member of Congress in its Alumni…and the Minister to Liberia. I don't believe Cornell has done any better" (*Washington Post* 1884). Howard was more frequently compared to Ivy League schools than Oberlin or Berea. These comparisons pushed schools that had once seen their position as unique but replicable, into overt comparison as schools began to compete for students and funding.

For White students, the field of higher education expanded rapidly. Students began to choose from a wider array of possible college options. As competition increased through the widening field of education, the AMA model of integrated education was

not widely adopted. The AMA's claim to ethnographic expertise was not accepted as a legitimate technocratic template for modern higher education into wide-scale coeducation but, rather, ethnographic knowledge justified a specialty niche in the educational market. For Black students, more colleges opened but choices in educational form diminished. Northern schools enrolled very small numbers of Black students and southern colleges offering non-industrial education were diminishing. By the 1900, a new foundation entered the field. John D. Rockefeller designated ten million dollars to create the General Education Board to redesign southern education. Referencing AMA and Black-organized colleges, the GEB stated: "The General Education Board therefore resolved that, while certain privately managed institutions must be aided, its main purpose required that it cooperate with progressive Southern sentiment in creating publicly supported educational systems" (RAC: The General Education Board 1902–1914). In other words, rather than risk tension with southern progressives, Rockefeller's foundation dedicated its enormous support to publicly-funded segregated education. Rockefeller's foundation organized its charitable giving to promote urban research universities for Whites and industrial education for Southern Blacks. This illuminates that while private colleges were originally donor-supported to circumvent local southern opposition to integrated education, private organizations were incapable of sustaining radical measures once the donor base expanded beyond the social movement. With increasing funding from industrialists, who required local favor to conduct business in the South, the tolerance for risk and radicalism diminished.

Though postwar educational expansion was intended to foster greater capacity in new citizens and develop national solidarity, by the mid-1880s, higher education expansion increasingly focused on liberal arts education for White elites and industrial training for Blacks. Many colleges, including elite universities like Columbia and Cornell, offered students opportunities to earn their tuition and fees through on-campus labor. Thus the "learning and labor" model initiated at Oberlin and carried over to Berea and Howard, was an extension of the larger post-bellum movement to democratize higher education. The industrial education movement, mobilized by Booker T. Washington, shifted this model from one of self-sustenance to industrial education as the focal point for Black students' collegiate curricula. By the 1890s, Berea's President Frost argued that industrial education was also needed for 'mountain students' and he too articulated a new match between a cultural category ('mountaineers') and curricula. By contrast, as Oberlin increasingly patterned its administrative practices on elite White colleges, it matched its enrollment practices accordingly and shifted long-standing practices to encourage more White males and discourage applications from women and Blacks. During the post-emancipation era, colleges aligned curricula, faculty salaries, degrees offered, and enrollment processes. Howard regularly compared its medical facilities and curriculum to leading programs in the country to calibrate its position in the field in the hopes of attracting White students. In order for Oberlin to compete with elite colleges, its Board of Trustees compared practices against competitors in making their decisions. Berea articulated its place as a "Tuskegee" for poor Whites and modeled a new industrial training program on Hampton and Tuskegee.

The diffusion process for particular models of higher education excluded racial co-education. As colleges increasingly negotiated a new market-based arena—one in which colleges competed for enrollment, funding streams and prestige—even marginally integrated education languished as a viable option. By claiming a new cultural category, "Appalachian," as unique for its racial purity, Berea capitalized on rising xenophobia among Northern elites. Howard's leadership pushed for colorblind policies, which put it at odds with its Black Board of Trustees, faculty and students. Against broader changes in the field of higher education that prioritized industrial

education for Blacks, Howard leveraged its unique heritage to claim a last redoubt for a Black intellectual elite. As the first deliberately integrated college in the United States, Oberlin could easily have drawn on ethnographic capital to assert its expertise in interracial cooperation. However, Oberlin parlayed its founding story as evidence of exceptional moral leadership to lay claim to elite status while retreating from racial integration in practice.

These coeducational colleges aligned policies and practices to match expectations in the broader field of higher education. Not only were curricula standardized through isomporphism (Meyer et al., 2007), but so too were the groups of people considered relevant for certain forms of education. Schools restructured whole categories of people, created and expanded elites, and redefined the rights and responsibilities of social groups. While Schofer and Meyer (2005) suggest that competition may lead to the exclusion of particular groups, this study seeks to provide an in-depth analysis of *how* that process occurs, thereby contributing to the study of racial boundaries and higher education by revealing the mechanisms by which race proved an important push factor in shaping higher education. Black college enrollment spurred an increase in White enrollment in higher education. Though even small status gains provoked backlash, status conflict was quickly racialized. Colleges proved an important site of competition for social status more broadly.

CONCLUSION

By calling for greater attention to the pathways to segregation, this paper highlights that social movements are more quickly able to gain rights than maintain them and sheds light on a few mechanisms by which these hard-won social movements victories can be rescinded. Colleges do not exist in isolation but belong to both a broader field of education with important networks between colleges, and are situated within a particular historical and political context that circumscribes what kinds of education colleges can offer different groups of people. Actors are changed by their networks and one can see the changes in their values, aspirations, and strategies shifting to align with higher status organizations.

Berea, Howard, and Oberlin were all deeply engaged in interracial living and negotiated integration for more than twenty years. United by a national organization, they worked to foster integrated colleges to promote a racially-inclusive democracy. By the mid-1880s, the colleges began a process of segregation separate from the familiar explanations for school segregation at the mesolevel (homophily, court mandates, or residential segregation). None of the colleges faced direct legal pressure until after the dawn of the twentieth century, nor were any of the colleges lacking in enrollment. By addressing the local level implementation practices and an examination of the satisfying conditions of contact theory, we can see that segregation was not primarily the result of campus practices conditions but that they segregated due to external pressures. At Howard and Berea, actors debated how best to accomplish integration through enrollment strategies and leadership choices. Such conflicts pushed colleges to respond with flexibility in enrollment strategies to maintain integrated student body at Berea and to overturn Presidential favor for "integration on paper" and secure liberal arts education for Blacks at Howard. While fewer debates took place at Oberlin, the college's Black alumni reported feeling incorporated prior to the mid-1880s but Trustee decisions in the 1890s to align Oberlin to a shifting field of market-driven higher education resulted in marginalization. Broader environmental dynamics illuminate the process of dismantling

integration and concomitant process of recoding race as a politically and socially salient organizing force.

Legal pressures differed by state context, but fail to account for the same over-arching patterns across coeducational colleges. More consequentially, discrimination by external professions organizations and intra-organizational administrative decisions resulted in increasingly monoracial enrollment. What mattered most in terms of macrolevel factors was the impact that these changes wrought on organizational resources, rather than more direct exclusion. Only Berea was subjected to direct legal pressure to segregate and this occurred after the administration shifted the college's mission. Changes in the *legal environment* permitted institutional discrimination by private organizations, including prospective employers for college graduates.

Through an analysis of the segregation of Berea, Oberlin, and Howard, I have shown the role of racial categorization processes in pushing new organizational forms, revealing an important and previously overlooked relationship between the mesolevel of private organizations and the production of social boundaries. Because of the rapid development of higher education in the South and increased opportunities for Blacks, a comparative, competitive field of higher education emerged. This research reveals a causal relationship between racial and status boundary processes and the production and diffusion of educational forms.

There is a recursive nature to the relationships between organizations within an organizational field. Bourdieu conceived of a field as a space of possibilities where actors compete for the *prise de position* (Bourdieu 1989; Steinmetz 2008). A field is defined by competition, and competition requires differentiation and evaluation. Actors make organizational fields and in turn, their organizations are recapitulated through their responses a changing organizational field. As colleges found themselves being compared, they shared information and adjusted their practices to increase their status. Distinct ideological foundations, funding models, and recruitment practices in turn shaped the organizational viability of higher education organizations as they came into field-level comparison and resulted in differentiated organizational forms.

Integration is multifaceted, not merely compositional and legally mandated, and requires a plurality of institutional infrastructure. When Howard's medical students were discriminated against by an important professional organization, the American Medical Association, its overall ability to attract White students and Black students declined. While declining White enrollment could be seen as rising homophily, understanding the interplay of organizations at the mesolevel provides more analytical leverage. Though the legal changes that permitted discrimination by private actors was unrelated to education law, the university needed support from actors beyond the immediate field of education.

This research offers three insights for understanding mechanisms of racial segregation, racial ordering, and higher education. These cases illuminate moments of fleeting inclusion that are important for understanding the mechanisms by which the deep structures of racial inequality are circulated even during through projects committed to radical change. First, this brings organizational dynamics to the fore more broadly in structuring segregation. The mesolevel emphasis reveals that higher education did not developed on separate, segregated tracks. Rather, educational organizations were deeply embedded in and structured by a competitive field and racial status was deployed as a means to indicate status and market share. Intercollegiate competition for resources proved an important site in structuring racial boundaries. Organizational competition and innovation can constrain opportunities for interracial cooperation. This illuminates the structuration of segregation as not only produced by macro-level forces (legislative and legal decisions). The existence of coeducational colleges

disproves theories that segregation arose merely from individual-level homophily. Divisions were drawn in response to rising status competition between organizations, and field-level convergence pressures pressed even integrated colleges to segregate to maintain their standing.

Second, institutionalist scholars focus on the convergence of organizational forms. However, while the rough contours of different collegiate models appear similar, inattention to key differences mask the unequal value of higher education. Rather, the field of higher education built upon the status of particular groups while lending the appearance that elite status was linked to individual merit. While scholars often emphasize how education expands rights, by extending analysis of integrated schools beyond within-school effects this study draws attention to how schooling serves broader cultural and political orders. Not only can education expand rights, but it can also operate as a field of unequal competition that then limits access to social and political rights. Higher education is an important arena for the conferral of status, but status is not uniformly distributed across all college graduates.

Finally, group boundary processes produce comparative and competitive fields that impact the allocation of resources by private donors and state actors. Actors creatively played with various ideas about the cultural value of particular groups and their relative educational "needs" and pitched these claims according to their interpretation of donors' interests. Segregated schools did not emerge *ex nihilio*, but rather resulted from status contestation among colleges competing for legitimacy. As the cases here illuminate, colleges drew upon multiple logics to develop hybrid organizational forms in response to shifting cultural terrain.

We need to extend the kind of inquiry brought to bear in studies of citizenship to the study of segregation and integration. Rather than a status, integration is a process of persistent negotiation with multiple modes of integration, analogous to processes explored by scholars of citizenship (Glenn 2011; Somers 2008). This mode of analysis entails viewing integration not as an achieved state, but considering configurations and types of integration that differ across time and context (Carter 2012). While this study is limited in its scope to the relationship of three integrated colleges and the broader political culture of the mid to late-nineteenth century, it suggests the importance of revitalizing higher education as an arena for political sociologists.

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NOTES

1. Historians of higher education have rarely made Anti-Caste colleges a central focus for study, most often viewing interracial schools as anomalies rather than, as I argue here, a competing model in the emerging field of higher education (Anderson 1988; Thelin 2004).
2. Archival collections are abbreviated as follows: Amistad Research Center at Tulane University (AMA); Berea College Archives (BCA); Howard University Archives (HUA); Oberlin College Archives (OCA); Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC).
3. These schools were organized by numerous organizations, ranging from small groups of Black veterans to religious denominations.
4. Contemporary Columbia and Panama.
5. As other scholars have argued (Anderson 1988; Watkins 2001), when foundations entered Southern higher education in the early twentieth century exerted unchecked influence in determining curricular offerings.
6. Prior to the rise of foundations in subsequent years, small individual donors constituted the majority of financial support for these colleges. A common practice among these colleges was to allow donors to provide "subscriptions" which financially supported individual students' tuition.

7. While fewer Blacks attended Oberlin and fewer Whites attended Howard than the equal representation at Berea, both Oberlin and Howard still enrolled more minority students than do most prestigious colleges in the twenty-first century.
8. President Abraham Lincoln was a favorite symbol for Berea's fundraising even though he lived in Illinois, Indiana and Western Kentucky, and never in the area now denoted as Appalachia.
9. Alice Lloyd College, the Highland Research and Education Center, and the University of Pikeville are three notable legacies from this movement.
10. Speaking to graduating class at Howard, Senator George Hoar reminded graduates that they had achieved Constitutional rights "whereas the forces arrayed against them were only temporary" (*Washington Post* 1894). Despite mounting evidence, Anti-Caste Whites failed to heed the warning signs of rights retrenchment.
11. 'Lily White' refers to a political bloc within the Republican Party to undermine Black gains in civil rights.

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