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Foreword

More than sixty years ago, the American writer Zora Neale Hurston observed that “research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.”

The Macon campus of Mercer University is full of undergraduates “poking and prying with a purpose.” Undergraduate research at Mercer is mentored, self-directed work that leads students—and their faculty advisers—to new discoveries and understandings. Just as important as the outcomes are the processes of inquiry, discovery, design, and communication. Research challenges us to ask hard questions, re-frame what we know, and risk going where others have not been.

This journal annually publishes some of the best undergraduate research at Mercer, but it has room only for a very small fraction of the many research projects done this year. At our annual celebration of undergraduate research, Bear Day, students in the sciences and business presented 33 posters of their projects. Students from the humanities, sciences, social sciences, and education read 61 scholarly papers. Simultaneously, the annual Engineering Expo featured 20 projects by undergraduates in the School of Engineering.

Sponsored by the Honors Program, this journal recognizes the scholarly activities of undergraduates from across the campus. The papers that follow came through a rigorous selection process. Each had two rounds of anonymous evaluation by an editorial board with student and faculty members. The articles were chosen for their interesting arguments, their solid and original research, and their authors’ command of their subjects. It is our hope that Spires will further strengthen the culture of undergraduate research at Mercer in all fields.

We thank University Professor Wallace Daniel and Karol Daniel, whose generous financial support made this journal possible. We also thank faculty mentors, whose painstaking and patient work shepherded our students through the long and sometimes frustrating process of engaging in original research. Finally, we thank all the students who submitted articles for us to consider. We learned something from each—and salute your commitment to research!

Richard Fallis for the Editorial Board
Defender of the People:  
The Great Migration and the *Chicago Defender*  
Shaynna Rodrigues

“There can be little doubt that that several hundred thousand Negroes, mainly men, have left the South in this movement. The wives and children are swelling the lists of those that are still leaving. And the end is not yet in sight.”

-U.S. Department of Labor; Division of Negro Economics

The Great Migration was the mass exodus of African Americans from the southern states to the North beginning in the early 1900s. In 1919, government officials estimated that 50,000 African Americans from Georgia, 90,000 from Alabama, and 100,000 from Mississippi had escaped the hardships of the South in the hopes of finding better circumstances further north. These numbers were based on the railroad traffic out of each state respectively but in all actuality were more likely an understatement of the vast numbers of individuals fleeing the South. According to Joe William Trotter, Jr., author of *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective*, in 1910 no more than 300,000 blacks had traveled North; in contrast, the number jumped to nearly one million during the years of World War I. Although the white population could not account for the exact number of African Americans moving to northern states, it was apparent to all those present that a massive movement was underway.

At the end of the Civil War, blacks were freed from their roles as slaves in the South, and because of this new-found freedom, there had been a gradual trickle of north-bound movement in the African American population from the South to the North. Southern blacks sought to find their fortunes in the North, hoping for prosperity and economic independence. Upon examination of happenings in Georgia in 1917, T.J. Woofter, a government investigator, concluded that “the beginnings of the movement in 1916-17 may, therefore, be characterized as an intensification of the shift of Negro population which has

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been taking place for the past fifty years, accelerated by the boll weevil and abnormal conditions of the northern industry.”⁴ He acknowledged the fact that the migration had been a continuous flow of black labor from the South to the North, but by 1915 the movement expanded into a more noticeable exodus. Woofter and many other whites believed that the intensification of the movement was a direct effect of several natural disasters that had occurred recently in the South, including the boll weevil, severe flooding in some areas, and drought in others, in addition to the pull from northern industry in the form of labor agents sent to the South to poach the labor force. By 1917, expensive licensing procedures and anti-enticement laws had been enacted in most southern states in an attempt to try to ban northern labor agents.⁵ Despite these restrictions, “No southern state [was] entirely free from the loss of necessary and desirable Negro labor.”⁶

Some whites attempted to force blacks to remain in the South; they lobbied senators, federal agencies, and congressmen in order to protect their labor supply and economy. In Macon, Georgia, for example, the police attempted to retain their labor by forcibly evicting hundreds of departing blacks from the railroad station.⁷ Macon was not alone in these desperate measures of restraint; however, whites were unsuccessful in limiting the black population to the southern states. Part of the issue that whites faced during this time was their inability to comprehend the reasoning behind the migration. Historians of the Great Migration, including Alan DeSantis, note that “Literature dealing with this exodus is dominated primarily by economic determinism and socio-emotional explanations. While both explanations supply valuable insights, both neglect the role of rhetorical discourse in constructing social reality.”⁸ The white population of the South refused to acknowledge the horrendous conditions that African Americans endured in the community, schools, and especially in the workforce. Acknowledging these harsh conditions would force Southern whites to change the antebellum practices they had fought so hard to maintain after the Civil War. In order to begin to comprehend the ignorance of the white community in the early 1900s, the reality of the black experience in the South needs to be brought

⁶ W.T.B. Williams, “Negro Exodus from the South,” 93.
to light. By understanding the African American plight in the early twentieth
century it will become clear how the black literature of the time, which was
ignored by whites as a viable influence, was able to expand the reaches of the
Great Migration to a wide and fearful audience.

Although some African Americans were optimistic about their
prospects after emancipation, in the South it quickly became apparent that the
living conditions imposed on blacks by Southern whites would not improve; in
many cases, the conditions became worse. The problem that arose for blacks was
that the laws had changed, but the mentality of the whites had not. In the years
following the conclusion of the Civil War, Southern whites began to amplify the
belief in white supremacy, which was an evolution of the racism remaining from
the antebellum period. White supremacy indicated that being of African descent,
and therefore darker skin color, deemed a person as lower in status, capabilities,
and overall worth; even the poorest white tenant farmer was considered “better”
than the richest, most educated black man, because that poor tenant farmer was
of fairer skin.

The realization that the overall mentality of whites had not changed
can be seen in the story of Charlie Holcombe, a black tobacco farmer in the
South. Both his father and grandfather were tenant farmers, growing tobacco
for a white landowner. Holcombe aspired to gain his independence from whites
by owning the land he worked. He explained, “I thought that I could manage
my business better and dat I was gonna be able to own a place o’ my own
someday. . . . I was a high-minded young nigger and was full of git-up-and-
git.” Holcombe soon discovered that his landlord would find ways to exert his
control. For example, when Holcombe actually succeeded in profiting from the
year’s settlement of the tobacco crop, his landlord called him back to charge him
for additional warehouse fees. Because Holcombe, like so many other post-slave
era blacks, was illiterate, he could not dispute the landlord’s clasims. In attempt
to provide his oldest son with the opportunities that he never had, Holcombe
sent his son to college. In the end, Holcombe’s son, Willie, was killed by a
group of white men at the tobacco warehouse for disputing the settlement price.
Holcombe believed that the trouble with his son was that “he had stepped outen
his place when he got dat eddycation. If [he’d] kept him here on de farm [Willie]
woulda been all right. Niggers has got to l’arn dat dey ain’t like white folks, and
never will be. . . . Niggers is build [sic] for service, like a mule, and dey needn’t

9 Leon F. Litwack, Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow (New York: Alfred
10 Ibid., 5.
‘spect nothin’ else.”

Charlie Holcombe’s story exemplifies how the belief of white supremacy dictated social interactions in the South. By the early 1900s, African Americans often began to believe in the superiority of white people as well because there was not another reality available to them.

The limitations placed upon Charlie Holcombe’s potential economic independence were not uncommon for African Americans in the South. After the emancipation of slaves, “whites eager to retain their laborers found that a “slavery of debt” worked almost as effectively as the old slavery of legal ownership.”

In the Mississippi Delta, for example, three systems of labor existed: renters, sharecroppers, or wage labor. Sharecropping, the most common form of labor in the Delta, allowed for the tenant and the landlord to “share “equally” in the crop.”

Through this system, the wages were paid in the form of a “share” in the crop, and the landlord provided all of the tools necessary for production, which he charged to the sharecropper’s account. More often than not, this arrangement with landlord put the sharecropper into debt, because the landlord would take advantage of the worker’s illiteracy when settling at the end of the season. W.E.B. Du Bois acknowledged the hindrances of this system because “above all, [blacks could not] see why they should take unusual pains to make the white man’s land better, or to fatten his mule, or save his corn.”

African Americans became trapped by the sharecropping system not only because of the debt that was accumulated but also because they did not strive to better their farming methods, thus limiting the potential of a more fruitful production.

Even if individuals stopped working for a certain landlord, the debt that was acquired would follow that individual. Runaways were hunted down, caught, and forced into returning to work for the landlord until they paid off their debt. If African Americans attempted to improve their position through organized labor groups, the leaders of the group were usually beaten or lynched. Without the strict discipline of slavery ruling over blacks, whites had to create a new system of regulations, including contract labor laws, vagrancy laws, and local ordinances that allowed employers to exploit black workers. Unemployed blacks could be arrested for violation of the vagrancy laws in some cities and

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11 Ibid., 6.
12 Leon F. Litwack, Trouble in Mind, 116.
14 Ibid., 25.
15 Leon F. Litwack, Trouble in Mind, 116.
16 Ibid., 133-134.
17 Ibid., 139.
forced to work. In the Mississippi Delta, “the search for a cheap source of labor drove Delta planters, who believed they never had enough workers and were willing to coerce, beat, cheat, and steal to find and retain them. The web of debt, peonage, and convict labor ensnared all sorts of people.”

Joseph Callus, for example, was approached at the train station in Little Rock by a man who put a gun to Callus’s head and asked him for his name, hometown, and if he had a job. When the man discovered that Callus was only carrying ten cents, he arrested Callus for vagrancy and shipped him to southeastern Arkansas, where he was forced to work in a wage labor camp. Similar situations occurred frequently in the Mississippi Delta and throughout the South in a desperate attempt to trap African Americans into the labor system.

Despite the abuse of the African American labor force and the strong belief in white supremacy, “the dependence of whites on black labor reversed the often expounded theories about black helplessness and black dependence.” The other white perception of black laborers was that blacks were more dependable, more hard working, and more adaptable than white laborers. Not only did many whites prefer black labor, they also expected African Americans to maintain the same level of commitment and obedience as the previous generation of slaves. One white man from Charleston conceded that “if today they were all to take ship for Africa, who would chop the wood to-morrow morning? Who would make the fire, who [would] cook the breakfast, who serve it, who would dress the baby, who would hitch up the horse, ply the hoe, and guide the plough?” Therefore, when African Americans began to travel North, their absence was sorely felt, even if white landowners would not admit it at first. Some were not initially worried by the change because “as the North [grew] blacker the South [grew] whiter.” Less paternal whites in the South, mainly non-plantation owners, saw the exodus as a relief from the burden of having to educate and refine blacks. Before the Great Migration began in full swing, the numbers of black workers in the South were described as an “idle surplus.” Southern plantation owners were able to use this surplus to their advantage, because it allowed them to exploit workers, so therefore, when the progress of the migration accelerated, the government did not see an immediate need for alarm. When asked about the migration, the Oglethorpe University Press went so far as to indicate that the migration was a gift in disguise, because

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23 Grossman and Harrison, “Black Labor is the Best Labor”, 56.
it gave landowners the ability to replace inefficient blacks with well-paid, efficient whites.\textsuperscript{25} This view was not shared by everyone, however. In Tuskegee, Georgia, for example, one-fifth of the plantations were worked by black tenant farmers, while the rest was worked by black wage workers. Many feared the possibility of bankruptcy that the migration of the workers could bring with it. Some whites understood that “no other would work under such conditions,” so it would be nearly impossible to replace the black labor force with whites.\textsuperscript{26}

In 1916, the United States Department of Labor began an investigation into the migration of African Americans. The result, \textit{Negro Migration in 1916-17}, was published in 1919 in order to publicize the circumstances surrounding the Great Migration. At the time of the initial investigation, the Department of Labor did not view the migration as too drastic of a problem; however, with the United States entry into World War I, the migration of black workers became more of a concern, because of the potential for the lack of labor to negatively affect the outcome of the war.\textsuperscript{27} In the introduction, the author, J.H. Dillard, recognizes the natural desire among all classes for improvement by stating, “The genuine progress of a country depends upon the spread of good conditions of living and good chances of healthy improvement among all people of the country.”\textsuperscript{28} Dillard attempts to acknowledge the blacks’ right to improve their condition, which he believes could be beneficial to the entire United States.

In one of the sections of the report, the investigator, T.J. Woofter, describes the conditions in Georgia after traveling throughout the state for over two months. According to his report, from May 1916 to September 1917 between 35,000 and 40,000 African Americans moved out of Georgia. Woofter continues by mentioning how after the Civil War, Georgia was one of the lowest paying cotton states with only an annual wage of eighty-three dollars versus Alabama’s eighty-seven dollars and South Carolina’s ninety-three. As a result, blacks were more prone to migrate out of Georgia earlier than from some of the surrounding states.\textsuperscript{29} The three types of labor examined throughout the report were farm labor, city labor, and turpentine and sawmill gangs. When studying the farm labor of Georgia, Woofter found twenty counties in southwest Georgia that had been greatly affected by the boll weevil by the fall of 1916. An interview with employers about the labor supply revealed that most “heavy

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid., 54-56.
\item Ibid., 53.
\item Ibid., 9.
\item T.J. Woofter, “Migration from Georgia,” 75.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
movement corresponded closely to the line of heavy damage by the weevil.”

In the other two areas where farming was present, south-central Georgia and the coastal region, the boll weevil did not greatly affect the productivity of the farms; Woofter concluded that there was an “irregularity of movement” of black workers from these areas.

The numbers of city laborers who migrated were more difficult to establish. Cities such as Savannah, Macon, Waycross, and Albany were noticing the effects of the migration, especially in regards to the loss of skilled laborers who were offered higher wages by northern employers. According to Woofter, even African American doctors and lawyers began to migrate out of the cities in order to follow their clientele north. Employers in cities reported that almost one-hundred percent of their day laborers were black. These same employers often complained about the shortage in numbers and experience of workers that remained in the South. Although production still continued, Woofter notes that employers might not be feeling the full effects of the migration yet because they have not attempted to hire seasonal labor.

Not much information was given about the turpentine and sawmill gangs in Georgia other than to note that the naval stores in Savannah had been inactive from 1914 to 1916, which meant that the labor agents for the Pennsylvania and Erie Railroads easily found workers amongst the unemployed in Savannah.

The most revealing aspect of *Negro Migration in 1916-17* was the attempts by the investigators to pinpoint the cause of the Great Migration. Woofter remarks that “the fact that the movement began among the farm laborers and the day laborers in the city and, at first, largely among the unemployed in Savannah indicates that a living wage attracted the first migrants and has been one of the primary considerations with the large majority of later migrants.” He blames low wages on a bad system of black employment in Georgia, which is based on the cost of living and not the productivity of the labor. After the initial spur of the migration, the high amount of press coverage initiated further migration, especially among the property-owning black population because their “social grievances were a subject of conversation.” Labor agents, according to Woofter, were also a major influence in the migration. In Macon, Georgia, for example, “the Central of Georgia shops employ about six-hundred Negroes, mostly unskilled… when a labor agent was

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31 T.J. Woofter, “Migration from Georgia,” 81.
34 T.J. Woofter, “Migration from Georgia,” 86.
active in Macon, they lost approximately two-hundred Negroes per month.”

Labor agents were arrested in Americus, Cuthbert, Thomasville, and Sylvester. In order to counteract the influence of labor agents, employers began to raise wages to entice blacks to remain in Georgia.

Other than the influence of labor agents and the mention of an inefficient labor system, Woofter barely acknowledges the possibility of social interactions with whites as a cause of the migration. He states that “minor” injustices by courts was often “assigned” by blacks as one of the causes of migration. The purposeful use of the terms “minor” and “assigned” indicates how little Woofter thinks of this supposed reasoning and implies that the courts were not guilty of the accused actions. In another section, Woofter states that it is “difficult to determine the exact influence of the lynchings” in Georgia on the black population. Despite this assertion, Woofter had previously mentioned in his report that three of the worst lynchings in Georgia had occurred in the southwest, near where the boll weevil struck and the main migration of blacks was occurring. Woofter’s belief that lynch mobs did not have a great influence on southern blacks was shared by many other whites at the time. One final aspect that Woofter examines is the education of African Americans. He briefly mentions that six times more education is provided for white teachers than black, which is reflected in the quality of schooling of each race. Woofter concludes this section by stating that “the improvement of race relations is a matter of time, and will rest largely on the satisfactory solution of the economic problems of farm life.” He does not see the need for immediate social improvements but rather alterations in the plantation system, which will eventually alter the supposed social concerns of the black population. The problem that Woofter and the other investigators faced was that “to respond meaningfully to the Great Migration’s ideological as well as economic threat to the system. . . would be to deny both the legitimacy and the efficacy of the assumptions about race central to southern economic and social culture.”

Because southern whites did not believe that blacks were capable of having a great influence on their own movement, whites had the general consensus that if they could discover a way to alter the African Americans’ living situation but maintain them as a subordinate people, the migration would

36 Ibid., 84-85.
37 Ibid., 88.
38 Ibid., 87.
39 T.J. Woofter, “Migration from Georgia,” 79.
40 Ibid., 88.
41 Ibid., 89.
42 Grossman and Harrison, “Black Labor is the Best Labor,” 65.
stop. Studies were conducted on how to improve the hostile race relations of the South but only as a matter of national security rather than to find social justice and equality. Additionally, whites did not find it necessary to explore the black experience of the time in order to understand the movement; analysis was conducted from a strictly white perspective. For example, throughout *Negro Migration of 1916-17* the authors often quoted employers, landlords, or white newspapers, but there was little indication of the black viewpoint. Part of the reasoning behind the absence of black thinking is the fact that revealing the truth behind their experience would upset the core relations of the South. Most whites believed that blacks were “docile, dependent, and un-ambitious” as well as willing to “accept in the white man’s country the place assigned to him by the white man.” \(^{44}\) W.T.B. Williams concluded that “the unusual amounts of money coming in, the glowing accounts from the North, and the excitement and stir of great crowds leaving, [worked] upon the feelings of many Negroes. They [pulled] up and [followed] the crowd almost without reason. They [were] stampeded into action. This [accounted] in large part for the apparently unreasonable doings of many who [gave] up good positions or [sacrificed] valuable property or good business to go North.” \(^{45}\) The way in which Williams describes the African American migration is reminiscent of the movement of cattle, blindly following one another to some unknown. He believed that they had no valid reasoning behind the exodus other than the flow of money from kinsmen and the fact that others have moved away. This assumption correlates with the image of a docile and obedient black population because it continues the portrayal of blacks as incapable of making rational decisions on their own.

In an attempt to slow the process of the migration, whites believed that by controlling the flow of information from the North to the South, they could limit the movement of African Americans. Northern newspapers, especially black newspapers such as the NAACP *Crisis* and the *Chicago Defender*, were banned in many southern states. By reducing the information available about northern jobs and transportation, whites believed that blacks would have no other way of discovering methods of transportation to the North. \(^{46}\) In addition, “without calling for major attitudinal or structural shifts, prominent whites prodded their communities to make the adjustments necessary to retain their labor supply,” especially through the newspapers. \(^{47}\) For example, the *Atlanta Constitution* warned its readers that low wages and lynchings were driving people away who

\(^{43}\) Joe William Trotter, Jr., *Great Migration*, 8-10.

\(^{44}\) Grossman and Harrison, “Black Labor is the Best Labor,” 51-52.


\(^{46}\) Grossman and Harrison, “Black Labor is the Best Labor,” 57.

\(^{47}\) Ibid, 61.
would “prefer to stay.”\textsuperscript{48} The \textit{Macon Telegraph} wrote articles at the time arguing that whites should limit mob law or else they would chase away the state’s best supply of labor. Despite the acknowledgement of some newspapers to the issues in the South that could have led to the migration, others remained steadfast in their belief that southern ways were not to blame. One South Carolina editor, for example, asserted that only ten percent of blacks leave due to treatment—two percent due to lynchings and violence and eight percent due to whites’ neglect of blacks and their way of life. The other ninety percent, according to the editor, leave due to problems with the boll weevil, food supply, and wages.\textsuperscript{49} Similarly, in 1916, the \textit{Nashville Banner} argued that “the Negroes who have gone north haven’t gone because of any bad treatment accorded them here.”\textsuperscript{50}

Despite the indecision in the newspapers, some temporary reform did occur in the South. By 1918, labor wages had risen from an average of $0.75-$1.00 a day to $1.75-$2.00 a day. Landowners also often chose to reduce the amount of rent on their lands, and some even offered free seed for food crops in order to lessen the abuse on their tenants. More money was placed towards African Americans’ education, although the schools were primarily agricultural training schools.\textsuperscript{51} In \textit{Negro Migration in 1916-17}, W.T.B. Williams offered various solutions in order to decrease the size of the migration of African Americans. One solution was to organize plantations to run more efficiently, which would allow for higher wages. Williams suggested that the contracts between owners and tenants should be analyzed so that advice could be given on the most practical solutions. Williams also noted that in areas where there were good schools for blacks, such as Lowndes County, Alabama, blacks were less likely to move away from the South. He suggested that if schools improved, blacks would not need to seek out better education for their children in the North.\textsuperscript{52}

Although “the white South strenuously [opposed] the Negro movement and loudly [objected] to the loss of her labor. . . she [was] slow to adopt any constructive measures for retaining it.”\textsuperscript{53} Despite the changes made by some employers, the majority still believed that African Americans were tied to the South and, therefore, would not leave. When interviewed about the wages given to blacks in the South, one landlord argued that “fifty cents to a dollar a day is worth as much to the Negro in the South as the pay of two to four dollars and

\textsuperscript{48} \textit{Ibid}., 61.
\textsuperscript{49} W.T.B. Williams, “Negro Exodus from the South,” 101.
\textsuperscript{50} Grossman and Harrison, “Black Labor is the Best Labor,” 57.
\textsuperscript{51} Grossman and Harrison, “Black Labor is the Best Labor,” 63-64.
\textsuperscript{52} W.T.B. Williams, “Negro Exodus from the South,” 89-94.
\textsuperscript{53} \textit{Ibid.}, 110.
over per day” in the North.\(^{54}\) Similarly, many whites believed that the black population would have had to seek out employment in the North sooner or later because of the surplus of labor in the South.\(^{55}\) The few attempts that were made to halt the migration “were undermined by the inability of many prominent white southerners to recognize blacks as active and rational participants in the historical process.”\(^{56}\) For example, in W.T.B. Williams’ report, he indicates that there is no black leadership within the movement. In a way, Williams attempts to blame prominent blacks for not “checking the movement” and doing more to slow down the process.\(^{57}\)

The one exception to his assumption that there was no black leadership is the single paragraph Williams dedicates to discussing the “effect of the Negro press in making the Negro actively conscious of his condition.”\(^{58}\) Williams states that there are two newspapers whose effect “is little known outside of the Negro race.”\(^{59}\) Neither newspaper is referred to by name in the report, but one is referred to as a Chicago newspaper, which indicates the popular publication called the Chicago Defender. Williams does not waste any time analyzing the black newspapers, which is apparent in the one paragraph he dedicates to the topic, before he moves on to discuss the wage rates of various cities. By doing this, Williams downplays the potential impact that the paper could be having on the African American population throughout the South.

Despite Williams’ dismissal of the influence of black newspapers, the Chicago Defender did have a great impact on the Great Migration, and “in some sections it [was] probably more effective in carrying off Negroes than all the labor agents put together.”\(^{60}\) The Defender was a black, weekly newspaper that was the first of its kind because it appealed to the masses and not just to the elite African Americans such as the NAACP Crisis. By 1915, the Defender reached nearly 50,000 southern blacks, and at its peak circulation it sold nearly 250,000 copies a week.\(^{61}\) This mass readership did not account for those illiterate blacks who heard the Defender read out loud and those who borrowed copies from others. The success of the Chicago Defender was its ability to “sum up the Negro’s troubles and [keep] them constantly before him, and [to point] out

\(^{54}\) Ibid, 100.  
\(^{55}\) Ibid, 98.  
\(^{56}\) Grossman and Harrison, “Black Labor is the Best Labor,” 52.  
\(^{57}\) W.T.B. Williams, “Negro Exodus from the South,” 95.  
\(^{58}\) Ibid., 103.  
\(^{59}\) Ibid., 103.  
\(^{60}\) Ibid., 103.  
in terms he can understand the way to escape.”62 Before the publication of this newspaper, the southern black experience was not openly discussed for fear of reprimand; the Defender gave African Americans the ability to “understand the omnipresence and the intransigence of their oppression. . . and a way to deliverance.”63 The Defender utilized the concept of the American Dream, freedom, and democracy in order to persuade its readers that there can be improvement in their quality of life. Although Williams and the other authors of the Department of Labor barely acknowledged the potential impact the Chicago Defender could have on southern states, the severe white reaction to the paper revealed how threatening its publication was to the white population. The governor of Georgia went so far as to ask the postmaster to remove any copies from the mail.64

If the refusal to allow the Defender into the post was not explicit enough, letters of the African American migrants during the time show how much of an impact the paper had on southern blacks. Emmett J. Scott, who discovered letters of immigrants, acknowledged that “these documents will serve as a guide in getting at the motive dominant in the minds of these refugees and at the real situation during the upheaval.”65 One unifying aspect of many of the letters was the author’s acknowledgement of the Chicago Defender and the information he or she gathered through the paper. For example, one individual from Rome, Georgia, wrote, “Dear Sir: I’ve just read your ad in the Chicago Defender on getting employment. So now I will ask you to do the best you can for me. Now, Mr. —, I am not a tramp by any means, I am a high class churchman and business man.”66 Another man in Jackson, Mississippi, wrote, “Kind Sir: I saw your ad in the Chicago Defender. Where you wonted 15 or 20 good men. So I am writing you asking you do you still wont them. Also you said you would send transportation for them.”67 The letters from these migrants varied in all ages and circumstances, from single men of eighteen years old to older gentlemen with families to support. One insight that these letters provided was how widespread the Defender was: letters ranged from Topeka, Kansas, all the way to South Carolina and Miami, Florida. Additionally, the migrants often referred to the available work they had read about in the Chicago Defender and how the employer was willing to provide transportation for those willing to move farther north.68

63 Ibid, 476.
64 Ibid., 479.
67 Ibid, 308.
68 Ibid., 293-302.
Other than advertising the job openings in the North, the articles found in the Defender highlighted the hardships that blacks endured in the South, emphasizing the difference between life in the South and the promises of the American Dream. The editor of the Defender, Robert S. Abbott, was not afraid to publish stories on the effects of Jim Crow, the lack of human rights and dignity blacks faced in the South, or the lack of educational and health facilities available to southern blacks. In addition to divulging the black experience, within the same pages one could also find hope for the advancement of the race. For example, on the front page on January 2, 1915, a notice read, “‘Peace on earth and good will to men’ has not been sung in vain. Although strife prevails in certain sections of the world and there are rumors of war in others, there is still enough on the brighter side to know that the Divine Injunction has not been sung in vain.” Abbott sought to ensure that his readers not only had the harsh truth but that they also knew of the hope of a better experience that could be found in the North.

One of the key aspects of the Chicago Defender was the fact that it did not shy away from publishing details about lynch mobs, unlike southern newspapers. In an article about a lynch mob in Louisiana, the title boasted that the “guilty should suffer.” The article then described how it took a detailed account of five different African Americans being lynched within ten days for the governor of Louisiana to begin an investigation into the matter. A quote from the Louisiana Times indicates the concern that a disregard of law will bring “contempt for human life” out in both blacks and the mob. Another later article described how Mrs. Julia Lawson lost a cow and young Edward Johnson was arrested for killing the cow. According to the article, “The sheriff never reached the jail, his prisoner was lynched on the road, the cow came home, but trifles like that are of no moment in these parts.” The description provided revealed both the condescending way in which whites approach lynching, as if it means nothing, while simultaneously shocking the reader with its desensitized approach. Many of the Defender articles are just as blunt as this article, leaving no room for interpretation while reading them.

Not only did articles inform the subscribers of lynchings, they also called for action amongst the southern black folk. In an editorial in 1915, the author discussed how in 1914 there were fifty-four lynchings, but only forty-nine

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69 Alan DeSantis, “Selling the American Dream Myth,” 481.
71 “Governor Hall to Probe Caddo Parish Lynching,” Chicago Defender, January 2, 1915, 1.
72 Ibid., 7.
were of black people. He stated that despite the fact that the mobs have argued that lynch law is specifically for blacks that “the fun wasn’t coming fast and furious enough” and now the “pastime” will continue on despite the color of the individual being lynched.\textsuperscript{74} The mob spirit will be kept alive because authorities are unwilling to rein the mobs in, especially when ringleaders are prominent white citizens in a community. The author suggested that the only solution is that “the Negro must protect himself and his family with the white man’s weapon,” the law.\textsuperscript{75} In a later front page article, the \textit{Defender} argues that the disregard for the law by whites has revealed to blacks that they must physically protect themselves instead of following the traditional advice of letting the law take its course. The article notes how in the past there actually had to be a crime for an individual to get lynched, “but more frequently [with] these murders oftentimes whole families have been for the most trivial cause.”\textsuperscript{76} One of the examples the article articulated was the Monticello Outrage, where a father, son, and two daughters were beaten then hung for some unknown reason; the only possibility authorities could think of was that they might have been illegally selling alcohol. The advice given is that when the mob comes, make sure to “take one with you.”\textsuperscript{77} The exemplar of this concept for African Americans was Green Gibson who, when cornered by the mob, shot twelve members after attempting to protect his son. According to the \textit{Defender} article, the southern newspapers failed to mention that Gibson succeeded in killing eight of the twelve mob members before they got him.\textsuperscript{78} Later on in May of that same year, in Sommerville, Tennessee, Tom Brooks was taken from a police car in transit by “a mob of white gentlemen (blue bloods) and strung up on a railroad trestle, where his body was riddled with bullets.”\textsuperscript{79} The death, according to the local paper, was due to unknown parties, but the \textit{Defender} notes that Brooks managed to kill two white men in an attempt to protect himself. The author repeats the mantra of “take one with you” before concluding by saying, “men everywhere are saying “long may his ashes rest in peace for protecting his manhood.”\textsuperscript{80} 

The \textit{Defender} not only highlighted the plight of African Americans in the South, but also acknowledged the successes of the African American cause in the North. In the beginning of 1915, for example, Congress was attempting to pass the Reed Bill, an immigration bill to ban any future black aliens from

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\textsuperscript{74} “The Habit of Lynching,” \textit{Chicago Defender}, January 9, 1915, 8.
\textsuperscript{75} \textit{Ibid.}, 8.
\textsuperscript{76} “When the Mob Comes and You Must Die Take at Least One with You,” \textit{Chicago Defender}, January 23, 1915, 1.
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Ibid.}, 1.
\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Ibid.}, 1.
\textsuperscript{79} “Another Member of the Race is Lynched,” \textit{Chicago Defender}, May 8, 1915, 1.
\textsuperscript{80} “Another Member,” \textit{Chicago Defender}, 1.
\end{flushleft}
entering the United States. According to the article, Mr. Sabath, a congressman from Chicago, stated that “he had few Negro constituents in his district, but he refused to be classed among the narrow minded members of Congress.”81 The defeat of the bill was portrayed as a victory for all blacks as well as for Illinois. The Defender regularly commented on the political happenings of the time, emphasizing especially when politicians from the North voted in ways which assisted the black cause. When Congress passed a bill that made interracial marriage illegal in the District of Columbia, the Defender called it an insult to the race and mentioned that blacks can “SCREEN FOR OWN DIRT.”82 It did, however, acknowledge the fact that four Illinois representatives voted against the bill.

Starting in July of 1916 and continuing until the Chicago Riot of 1919, the newspaper called for the “Great Defender Migration Drive,” which urged for a mass exodus on May 15, 1917, of southern blacks to the North. Throughout this campaign, the Defender printed over 191 articles about the plight of southern blacks in order to “give them the courage to acknowledge their dissatisfaction.”83 The Defender sought to emphasize that the occurrences in the South were not the plight of just a few individuals but of the whole people; it attempted to show that African Americans will never be free in the South. Although it was barely recognized as a driving force at the time, the Chicago Defender was one of the most influential factors of the Great Migration. Even before the drive for migration in 1916, the Defender succeeded in its effort to interpret the black experience and allow for open discussion of the unfair treatment that blacks faced in the South. Unlike the NAACP Crisis, which was written for a more elite African American audience, the Defender allowed the Great Migration to be “contained to no one class entirely; the ignorant and the intelligent, the inefficient and the capable Negroes” were all included.84 Although the white population did not acknowledge the newspaper’s vast effect on the black immigrants, the Defender broadened the intelligence of “the Negroes [making] them more restive under these unfavorable conditions than they [had] been in the past… They [were] all tired of being treated as children; they [wanted] to be men.”85

83 Alan DeSantis, “Selling the American Dream Myth,” 484.
84 W.T.B. Williams, “Negro Exodus from the South,” 94.
85 Ibid., 107.
William Faulkner is famous for borrowing well-known quotations for his titles. His work Go Down Moses refers to the black spiritual of the same name, and The Sound and the Fury obviously refers to the passage of Shakespeare’s Macbeth, “A tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.” While these references are fairly straightforward, both easy to catch and understand (particularly the latter obviously referring to the narrative delivered by the mentally impaired Benjy Compson), the biblical allusion in the title of his novel Absalom, Absalom! is slightly less obvious. Not only is the passage it refers to relatively obscure compared to the previous two, but it is also unclear what Faulkner intends by making this reference. The title refers to the passage in 2 Samuel in which King David cries out, “Absalom, my son, my son, Absalom! Would God that I had died for thee,” after learning that his rebelling son, Absalom, has been killed in battle by Joab (2 Sam 18:33).

While it is clear which passage Faulkner refers to, scholars have argued how exactly to interpret the reference to the King David story. There are several similarities between the two narratives, to be sure. Both stories engage in a discourse that is particularly concerned with sons, with dynasties, and with succession. Both show the rise of a remarkable young man from a country outsider to a prominent aristocrat, and both men watch their respective empires destroyed by feuding sons. However, many have found comparing the “design” of the manipulative, shrewd, and calculating “man-demon-horse” (as Rosa Coldfield calls him) known as Thomas Stutpen to a biblical hero like King David to be problematic (Faulkner 8). Some scholars, like David M. Monaghan, argue that the reference is “basically ironic,” that comparing him to so lofty a figure merely satirizes the Southern aristocracy and notions of capitalistic greed (Monaghan 28). Others assert that the intertextuality is a simple manifestation of the religious culture in which Faulkner grew up and set his novel, H.L. Mencken’s so-called “Bible Belt” of Evangelical Christianity (Wilson 56). However, Faulkner’s engagement with the biblical text seems much deeper and more sophisticated than these explanations. Though he never explicitly quotes the biblical text apart from the novel’s title, the Old Testament characters,
language, and thematics of the King David story permeate *Absalom, Absalom!* to such a degree, I argue that Faulkner uses the Old Testament story as an intertextual thematic nucleus, a skeletal structure that directs the novel’s prose style, characterization, conflict, and action. Faulkner defines the novel in both the ways it follows the biblical archetype and the ways it deviates from it, and this conversation with the Biblical text provides the key answer to the central question of the novel: “what is the reason for the failure of Sutpen’s design?” (Behrens 24).

The particular style Faulkner’s prose emulates is the first indication of this thematic skeleton. Nearly all Faulkner scholars agree that Faulkner had a strong affinity and affection for the Bible, particularly the Old Testament. This affinity, however, was not so much the religious culture (though that was a contributing factor) as it was that culture’s literary tradition. Growing up in the South, the Bible was “the very stuff of Faulkner’s world” (Gold 142). The fact that Faulkner was raised below the Bible Belt, meant that the Bible was the one book he and his southern neighbors were certain to have read. It was a book that even “the least literate” of southerners would be familiar with, and it would be the only text that he could set up an analogous structure with that would be guaranteed to be understood by all of his neighbors (Gold 141). Not only was the text very familiar to Faulkner, but it was also one that he took personal pleasure in. According to Faulkner own words, he made a tradition of reading it “once every ten or fifteen years,” and he considered it “some of the finest, most robust, and most amusing folk-lore I know” (Behrens 29). Apparently, he thought of the idea of the novel and the title “simultaneously,” intending to tie in the biblical literature to his novel from the beginning. Though the narrative itself may not explicitly follow its biblical counterpart, Faulkner has built his story upon it and the two are inseparable (Behrens 29).

However, as Robert Alter points out, as much as Faulkner enjoyed and appreciated finer examples of biblical prose, the “most distinctive traits” of Faulkner’s style are completely “antithetical to biblical prose or poetry as it is represented in the King James Version” (Alter 84). The “labyrinthine-poetic and the pungently vernacular” stream of words and phrases that make up Faulkner’s prose style “is intrinsically resistant to the assimilation of elements of biblical style,” which are simple, neat, straightforward, formal, and elegantly brief. It would seem nigh impossible to find the “spare line of biblical prose” in the flood of polysyllabic words and enjambed clauses of Faulkner’s own writing (Alter 85). With this said, there are some noteworthy uses of highly biblical language in the pages of *Absalom, Absalom!*
While there are no explicit references to the King David narrative outside of the title, there are a few striking emulations of Genesis, particularly at the very beginning. The founding of Sutpen’s Hundred “out of the soundless Nothing” as described by Rosa Coldfield strongly echoes the creation of the earth in Genesis (Blake 128). Coming seemingly from nowhere, Sutpen appears to constructs this house out of “the void” with nothing except the sheer force of his will, just as God creates the heaven and earth out of the formless void in the first chapter of Genesis (Behrens 28). Throughout the entire novel, Faulkner also makes use of several biblical terms; terms that form what Alter refers to as “a thematic lexicon” (Alter 85). These terms are a particular mode of language used by the King James Bible that resonates thematically: seed and house, dust and clay, flesh and blood, land and curse, By themselves, such phrases are all normal, everyday words, but grouped together they are loaded with powerful theological connotations. Alter claims that though “we need not assume that Falkner subscribed” to the particular theological principles, “the theological framework” of the words gives him a powerful tool to evoke a very grim and theologically charged atmosphere (Alter 96).

The key things that these language interplays accomplish in the novel are establishing a suitable atmosphere, and “biblical tone” to introduce the novel and articulate certain thematic principles, such as a concern with sons and with the idea of dynasty. When the story’s numerous narrators use such language, they mimic Old Testament style and authority without copying all aspects of the form. For example, when Rosa Coldfield or Quentin uses an example of this “thematic lexicon” of pseudo-biblical terms such as “land” or “curse,” they project the specific “melodrama” of the Old Testament prophets, melodrama that is heavily reflected in her speech (Behrens 29). “In the Hebrew Bible,” according to Alter, “the land is the theatre in which God bestows blessing on His chosen people” (Alter 94). The central feature of the covenant between God and the nation of Israel is the idea of “the promised land,” and if they chose to break the covenant, the books of the prophets and the books of law, such Deuteronomy, warn that God can and will turn the land against them (Alter 95). Thus, when Quentin asks his father, “What’s it to me that the land or the earth or whatever it was got tired of him at last and turned to destroy him?” and his father replies, “It’s going to turn and destroy us all someday,” Faulkner’s prose has the melodramatic effect of a Jeremiad prophesy or a passage from Revelation, foretelling doom, hellfire and brimstone (Alter 95). By bookending the novel between the pattern of Genesis narrative and the final fall of the Sutpen’s design and his hopes of creating a dynasty, and with Rosa’s semi prophetic ramblings in between, Faulkner models the narrative after the Old Testament in its simplest, most watered down, and diluted form: Genesis, the
founding and fall of Israel (the rise and fall of Sutpen), and the prophets. It “is the Old Testament to the inhabitants of this world” (Alter 96).

The aspect of the novel that is probably the most affected by the formulaic biblical structure is its characterization, particularly regarding Thomas Sutpen, Henry, Judith, and Charles Bon. It is clear that Faulkner fashions Sutpen in the likeness of David, the patriarch of each subsequent Israelite king. Like David, the youngest son of a poor shepherd from the tiny hamlet of Bethlehem, Sutpen comes from a simple, pastoral life in the backwoods of West Virginia (Faulkner 179). When he decides to run away to Haiti, he is fourteen years old, at the beginning of the transitional stage between boyhood and manhood. This is very close to the age David would have been when he faced Goliath as “but a youth” (1 Samuel 17:42). Interestingly enough, Sutpen’s noted accomplishments of marksmanship and physical prowess, such as “the pistol demonstration” he gives “on the first day of his arrival” in which he hits a playing card with both of his pistols and his wrestling matches with the “wild negroes” (whom Faulkner constantly compares to animals) mirror David’s own feats of skill and strength: pegging Goliath in the head with his slingshot and fighting off lions and bears with his bare hands (Faulkner 25, 30; 1 Samuel 17:36, 49). Both of them are valiant soldiers who fight well and fearlessly. Even Sutpen’s fair complexion which “had the appearance of pottery” and his “short reddish beard” hint at David’s features which were “ruddy and of a fair countenance” (Faulkner 24; 1 Samuel 17:42).

The two also share similarities that are less circumstantial. According to Robert Alter, Faulkner’s depiction of Sutpen shows a keen understanding of three often overlooked key aspects of David’s persona: “the moral ambiguity,” the “tragic fixation on sons,” and the simultaneous paradoxical fall and founding of “the Davidic Dynasty” (Alter 80). The most prominent of these features, “his obsession with sons” is one that Faulkner particularly emphasizes in Sutpen. However, David’s fixation is slightly more complex and much more emotional. Both characters are exceedingly “preoccupied with establishing a dynasty” (Alter 82). Sutpen’s absolutely emotionless response to Bon’s death and Henry’s exile contrasts sharply with David’s extravagant displays of paternal affection, such as the despair he sinks into when he thinks all of his sons have been slaughtered or the outburst that Faulkner’s title refers to when he learns that Absalom, the son who took arms against him, has been killed. To Sutpen, his sons mean nothing more to him than another part of the design. To build his dynasty, he simply needs an heir. It does not matter to him whether that heir is Henry or Milly Jones’ baby, so long as the child is male and white.
The biblical thematics of King David’s story affect the characterizations of the younger generation of Sutpens as well. The two stories regarding Prince Absalom in 2 Samuel provide approximate guidelines for the roles and behaviors of Henry and Bon, and to a lesser extent Judith. In the first story, the story of Amnon and Tamar, David’s son Amnon falls in love with his half-sister Tamar. Feigning illness, he begs for her to come take care of him, and he rapes her after she falls for his ruse. Her older brother, who coincidentally is Absalom, is furious, and he kills Amnon to avenge their sister’s honor. Fearing his father’s wrath, he immediately flees into self-exile after his fratricide (2 Samuel 13:1-29). After reading this account, casting the younger Sutpens into their respective roles seems easy enough. Bon, Thomas Sutpen’s long lost son from his first wife, plays the role of Amnon, attempting to marry his half-sister Judith in order to reclaim his birthright. Henry plays the role of vengeful Absalom as he shoots his brother and best friend to prevent the incest, subsequently leaving in self-imposed exile.

However, a few disconcerting details about the Sutpen narrative prevent the parallel from being perfect. Firstly, apart from the role of avenging brother, there are no facets of Henry that resemble Absalom at all. After he returns from exile, Absalom begins to try to usurp his father’s throne and “steal the hearts of the men of Israel” (2 Samuel 15:6). This is a far cry from the meek and mild Henry who as a child is “unable to bear the sight of” even the violence of the slave wrestling matches (Faulkner 30). Henry who spends his life at Sutpen’s Hundred and at college doing exactly what Bon or his father want him to do, even when that means killing his brother and best friend, has not the spine for such rebellion.

The description of Absolom after he returns from exile sounds much more like Bon, the unwanted son who comes to Sutpen’s seeking recognition and hoping to reclaim his birthright. Furthermore, the praise as Absalom receives “for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him” sounds much more like Bon who “seduces” both Henry and Judith with his looks, his clothes and “with his very manner” that inspires heartache from women and imitation from men (2 Samuel 14:25, Faulkner 76). One particular part of Bon’s death scene also seems particularly evocative of Absalom. Though obviously a pistol shot would be utterly anachronistic in the biblical account, one object carries into both the biblical and the Faulkner scene. As Bon and Henry sit facing each other “on the two gaunt horses, two young men not yet in the world,” Henry warns Bon, “don’t you past the shadow of this post, this branch, Charles,” with the gun “lying across the saddle bow, yet unaimed” (Faulkner 106). It is noteworthy that Faulkner marks the spot of Bon’s
death with a tree-branch, or at least something like one. In the biblical account, a tree branch is actually the cause of Absalom’s demise:

“And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away” (2 Samuel 18:9).

Though both of the sons play roles in crumbling what would be the Sutpen Dynasty, neither of them truly fulfills the role of Absalom. They stand face as each other’s mirrors, playing part and counterpart to each other: one to play the role of two slain sons, both unmissed by their father; and the other to play the role of the thankless avenger twice, exiled by his love for his brother and made murderer by his obedience to his father. Perhaps this is why Faulkner drops the exclamatory “O” before each name in the title of *Absalom, Absalom!* This is the story of Absalom and Absalom, two brothers that live up to the same title.

Stylistically, evocation of the scriptural lines of 2 Samuel in the title of *Absalom, Absalom!* provides Faulkner with a theologically resonant vocabulary, a highly biblical atmosphere to use in his narrative, and the basic structure of the Old Testament for his plot elements to conform to. Using the biblical text as a reference, its evocation also provides him with a framework to build his characters upon, either by adhering to the precepts of their biblical counterparts or by deviating from them. Thematically it also offers him an opportunity to a central question raised by the novel, a question that Ralph Behrens argues is the “thematic center” underpinning the entire novel: “Why does Sutpen’s dynasty fail?” (Behrens 24).

Sutpen and David follow similar paths to establishing their respective dynasties. “Given the occasion,” both David and Sutpen “can and will do anything” to establish their respective dynasties (Alter 81). They both marry shrewdly to advance their respective social statuses; David’s marriage to Abigail and to King Saul’s Daughter Michael is comparable to Sutpen’s unions with Ellen Coldfield and Charles’ mother. Both lead successful military careers and become war heroes. While David slays Goliath and leads Israel’s army, Sutpen receives a certificate of bravery from General Lee. Both show adaptability and the ability to move when necessary (David to Zicklag and Sutpen to Jefferson). They also both make one critical mistake.

David commits adultery, conceiving an illegitimate child with his lover Bathsheba and murdering her husband so that he can marry her himself (2
Samuel 11). He repents when the prophet Nathan confronts him, and so he is allowed to keep his kingdom and his line intact. As punishment, however, God declares through Nathan:

\[ I \text{ will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun (2 Sam 12:11). } \]

This prophecy is fulfilled through the violence and rebellion of Amnon and Absalom. Sutpen thinks that his mistake is marrying Eulalia Bon, who, unbeknownst to Sutpen, is part black. Because this does not fit his design, he moves to Mississippi to start over and try again, despite the fact that he has already established a dynasty in Haiti, complete with a male heir. “The spiritual superiority of David,” according to Ralph Behrens, “is apparent in his acknowledging his errors” (Behrens 31). Unable to see the flaw in his design, Sutpen not only delays his enterprise and deprives himself of one heir, but he also loses his second and chosen heir, Henry, by turning him against his brother. If he had simply acknowledged the error of his design, it could have been successful through Eulalia and Charles Bon in Haiti.

However, viewed through the lens of another character, Sutpen’s first marriage would not appear to be his greatest mistake. Sutpen’s cold apathy towards his sons is a marked departure from the Davidic model, and his plan to turn Henry against Bon is patterned after the actions of another character entirely. While scholars like Alter asserts that the establishment of David’s line is simultaneous with the fall of the Davidic dynasty, and this certainly fits with the Sutpen narrative, there is a problem with the parallel (Alter 80). David’s dynasty remains intact for generations after David dies, while Sutpen’s crumbles after his death. While Behrens and Alter allow for the “spiritual superiority of David” to Sutpen, the treatment of his sons is completely unlike the David model. In fact, the plan mirrors one of his failed predecessor, King Saul. After Saul disobeys the Lord in the battle against the Amorites, Samuel tells him that the kingship will pass from his house unto another. Fearing that David might threaten his own dynasty, Saul counsels his son Jonathan to kill David (1 Samuel 19:1). While Jonathan refuses to kill David, Saul’s plan itself reoccurs in Faulkner’s narrative, and so does his same ironic lapse in judgment.

Though David and Jonathan are not born of the same parents, they are legally brothers through Michal’s marriage to David. Though Saul fears David and his influence, David is in fact Saul’s son, and Saul refers to him as such when David spares his life. Though David many times refuses to “raise his hand
against the Lord’s anointed,” David could have succeeded Saul and continued his Dynasty. However, this did not fit Saul’s design. Saul wants his eldest son and biological heir to reign after him, and his hostility drives David and his men away, weakening his own army. This leads to his defeat at the hands of the Amalekites, and it leads also to the death of his sons who fall in battle with him. This effectively ends his reign and ends the lives of both Saul and Jonathan, crumbling his dynasty.

In the same way that Saul’s plans to kill David effectively end Saul’s line and hand the kingship to David, Sutpen’s machinations kill Bon and drive Henry away, depriving Sutpen of a male heir to inherit the dynasty. Furthermore, Sutpen’s death at the hands of his lackey, Wash Jones, mirrors Saul’s request for his armor bearer to kill him (1 Samuel 31:4). Though the armor bearer does not kill Saul, and Sutpen certainly does not ask Wash to kill him, dying by Wash’s blade hints at Saul’s request. Also, the callous treatment of Milly is what drives Wash over the edge, suggesting that Sutpen dies, in a sense, by his own hand, like Saul. These parallels to the first dynasty of 1 Samuel suggest that Sutpen’s design fails because it departs from the comparatively successful model of David. As a southerner, Faulkner’s work is deeply rooted in the Biblical tradition, and Faulkner following this model’s form, style, plot, and characterization is ultimately what determine the fate of Sutpen’s dynasty. Even as Faulkner constructs a Davidic archetypal structure in the Sutpen Dynasty, he deconstructs it by patterning Sutpen’s failure after the ruined house that David replaced. By emulating Saul’s mistakes, Sutpen adopts a model rooted in biblical failure:

“And Samuel said to Saul, ‘You have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you as king over Israel!’ As Samuel turned to leave, Saul caught hold of the hem of his robe, and it tore. Samuel said to him, ‘The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to one of your neighbors—to one better than you.’” (1 Samuel 15:26-27).
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Russo-German Relations of the Weimar Era

David Ellis

The conclusion of World War I left Europe a shattered continent with the defeated Central Powers, Germany at their head, at the mercy of the Allied Powers. The victors argued about the severity of Germany’s punishment, how to rebuild, how to move on, and how to avoid future wars. Germany and Russia found themselves at the center of these debates, and while the victors decided how best to handle these former powers, they struggled against internal instability and uncertainty. The war had led to new governments in both of the countries, and both struggled desperately against the stranglehold of the West so that they might maintain their independent control of their country. This turmoil led the German and Russian governments to seek respite in each other, creating a series of treaties and agreements that built a strong relationship between them.

After Germany’s defeat, its monarchical government vanished. In its place a republican government came to power created by the newly minted Weimar Constitution. The constitution established Germany’s first republic, and soon its strength would be tested continuously from all angles. Soon after its creation, the government had to face the victors and the Peace of Versailles. The Versailles Treaty forced Germany to take full blame for the war and placed the country in full submission to the western powers. From this position, Germany attempted to re-establish contacts with the West, but until the mid-1920’s improving and furthering relations with western Europe remained difficult. As a powerless and isolated country, Germany had little choice but to embrace Russia and look for bonds with Russia as a way to counteract the policies of the Britain, France, and other western powers.

Russia faced similoar political and economic problems during this time. The Communist government had taken power in 1917 and had been continually struggling for existence ever since. Immediately after its seizure of power, it worked on securing a peace treaty with Germany and quickly signed the insulting Brest-Litovsk Treaty. Russia’s removal from the war allowed them time to focus on their internal affairs consisting of the new Red Army pushing out what remained of the Tsarist White forces as well as the limited expeditionary forces that the western powers had sent. Given time, the Red Army defeated the White forces and soon thereafter all expeditionary forces left the country. With these events, the West effectively washed its hands of Russia and began to isolate the country both politically and economically.
Under these circumstances Germany and Russia, although ideologically different, had no other option but to turn to each other for political and economic support. Immediately, for the Germans, Russia seemed to be their only hope for economic and military growth. The West refused to participate in economic agreements with Germany, pushing them eastward. As happened in many other scenarios, “the widely advertised decision of the victorious Allies to exclude German exports from western markets impelled the whole of Germany industry to face east.”¹ In looking towards the east Germany hoped to use Russia as a tool to rebuild her strength. Their list of goals: military buildup, the removal of Poland, solidification of their eastern border, improved relations with the West, and European economic growth could all be reached with the use of Russia. Germany saw close relations with Russia as the only weapon against the oppressive Versailles Treaty and as a way to promote the inclusion of Germany in western affairs. This insecurity is the true reason behind Russo-German relations throughout this entire time period. An alliance with Russia would serve as a means to break through the western wall so the country could place itself amongst the top powers once again. This paper will argue that Russia served Germany as a tool, a political lever, and a weapon against the West until a point at which Russia could be of no further use.

Russia’s goals centered much more around the defense of the country. As a fledgling communist government in a capitalist world, Russia needed a strong ally in order to survive. After the war the “Soviet relations with Germany were conducted by the new Soviet leadership with the intention of securing one goal: The continuation in being of the fledgling Soviet Republic.”² To achieve that goal they needed military safety and security against the West, economic stability, and political recognition. The West refused to deal with the Soviets, seen as the enemy of the world, and so only Germany remained open to Russia. As long as Russia remained isolated, the country required a strong Germany.

With these goals in mind, the two governments sought out each other during the Weimar Era. They concluded a series of agreements that tied the countries together both politically and economically. With the ever-present West watching closely over these two countries, they attempted to work together to rebuild their strength. By the end of the era, each country had succeeded marginally in its goals, and no longer stood in isolation. It is the conclusion of

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these relations that demonstrate how Germany only saw Russia as a means to an end that could be discarded easily.

The first official contact made after the new government took power came in the form of prisoner of war exchanges. The new military leader of the Reichswehr, General Hans Von Seeckt, began to work with the Russians to create an efficient system to manage the many prisoners of war. Given time, he eventually established an official program of exchange in April of 1920. This first contact, on a military basis, helped to instill a cordial relationship between the two countries. The arrangement that existed “became a means by which representatives of both the German and Soviet Russian governments sought to re-establish closer diplomatic links between the countries.”

Through his efforts, Seeckt had seen Russia first hand and would soon use this experience in the military restructuring of Germany. With the exchange of prisoners established, communication between the countries ceased once more.

For a time, the two countries had wished to create a treaty that established close relations, but the only contact the countries had previously held existed only in the military sphere. It is then logical to see that a military agreement could be concluded first. Under the command of General Von Seeckt, a German officer and a small military mission departed for Russia in January of 1921. This group would establish the basic foundation for future military endeavors in Russia. Seeckt’s overarching plan served to strengthen Germany by strengthening her ally, Russia, and directly strengthening Germany herself by building an arms industry in Russia to be used by Germany. These talks, which occurred in complete secrecy, allowed Seeckt to establish Sondergruppe R, or Special Group R, a military program created specifically for the training of Russian and German soldiers in military facilities yet to be built on Russian soil. In order to maintain secrecy, since any attempt to rebuild Germany’s military remained forbidden under the Versailles Treaty, the Germans created the “bogus company known as GEFU” to serve as a cover for the German firms working on these military projects. GEFU, or the Encouragement of Industrial Undertakings, became tasked with building these military bases in Russia using German technical knowledge and Russian resources. This agreement designated Russia as the provider of land and all required raw materials. Using

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5 Kennan, *Soviet Foreign Policy*, 40.
7 Carr, *Between the Two World Wars*, 59.
8 Passant, *History of Germany*, 166.
these materials, Germany would then be able to build military bases in order to produce war material and train soldiers of both countries. The war material factories would produce trains, Junkers planes, ammunition, poison gas shells, etc. Germany would receive a substantial amount of these products, and in return Russia would receive the technical knowledge on how to produce and use war material, as well gain the privilege of sending Russian officers to German military schools. From this point on, throughout all of the Weimar Era, some form of military agreement existed. This program itself saw limited success, because the economic struggles of the time only allowed for the production and delivery of ammunition, with all other military based factories seeing few to no results.

In addition to seeking a military agreement in 1921, Russia also actively sought an economic one. Such a treaty seemed very beneficial to Germany due not only to their economic troubles, but also because of their fear of Article 116 of the Versailles Treaty. This article, if enacted, gave Russia the right to make claims to reparation payments from Germany for any war damage. If Russia chose to enact this article, Germany’s debt would increase greatly, and the already strained economic and industrial infrastructure could collapse completely. Under these conditions, German ‘Easteners’ began to establish talks with the Russians, with the mind of creating a draft of an economic treaty. Even though these Easteners held no official power within the German government to begin these talks, their efforts led to the creation of a first draft. The German diplomat Adolf George Von Maltzan and Soviet representative Karl Radek began to meet, and on January 22, 1922, the two had finished work on the first draft of a mutually beneficial treaty.

The two created several more advance drafts, but Germany did not wish to sign immediately. Meanwhile, David Lloyd George, the Prime Minister of Britain, had announced that he wished to hold a conference to discuss the financial crisis of Europe, an event that came to be the Genoa Conference. The Germans feared that if they signed a treaty with Russia that the other European powers would only place harsher restrictions upon them. The German Foreign Minister of the time, Walther Rathenau, “perceiving, perhaps more clearly than the Russians, that the signature of a German-Soviet treaty would wreck the conference, still held back; and both delegations proceeded to Genoa with the treaty unsigned, with the draft incomplete and with its very existence

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9 Kennan, *Soviet Foreign Policy*, 41.
10 Kennan, *Soviet Foreign Policy*, 45.
unsuspected outside the inner circle of the German Foreign Office and the Soviet delegation.”

The Genoa Conference proposed to create a solution to the financial crisis of Europe. Lloyd George described its purpose as an “international conference to deal with the re-establishment of economic exchanges and the establishment of a definite state of peace between Russia and the West.” The conference would include all major European countries, with the inclusion of the United States of America, in order to solve the major economic issues and establish relations among the participants. Germany desired the creation of economic agreements, concessions, the reduction of reparations, and a solution to the inflation problem. Russia “hoped to obtain through the conference loans with which to rebuild the Russian economy according to their own desires.”

If the conference had happened as Lloyd George had planned, it might have accomplished much, but France ardently opposed any discussion of reparation payments, and the United States refused to participate. As the only country in the world with ready money, the United States’ refusal to attend rendered the topic of European debt pointless. These protests left the issue of contact with Russia as the only remaining major topic. The German Foreign Minister Walther Rathenau spoke to the German Cabinet Council a week before the start of the conference: “Genoa is a conference from which the chief creditor of the world stays away, at which the reparation question cannot be dealt with, [and] at which the Russian situation will get much more attention than that of Germany.” With this set-up, the European countries headed to Genoa with few hopes of achieving anything worthwhile.

In total, 27 countries attended the conference which began on April 10, 1922. With the conference in session, Lloyd George quickly called the Russian delegation to a private meeting at the Villa de Albertis so that they might have private, and secret, discussions. During this time the German delegation attempted repeatedly to contact both Lloyd George and the Russians, but received no response. Rather than let the Germans know exactly what the two countries discussed, each delegation sent exaggerated messages to the Germans. In speaking to the Russians privately, Lloyd George hoped to create an Anglo-

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11 Carr, Between the Two World Wars, 63.
12 Kennan, Soviet Foreign Policy, 44.
13 Haigh, Morris, Peters, Friendship from Necessity, 77.
15 Kochan, Russia and Weimar, 51.
16 Flex, Rathenau and Weimar, 140.
Soviet treaty of some kind, and he fed this information to the Germans through an Italian representative, Amedeo Giannini. Lloyd George provided Giannini with false information, saying that Russia and Britain would very soon finalize a treaty that involved the payment of tsarist debts, the nationalization of foreign property, and the enactment of Article 116. In actuality, these talks gained nothing for either country. Russia, while wishing to conclude treaties with any country, placed the signing of the already drafted treaty with Germany as its main goal.

The Soviet delegation, however, did not waste this opportunity. They also fed Germany false information to make them more eager to conclude the treaty as quickly as possible, telling them that if no Soviet-German pact could be finalized, then an Anglo-Soviet treaty could. After several days, the Russian delegation broke its silence and invited the German delegation to the nearby town of Rapallo to discuss the final issues of the treaty. The Germans accepted, fearful that if delaying the signing further, Russia might abandon them and agree to some western deal. When the Germans met with the Russian delegation, they resolved the few final issues and signed the document. Even though they agreed to the document’s terms, Rathenau and Wirth signed with doubt in their minds. Neither of them could be certain if this treaty actually rested in Germany’s best interests, but they believed that signing had become a necessity. In the early evening of April 16, 1922, the delegates concluded all talks on the documents and officially signed it.

The treaty itself only contained six articles and held no secret clauses of any kind. The treaty itself contained no secret military agreements and held no link to the already existing military programs being administered by General Von Seeckt. The first article completely nullified Article 116 and removed any chance to claims of war reparations. The second clause ‘forgave’ Russia for its subversive actions in Germany in earlier years in its attempt to spark revolution. Article three established direct contact between the countries once again, allowing for future agreements and treaties. The fourth article ensured the legal protection of citizens in either country. The fifth article created a rough economic agreement that formed the basis of the so called “Spirit of Rapallo,” a basic feeling of camaraderie between Germany and Russia. The sixth article provided a time frame of enactments. With the treaty signed, the delegations returned to Genoa to announce it.

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17 Flex, *Rathenau and Weimar*, 141.
18 Kennan, *Soviet Foreign Policy*, 46.
19 Flex, *Rathenau and Weimar*, 142.
Upon returning and revealing the treaty to the other delegations, the Rapallo Treaty quickly became the main focus of the Conference. None of the other powers knew of any establishment of relations between Germany and Russia, and their reactions remained mostly negative. Lloyd George “raged picturesquely, but not very convincingly.” He led the British delegation to demand the withdrawal of the treaty knowing that while Germany did not have the means to save Russia economically, they could re-arm each other using Russia’s resources and Germany’s technical skills.\(^{21}\) Given time, he accepted the treaty and even attempted to make a ‘European Rapallo’ among all European powers, or at the very least, with Britain and Russia.\(^{22}\) The French, under the direction of their Prime Minister Raymond Poincaré, reacted quite differently. From the initial announcement, they demanded a full withdrawal of the treaty and went so far as to place their military on alert throughout France. The German ambassador to France, Wilhelm Meyer, wrote that “the news of the treaty struck here [in Paris] like lightning.”\(^{23}\) The French delegation began to prepare to leave the conference in protest while Poincaré ordered them to take instant hostile action against the treaty. The French delegation however, received no response from any of their demands and begrudgingly accepted the treaty.\(^{24}\)

Overall, the delegations at Genoa saw the Rapallo Treaty as a solid establishment between Germany and Russia that allowed both countries to break free from their isolation and enter the European sphere of influence.\(^{25}\) “No longer could either [country] be treated as a discreet and isolated entity,” because Germany and Russia connected themselves with this treaty, allowing Germany especially to use Russia as a counterbalance against the West.\(^{26}\) The Rapallo Treaty made it so “the German government could maneuver freely between east and west, playing off the two rivals against one another, disclaiming any firm or irrevocable commitment to either, extorting concessions from the one by threatening to fall into the arms of the other and always keeping its own choices open.”\(^{27}\) This treaty placed Germany on the international playing board once again and allowed her to become the bridge between Communist East and Capitalist West. By being the mediator, she guaranteed that each side remained open and capable of propelling Germany forward.


\(^{23}\) Flex, *Rathenau and Weimar*, 143.


\(^{25}\) Kochan, *Russia and Weimar*, 53-54.

\(^{26}\) Haigh, Morris, Peters, *Friendship from Necessity*, 80.

\(^{27}\) Carr, *Between the Two World Wars*, 66.
For Russia, the treaty provided a foothold against western action and a neutral buffer zone that further protected the country, both physically and economically.\textsuperscript{28} The official \textit{Soviet History of Diplomacy}, published in 1945, contained some material on Russia’s involvement in the Genoa Conference and the Rapallo Treaty. The study expressed Soviet fears that Germany nearly joined a European consortium against Russia: “The Treaty of Rapallo disrupted the effort of the Entente to create a unified capitalist front against Soviet Russia.”\textsuperscript{29} The article further praised the treaty by saying that it “brought serious political advantages” and put an “end to the controversial questions of the past . . . It created new mutual relations which assured both governments full equality and the possibility of peaceful economic collaboration.” The final comment given to the treaty points out that both countries “emerged from their isolation thanks to the Rapallo Treaty.”\textsuperscript{30} Soon thereafter, the attending delegations dispersed from the conference with the only truly beneficial accomplishment the signing of the Rapallo Treaty.\textsuperscript{31}

Over the next several years, only basic relations existed between Russia and Germany. They followed through on the ‘spirit of Rapallo,’ establishing and maintaining economic ties. Other than these minor settlements no major agreements occurred for several years, but Russia became greatly offended by Germany’s participation in the Locarno Treaty with the West as well as their entry into the League of Nations. Throughout both of these events, Germany attempted to calm Russia, assuring them that their improvement of western relations did not endanger Russian relations. Until Russia compelled Germany to sign another treaty, Germany continued to use Russia as a means to gain western concessions and agreements without any eastern advancement. The German Foreign Minister during this time, Gustav Stresemann, held hopes that with the help of Russia, Germany could be the bridge which would bring East and West together in the future development of Europe.\textsuperscript{32}

In order to serve as this bridge Germany participated in the finalization of the Locarno Treaty. In October 1925, England, France, Italy, Belgium, and Germany came together to sign the Locarno Treaty.\textsuperscript{33} The entire purpose and the self-proclaimed meaning of Locarno revolved around “the settlement of our differences by peaceful methods … and above all the renunciation of war

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{28} Flex, \textit{Rathenau and Weimar}, 145.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Kennan, \textit{Soviet Foreign Policy}, Document 14, 141-142.
\item \textsuperscript{30} Kennan, \textit{Soviet Foreign Policy}, 141-142.
\item \textsuperscript{31} Kessler, \textit{Walther Rathenau}, 355-356.
\item \textsuperscript{32} Passant, \textit{History of Germany}, 167.
\item \textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 168.
\end{itemize}
between France and Germany.”34 The treaty established a system of border reassurances, where if France or Germany were to make an offensive move against another country, the other surrounding powers would intervene to defend the assailed country.

In 1924 Germany made its first attempt to join the League but still met with resistance from both the East and the West.35 France specifically did not want to allow Germany to join because France feared that it might use its position in the League to free itself from reparation payments and strengthen itself. From Russia, Foreign Minister Gregori Chicherin believed that if Germany joined the League, it would solidify their position in the West. Chicherin wrote that

from the standpoint of the German interests entry into the League would signify a capitulation . . . , Through entry into the League, Germany accedes to a definite coalition. Germany’s policy thereby collides with the Rapallo policy. Against her own wish, through the power of facts, Germany will in this way be drawn into such combinations and actions as will lead her into conflict with us.36

In actuality Germany sought to join the League so as to place itself in an intermediary position between the East and West and balance the two. As Stresemann said, “We can neither become a continental spearhead for England, as some believe, nor can we involve ourselves in an alliance with Russia.”37

While facing resistance from foreign powers, Germany quickly raised objections to the concessions and demands needed to join the League of Nations. The League required the acceptance of the organization’s constitution by any applicant country. Several of these articles conflicted with Germany’s interests and would nullify their established neutrality with Russia, and the country refused to join if these articles could not be altered. The most prominently debated was Article 16, which concerned the movement of troops through League member countries. With its acceptance, Germany could not refuse passage to foreign armies and could possibly be used as a passage to bolster Poland or take hostile action against Russia. As with Germany fearing Russian enactment of Article 116 of the Versailles Treaty, Russia feared Article 16 the same. If Germany joined the League, then if Russia declared war on Poland, France would be able to send troops through Germany, break Germany’s

37 Ibid, 103.
neutrality Treaty with Russia, and possibly defeat the Red Army. The article remained a major debate until its final modification, which gave Germany the power to decide whether or not fellow League members’ troops could move freely through the country. The modification of the article and the settlement of other issues allowed Germany to ensure its neutrality to Russia.

In entering the League, Germany hoped to regain its lost power and place itself in a better position to alter the Versailles Treaty. If allowed entrance, Germany could raise the question of legal re-armament and the strengthening of her military. Border disputes could be resolved and, most importantly to Germany, the Polish “issue” and the reclaiming of once German lands. Germany could also defend against any hostile actions towards Russia that the League might make. In effect, upon joining, Germany could no longer be seen as a defeated, outcast country. The country would have gained its previously held power in Europe on both an economic and political level. Germany would no longer be forced to agree to whatever the western powers placed on her.

After much debate, the League accepted Germany into its ranks in September 1926. With the Locarno Treaty signed and its acceptance into the League, Germany had successfully pulled itself out of isolation and reached a position of power where it could significantly affect the relations between the East and the West. On the acceptance of Germany into the League, the Russian newspaper Izvestiia said, that Russia holds “hope that German participation in the League of Nations will not prevent her fulfilling to the letter all the obligations she has assumed in relation to the USSR. We would also like to count on Germany--despite her participation in the League--continuing to live in peace and friendship with our country.”

Since the signing of the Rapallo Treaty, Germany leaned more and more westward. Each year brought new western relations and successful dealings with the West. While Germany excelled in its political conquests, Russia failed. Soviet attempts to spread its influence in China came to an abrupt stop when the Communist Party failed to gain power. “Soviet officials were shaken by their string of failures and Germany’s diplomatic triumphs,” they feared isolation and destruction. Rather than gathering further support, they turned to the “task of keeping Germany from slipping into an anti-Soviet constellation.” In order to achieve this goal, Chicherin began speaking to Stresemann and other German officials in 1925 for the creation of a new treaty, and a treaty with the

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38 Kochan, Russia and Weimar, 102.
39 Kochan, Russia and Weimar, 104.
40 Dyck, Diplomatic Instability, 16.
main topics of neutrality, the continuation of peaceful relations, and the further establishment of agreements began to be drafted in Berlin. The creation of the treaty settled Russia’s fears and provided Germany with “a standing threat to the Western powers that it would be transformed into an alliance if Germany were not accommodated in such matters as the evacuation of the Rhineland, reparations, armaments and political equality.” In order to avoid the same uproar that occurred after the announcement of the Rapallo Treaty, Stresemann made sure to reveal the drafting of the treaty to foreign powers. The two countries created a draft, agreed upon the contents, signed the treaty on April 24, 1926, and dubbed the document “the Berlin Treaty.”

The treaty remained very short, contained no military clauses of any kind, and expanded the already existing Rapallo Treaty. Stresemann wrote that: “The ‘Berlin Treaty’ started on the assumption that the Treaty of Rapallo still existed as a basis of the relations between Germany and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.” The treaty contained four short articles and in effect reaffirmed the Rapallo treaty and assured both countries of their dedication to neutrality in all political, economic, and military affairs. The treaty stated that upon ratification the treaty would last for five years and before its expiration the countries would convene to renew the document. Germany viewed the treaty as a way for the country to counter the negative policies of the West and to achieve its own diplomatic and economic goals. For his part, Stresemann concluded the Berlin Treaty with the thought that the treaty existed as a necessity for Germany’s economy, that it served as a way to bolster his negotiating power against the West, that it might allow for the revision and rebuilding of military power, and quickly resolve the country’s eastern border questions in regards to Poland.

Many European countries believed that Germany must pick which direction to take. The Locarno Treaty and entry into the League of Nations seemingly placed Germany on the western side, but the Rapallo and Berlin treaties placed Germany in the east. Stresemann, however, remained convinced that Germany’s true position existed as being the mediator between the two sides. Placing the country between the separate spheres would allow Germany to

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44 Kennan, *Soviet Foreign Policy*, 62.
47 Dyck, *Diplomatic Instability*, 18.
move freely in each and reach a position of power even greater than their post-war position. Stresemann wrote, “The Treaties of Locarno and that of Berlin are not mutually destructive instruments, but are complementary to one another. Taken together they afford us a guarantee for the peaceable development of Europe.” With Germany finalizing her position as mediator, the country seemed to have established a solid foundation. The possibility for a unified Europe seemed realized, but relations between Russia and Germany soon began to degrade and falter.

Since the signing of the Rapallo Treaty and other large treaties with the West, neither Germany nor Russia remained in isolation. The need to use Russia to achieve western goals no longer existed. From that point, although Germany maintained relations with Russia, the country began to turn westward. Russia’s usefulness to Germany faded to the point where further advancements remained unnecessary as long as basic relations still existed to maintain Germany’s political leverage. With the West resolutely open to Germany, relations with Russia stagnated.

From 1929 onward, Germany tended to ignore Russia, de-emphasizing contact with the eastern power and always placing western relations over the other. This focus west made Russia uneasy, and rather than silently accepting Germany’s actions, the country began to attempt to establish relations with other western countries. Moreover, as Russia reached westward, Germany’s internal political situation began to falter. The economic struggles of Europe, the constant strains placed on the Weimar Republic, and the death in 1929 of the country’s strongest political figure, Gustav Stresemann, crippled the government. In time the Reichstag fell to the more radical left and right wing parties, allowing the rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party. With his ascension to power in 1933, Hitler changed the course of foreign policy, choosing to focus more on testing the boundaries of the Versailles Treaty. As Hitler tightened his grasp on Germany, Russia began to fear Germany might turn against it. If Germany began to act with hostility towards Russia, they would join with the Versailles Powers against her and be able to subdue any threat. Yet, if Germany continued to hold true to peaceful relations with Russia, all might continue as normal. Germany further continued on the path of uncertainty with its withdrawal from the League of Nations in September of 1934. Soon thereafter, the Russians joined the League for military and political reassurances. By this point the Weimar Republic had ceased to exist. Germany was now Hitler’s Third

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48 Stresemann, Essays and Speeches, 263.
49 Kochan, Russia and Weimar, 153.
50 Ibid., 169.
Reich. Russo-German relations would continue, leading to the joint occupation of Poland and further eastern border revisions in 1939 onwards. Only when German troops invaded Russia did the Soviets wholeheartedly agree to abandon Germany and join with the West.

In the early years of the 1920’s Germany was a broken country. Blamed for the horrors of the Great War, strained under massive war debts, isolated by its fellow European countries, and desperately fighting the Versailles Treaty, the new nation of Germany had to find a way to regain its lost power. The only possible opening remained to the East in the newly created Communist Russia. The two countries formed a strong relationship to secure their existence in a hostile world. Russia used Germany to ensure its livelihood, and Germany used Russia as a tool and sometimes a weapon against the West. This pairing allowed each country to emerge stronger from its defeated and isolated states. As early as 1922 Russia still continuously sought German assistance and power, but Germany had finished with Russia. With the West open, Germany drifted from Russia and left their prosperous agreements in the past. By the late 1920’s, Germany established herself at the center of European politics. Being the mediator between the East and the West allowed her to join neither but have influence over both. Thanks to the diplomatic skills of Rathenau and Stresemann, Germany played the game of geopolitics effectively, using the Russians to regain a status of power that rivaled its pre-war position.
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The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools: Transformation into an Accreditation Agency

Ryan Dickinson

The public school system emerged as the driving force of childhood education during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. When James H. Kirkland, then Chancellor of recently established Vanderbilt University, saw that students in the South struggled at passing preparatory classes even while attending colleges, he took matters into his own hands and helped create the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Southern States. This organization sought to separate the roles of Southern colleges and secondary schools by forbidding its member colleges from offering preparatory classes and by establishing standard college entrance requirements. As the landscape of education continued developing during the early twentieth century, the Association’s ambitions overtook its values and it developed into an agent of social control. With its mission statement no longer representing its actual purpose the Association transformed into a highly political, less noble body. The creation and subsequent development of the Association coincides with the centralization of power of education in the United States and the emergence of accrediting agencies across the nation.

During the years from 1870 to 1910, the United States developed rapidly. As almost twelve million immigrants arrived on its shores, its population doubled to total about seventy-six million people. This increasing population, coupled with the passing of many compulsory-attendance laws, caused the number of students enrolled in public secondary schools to grow from seven million in 1870 to eighteen million in 1910 and resulted in the number of public high schools increasing from five hundred to ten thousand over the same period. Eventually “the rise of the public school system” sparked the “democratization” of American education, a “goal valued by reformers not only for reasons of fairness but also of social order in a chaotic, changing, heterogeneous world.”

As with any new enterprise, however, the development of the public school system as a dominating force came with certain drawbacks. Prior to the 1870s, the majority of students prepared for university through homeschooling

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or private institutions and did not attend public secondary school. These students hailed from similar upper-class backgrounds and studied the same materials while preparing for university. Factors like these allowed for colleges throughout the United States to maintain uniform college admission standards. Increased participation in public secondary schooling caused the content of coursework required for admission into college to become more diversified and less challenging. Public schools (especially in the South) that had traditionally been attended by students with no plans of receiving a higher education found themselves unprepared to handle their sudden role as preparatory schools. Furthermore, the sudden evolution of public secondary schools into preparatory schools troubled the parents of upper-class students. Worried that their children might lose their competitive advantages they became convinced that “their sons and daughters could do much better if sent to ... college before completing the high school course.” A study conducted in 1893 revealed that many of the best known Southern universities required only five or six units of coursework for admission. Seventy-five percent of the university students of good repute in the study enrolled in secondary or preparatory work rather than completing college grade work, proving themselves unprepared for the rigors of college. University administrators complained “that colleges admitted pupils to collegiate studies without the preparation represented by a good secondary school course.” Unfortunately, administrators could not reach a consensus on what defined a good secondary school course. A divide existed between conservative educators who valued traditional courses like the study of Latin and Greek and more progressive educators who wanted the focus of a student’s education to be on mathematics and logic. At this point accrediting agencies like the New England Association and the North Central Association began emerging. These developments represent “the voluntary attempts of professional or scientific groups to guide and control the conditions under which several educational efforts may be carried on.” Following the lead of these organizations and concerned with the state of Southern education Kirkland took the initiative and assembled a group of Southern educators interested in developing a standard set of student entrance requirements for Southern colleges.

These Southern educators first assembled on the morning of November 6, 1896 at the Georgia Institute of Technology and created an organization officially known as The Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Southern States (ACPSSS). Sharing similar backgrounds and experiences, the men who attended the initial meeting represented the most prominent institutions in the South. Respected for both their academic and administrative accomplishments, these men rose to positions of influence in the South’s universities at a time when attempts were being made “to set aside the consideration of politics, popularity, family connection and sectarian interest that in past had often been the guiding priorities in the selection of faculty.” They believed that they could accomplish more for higher education as an organization then they could as individuals. Kirkland noted that these educators sought to “bring together a small group of colleges willing to help each other and to stand together on a moderate platform of honest work and unfaltering publicity.” During the first meeting, these men crafted a mission statement expressing their intentions for the Association:

- To organize Southern schools and colleges for co-operation and mutual assistance.
- To elevate the standard of scholarship and to effect uniformity of entrance requirements.
- To develop preparatory schools and cut off this work from the colleges.

They never intended to set college admittance standards for non-members, control the educational policy for the South at large, or even pressure institutions to join the Association. In fact, few institutions qualified to meet its set standards. Although representatives from twelve universities attended the first meeting, only North Carolina, Mississippi, The University of the

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8 Miller, *Centennial History*, 2.
9 Ibid., 11-13. The founding members of the Association were President George T. Winston of North Carolina, Professor J.B Henneman of Tennessee, Chancellor R.B. Fulton of Alabama, Professors R.W. Jones and T.W. Palmer of Mississippi, Professor William Peterfield of The University of the South, Professor S.T. Moreland of Washington and Lee University, Professor Edwin Mims of Trinity College, Professors J.T Sellers and P.D Pollock of Mercer University, Professors H.N Snyder and A.G Rembert of Wofford College, and Chancellor J.H Kirkland and Professor W.M Baskerville of Vanderbilt University.
South, Washington and Lee, and Trinity College subscribed to the conditions established in the Association’s by-laws. The universities and colleges that abstained from joining the Association worried that adhering to the Association’s by-laws would cause their school’s attendance to decline and would put their school in an unstable financial position. The by-laws stated a college or university must:

- Not offer preparatory courses as part of its curriculum.
- Not admit anyone under fifteen.
- Have written examinations in English, history, and geography for all students except technical students.
- Have written examinations in Latin, Greek, and mathematics for all students planning on continuing on in those subjects.
- These rules committed the participating universities to maintaining high admittance standards and preserving the integrity of higher education.  

Initially the Association grew slowly. After a decade of existence only fourteen colleges in the South considered themselves members of the Association. Ten years later that number rose to thirty-two. In addition to institutions of higher education, forty-five secondary schools belonged to the Association in 1902. The number of secondary schools belonging to the Association, however, fluctuated between forty-five and thirty in the following decade. During these years the Association showed very little tangible success and amassed a fair share of criticism. Opponents of the organization resented its very existence. “To those who believed in public high schools, these men were valiant workers in a great cause” while “to others, the venture may have represented the efforts of well-established colleges to aggrandize themselves

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13 Edward Mims, *Chancellor Kirkland of Vanderbilt* (Nashville, Vanderbilt University Press, 1940), 140. The fears of the universities and colleges that refused to join the Association proved true. Even the prestigious Vanderbilt University lost students as a result of Kirkland’s commitment to the Association’s standards. “From the standpoint of educational policy Kirkland at once put himself firmly behind the efforts of himself and his colleagues to maintain high standards of admission and graduation. Despite the loss of students and the consequent decrease of income, he did not waiver.”


15 Miller, *Centennial History*, 46.

16 Ibid., 46-52. The Association’s founding members intended for the presence of secondary schools in the Association to ensure communication between secondary schools and colleges and to build on the community of co-operation and mutual assistance. Kirkland noted in 1912 how attention needed to be paid to the relationship between secondary schools and higher institutions.
at the expense of smaller and weaker institutions and to build up the public high schools at this end.”\textsuperscript{17} The older and larger institutions often received an exemption from filling out in full detail the tedious reports required by the Association for membership, while the more recently established institutions remained under the closely guarded watch of the Association.\textsuperscript{18} After all, many of the new Association members had originally been thought to be incapable of meeting the Association’s by-laws. Though concerned with its slow growth, Kirkland and the other founders of the Association proved unwilling to sacrifice their ideal of a “professional association founded on professional cooperation” in order to adopt the mold of a “mass organization dependent on public support.”\textsuperscript{19} Despite the Association’s lack of recruiting success, it remained a valuable forum of discussion for educators and created a sense of uniformity amongst member schools.

Eventually the Association’s distinctive forum for discussions on education at its meetings propelled it to greater success. Kirkland and the other founders intended for the Association’s annual meetings to be gatherings “where the peculiar problems of schools and colleges might be discussed and illuminated.”\textsuperscript{20} The Association encouraged interested non-members to attend and participate in the “friendly exchanges of experiences and opinions” aimed at “[alleviating] the difficulties of all institutions of learning within its bounds.”\textsuperscript{21}

By appearing open and welcoming to the entire educational community, the Association increased its success. It continued to grow in numbers when the founders reluctantly abandoned outdated certain college entrance requirements in favor of students receiving greater freedom in entrance requirements. For instance, subjects like the sciences, modern languages, and history increased in value and eventually gained preferential treatment to subjects such as the classics and mathematics. The growing emphasis placed on the sciences elevated the Bachelor of Science degree to the level of the Bachelor of Arts degree. These developments revealed the Association’s ability to “blend attachment to traditional ideals with acceptance of innovation when it was either desirable or inevitable.”\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{17} Krug, \textit{Shaping}, 131-133.
\textsuperscript{18} M.C Huntley to Miss Laura Louise Hart, 12 January 1938, \textit{Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (Correspondence) 1925-47}, Box 220, VSC.
\textsuperscript{19} Miller, \textit{Centennial History}, 48.
\textsuperscript{22} Miller, \textit{Centennial History}, 55.
While some of the concessions the Association’s made allowed it to thrive in an evolving world, others betrayed the Association’s core values and changed the very nature of its existence. When the Association provided for more freedom in college entrance requirements, they also implemented changes recommended in a 1906 report from the Carnegie Foundation. Providing a way to standardize the means of high school achievement through the unit of credit, the Carnegie report sparked a trend considered the future of education. It recommended that a university require fourteen hours of credit from a student seeking admission into any degree course. The Association adopted these changes in 1907, and they came into effect in 1910. During this period both the New England Association and the North Central Association also made similar changes to the frameworks of their organizations. Though these organizations did not begin as institutions of social control, popular demand dictated that they ensure unified admissions standards. Agencies like these proved to be peculiarly Western in origin and emerged as “[mechanisms] of self-regulation that [developed] in societies where hierarchical regulation [was] weak and where relevant professional groups [believed] market forces [were] inadequate for the maintenance of desired standards.” These changes proved to be such a huge step toward the standardization of schools that soon the Association practically had no other entrance requirements.

Only two years later the Association began brainstorming ways to implement a suitable system of certification and accreditation. Following in the footsteps of the New England Association and the North Central Association, members of the Association thought of a system of accreditation that would prevent Southern schools from lowering their standards for the benefit of institutions outside the South. After several commissions met to determine the best manner in which to implement the system of accreditation Kirkland suggested that the Committee on Regulating and Improving the Administration of the Certificating System be created. At the Committee’s first meeting Joseph S. Stewart pushed for creation of the Commission on Secondary Schools. Responsible for “preparing uniform ‘blanks,’ or questionnaires, for reports

25 Miller, Centennial History, 55-56.
26 Ibid., 59-60. Kirkland recommended that Association members J.L. Henderson, Bruce R. Payne, J.J. Doster, E.C. Brooks, and St. George L. Sioussat, and Joseph S. Stewart be the Committee’s original members.
of high school principals relative to organization, teaching force, attendance, library, laboratory, and other equipment” and for defining “unit course study in various high school programs,” the Commission eventually became the basis of evaluation for “the Southern List of Accredited Schools.” 27 Accreditation through the Association did not qualify as membership in the Association. Both, however, initially sought to be institutions that schools voluntarily chose to join. Members of the Association needed to choose whether or not to seek inclusion on the accredited list. Members involved with the Committee and the Commission never intended for schools to be forced to seek accreditation.

Regardless of their intentions, less than five years later with the creation of the Committee on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE) the Association’s role as an accrediting agency became further cemented. The CIHE aimed to:

- Prepare standards to be met by members and prospective members.
- Make necessary inspections.
- Recommend dismissal of institutions not meeting the standards.
- List those institutions who meet the standards for publication.

This Commission for Colleges and Universities emerged as the arm of CIHE. It prepared “subject to the approval of the Association” a list of twenty standards “to be met by institutions of higher education, which are members of this Association” and rated “any other institutions within the territory of this Association, which may apply for inspection, classification and rating by the Commission.” 28 The Association adopted the commission’s recommendations and the standards went into effect in 1921. Through the creation of commission after commission, the Association continuously gained more control over the actions of colleges and preparatory schools. Even the decision to seek accreditation became essentially mandatory for educational institutions.

The transformation of the Association from a discussion-oriented body to a control-oriented one did not occur without bumps in the road. General problems of social control plagued the Association and other accrediting agencies within the United States. The imposition of new standards by the Association on institutions of higher education raised the question of how to treat schools that “because of their special purposes – teacher’s colleges, junior

27 Ibid., 61.
colleges, and Negro colleges – could not be held to the same standards that had evolved.”29 After much debate the Association chose to follow the lead of the North Central Association. In 1929 it created different set of criteria for teacher’s colleges and junior colleges to follow. Unfortunately, no model existed for the Association to follow with regard to the accreditation of African American colleges. Prior to 1930 the Association refused to take responsibility for the accreditation of African American schools or universities. After being pressured by the Department of Education and African American educators the Association set up the Committee on Approval of Negro Schools which, in turn, created the “Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools for Negroes – the Negro counterpart or auxiliary of” the Association. In 1930 the Committee began its work “on the explicit assumption that Negro schools and colleges were to be rated on exactly the same standards as the white institutions in this area, and with the exception of the establishment of a “B” class among Negro colleges.” In its first year in existence the Committee gave all but one African American college a “B” rating.30 Schools given a “B” rating earned accreditation but not membership status in the Association. “B” ratings, which could not be applied to any white institutions, “supported the ‘separate but equal’ ideology without having to lower standards of the central body.”31 The existence of the “B” rating hurt students who applied for graduate schools and, in general, came off as deprecating to administrators and educators in non-white schools. At this point, however, accreditation from the Association carried so much weight that a sub-par rating trumped no accreditation at all.

After the method of Certificate and Examination ceased in 1912 secondary schools needed to seek accreditation in order to ensure admission for its students into college. Also, in 1925 medical schools and state departments of education began using the Association’s list of accredited institutions as the basis for the selection of teachers and acceptance into graduate schools. Meanwhile “high school counselors, parents, and students used certifications as a criterion of college acceptability.”32 Thus, even though accreditation agencies like the Association neither had the coercive power of the state behind them nor directly controlled economic interests, they still retained a significant amount of influence. The Association seemed so wide-spanning and influential that preparatory schools and colleges felt compelled to apply for both accreditation and membership, even though many did not meet the standards usually required

29 Wiley, Growth and Transformation, 41.
31 Wiley, Growth and Transformation, 41.
32 Ibid., 39.
by the Association. So many “dubious members” earned acceptance into the Association that eventually every institution applying for membership had to send to every member on the Commission of Higher Education two full years worth of all its literature and copies of the report required by the Association.\textsuperscript{33}

The fabric of the Association changed in other ways as well. As it transformed into an accrediting agency, the Association began valuing quantitative data rather than qualitative research found through open discussions. The questionnaires used by the Commission of Secondary Education and later by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education proved to be the “best plan of procedure for the Committee to adopt in its attempt to ascertain the mind of the Association without reference to college entrance requirements to officials of both colleges and high school members of the Association and of making the answers to these questions to the basis of [reports] to the Association.”\textsuperscript{34} These surveys, however, helped depersonalize the Association and helped eliminate the sense of community established in the organization’s mission statement. By 1924 the Association no longer valued discussing educational issues and thought about eliminating the annual forum on education that originally made the organization successful. Walter L. Fleming, a representative of Vanderbilt University, commented that “every effort should be made to minimize the speech-making features of the meetings.”\textsuperscript{35} The disintegration of community within the Association further continued as it grew in power and as a clear divide emerged between member schools, accredited schools, and nonmember/non-accredited schools. An organization whose founders once aimed to improve the Southern education as a whole now found non-accredited schools to be “a nuisance.” Educators in the Association resented handling students who wanted to transfer from a non-accredited college to an accredited one because it “is difficult to convince them that they are not entitled to the same considerations.”\textsuperscript{36} The Association lost its interest in studying “serious economic problems” and consulting “with one another about forward steps” and became a disjointed body of committees and commissions that reviewed the applications of high schools, colleges, junior colleges, teacher training institutions, engineering schools, and other groups of educational institutions.”\textsuperscript{37}

Proponents of accreditation like K.J Hoke, the Chairman of the Commission on Curricular Problems and Research, defended the Association’s

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{33} Walter Fleming to A.B Dinwiddie, 2 August 1924, \textit{Southern Association, Box 704, VSC.}
  \item \textsuperscript{34} W.K. Greene to Walter Fleming, 6 May 1927, \textit{Southern Association, Box 704, VSC.}
  \item \textsuperscript{35} Fleming to Dinwiddie, 2 August 1924. \textit{Southern Association, Box 704, VSC.}
  \item \textsuperscript{36} Walter Fleming to A.B. Dinwiddie, 9 September 1927, \textit{Southern Association, Box 704, VSC.}
  \item \textsuperscript{37} Ibid., 16.
\end{itemize}
new status by arguing that “in our democratic society, the secondary schools and the colleges must meet the needs of the changing social order which has created them. Education is not an absolute.”38 Although the Association initially retained notable support both for and against the system of accreditation, the defenders of the new system outlasted the Association’s remaining traditionalists. They lived to see the Association grow in power and become an intimidating force. The Association utilized control mechanisms like the threat of loss of accreditation to ensure that secondary school and universities complied with the Association’s standards. For instance, the failure of preparatory schools or colleges to reply to a questionnaire or to reply unsatisfactorily “may create an impression to the discredit of [the] institution in the estimation of the Association.”39 The Association demonstrated its authority in 1921 when it brought charges against Centre College for “subsidizing football players and laxly administering entrance requirements in admitting them” and recommended their suspension from the Association. Exclusion from membership proved to be a serious hardship for Centre. The “stigma hurt Centre’s ability to attract new students,” harmed existing student’s ability to transfer to other schools,” and damaged the chances of graduates to be hired as teachers.40 Other schools feared facing similar repercussions and did their best to comply with the Association’s standards. By 1940 secondary school representatives made up the controlling body of the Association. They insisted on fewer specific requirements for admission to colleges, forcing colleges to offer more preparatory classes. The distinct separation between colleges and secondary schools that Kirkland and the other founders worked so hard to ensure had been reversed.

Accrediting agencies throughout the United States, including the Association, grew so powerful that in the 1930s the federal government began worrying about the extent of their influence. On March 7, 1938, the Department of Education established the Joint Committee on Accreditation of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities (JCAA LGCU). The committee reviewed the role of accrediting agencies in the field of education and concluded that too many accrediting agencies existed and that many of them “[invaded] the rights of institutions and “[destroyed] institutional freedom.”41

38 MC Huntley to Dr. John Pomfret, 12 January 1938, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (Correspondence) 1925-47, Box 220, VSC.
39 Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Southern States, Committee on Athletics, Southern Association, Reports to (1923-41), Box 96, VSC.
40 Miller, Centennial History, 45.
41 Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Southern States, Objectionable Practices of Accrediting Agencies, Southern Association, Miscellaneous, Box 1087, VSC. In its review, the JCAA LGCU criticized accrediting agencies for their excessive costs, their outmoded standards, their guild system or trade uniformity, and their complexity.
Members of the JCAA LGCU sought to reduce the number of accrediting agencies in the United States and to remove the “evils” present in the remaining agencies without being drawn into the accrediting business themselves.\footnote{Ibid.} Two years after the committee’s creation, it issued a report outlining the new “standards and criteria” accrediting agencies had to adopt.\footnote{A.F Kuhlmen to T.P Cooper, 4 February 1940, \textit{Southern Association (Correspondence) Miscellaneous}, Box 1068, VSC.} The Association survived these developments by conforming to the JCAA LGCU’s guidelines. Unfortunately, the changes implemented by the JCAA LGCU failed to limit the power of the Association.

By 1963 the Association exerted so much control over Southern universities that it influenced more than just its member universities’ admission standards. The Association evolved to regulate “requirements for graduation, training and development of faculty, teacher load, remuneration and tenure, financial support, library size, physical plant, extra-curricular activities, intercollegiate athletics, general administration and graduate work.”\footnote{Wiley, \textit{Growth and Transformation}, 46.} Even in areas where the Association retained no formal power it still exerted pressure and influence over schools and colleges. For instance, when students and faculty of the University of North Carolina protested the Communist speaker ban law of the North Carolina Acts of 1963 the Association “threatened the entire system of public education in the state with the loss of regional accreditation unless such political interference in affairs of higher education was withdrawn.”\footnote{Sam P. Wiggins, \textit{Higher Education in the South} (Berkeley: MrCutrhan Publishing Corporation, 1966), 111.} The threat of losing accreditation proved to be such an effective control mechanism that the University of North Carolina’s relatively liberal administrators felt obligated to attempt to minimize the students’ protests. To this day, it continues to exert influence and set standards for Southern colleges and secondary schools.

From its earliest days the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Southern States carried the high hopes of Southern educators. They saw it, above all else, as a democratic organization that colleges and schools would voluntarily join. Early members followed its stated purpose because they believed in the mission of the Association. Its founders never intended and never wanted the organization to transform into an accrediting agency. When the Association found tangible success when medical schools and state departments of education began using the Association’s list of member institutions as the basis for the selection of teachers and acceptance into graduate schools, its members turned their backs on the Association’s mission and
abandoned its original goals. These developments transformed the Association into an institution of social control that utilized control mechanisms to ensure that both member schools and accredited schools complied with their rules and regulations. As the Association became more powerful other accrediting agencies throughout the United States also grew in influence. By the time the Joint Committee on Accreditation of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities came into existence in 1938 most educators and school administrators agreed that accrediting agencies played an integral role in the field of education. Their rapid evolution ushered in a new, highly standardized era of American education. The Department of Education’s creation of the JCAA LGCU served more as an acknowledgement of this changing landscape than as a notable effort to limit the influence of accrediting agencies.
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1960: The Media’s Portrayal of Jackie Kennedy and Her Campaign

Rebecca Webb

The presidential election of 1960 was a first for many things; the first nationally televised debates, the first election of a Catholic president, and the first campaign between candidates for first lady. In the 1960 election “the press attempted to create a ‘race’ for First Lady between Pat Nixon and … Jacqueline Kennedy based on their clothing costs and styles.”¹ This race generated a great deal of publicity for the candidates of both parties. Jackie Kennedy won this race in part thanks to her portrayal in the media, which promoted her as an asset to her husband’s campaign.

Jacqueline Lee Bouvier was the daughter and stepdaughter of wealthy, nouveau riche, Wall Street stockbrokers. Her family was very affluent and very conservative and believed that people needed to be well educated in order to do well in life. Jackie attended one of the most prestigious finishing schools in Connecticut, Miss Porter’s School in Farmington, and upon graduating in 1947 with top marks, continued her education at Vassar College. There Jackie continued to fulfill her noblesse oblige, studying the liberal arts, including history, literature, art, and French. After two years at Vassar, Jackie decided to study abroad her junior year, studying in Paris, France. There she became fluent in French and really discovered her love her hunger for knowledge. When her junior year came to an end, Jackie returned to the United States but did not return to Vassar; instead she transferred to George Washington University so that she could be closer to her family, who were living in Washington D.C. Upon graduating from George Washington, Jackie worked her first, and only, job before marrying, as a news photographer and column writer for the Washington Times-Herald. It was while working for the Times-Herald that she met John F. Kennedy.²

Jackie married John F. Kennedy (Jack) in 1953, at the age of 24. Before she joined the Kennedy clan Jackie had no knowledge of politics or the political life. Her one political standpoint in her youth was the belief that “Roosevelt was the devil,” a phrase she most likely picked up in her Republican home. As the new bride to an extremely politically involved man and one of the most influential Democratic families in the Northeast, if not the country, Jackie had a lot of “on the job” learning to do. As a result of her affluent background, Jackie was able to fit in with the Kennedy family, and she quickly began to learn the family business, politics, “through osmosis.” During the campaign when asked about her previous political position as a Republican and how and why her views had changed, Jackie humorously replied “you have to be a Republican to know how nice it is to be a Democrat.” Although she was not experienced in politics, her quick wit and engaging style enabled Jackie to stand by Jack’s side as he made the transition from Congressman to Senator, and then from Senator to President, and it is through her dedication to her husband and his ambitions to be the President of the United States that Jackie was afforded the opportunity to campaign for the position of the First Lady of the United States.

Aged thirty in 1960 when the race for First Lady began and twelve years younger than her husband, Jackie was the youngest candidate for First Lady in history. Although some considered her age a disadvantage in this race, Jackie gracefully and tactfully used her age and lack of political experience to her advantage over the course of the campaign. In the three major areas that the media focused on--beauty, brains, and family--Jackie was lucky enough to have the winning combination of all three.

Throughout the campaign of 1960, the press often commented on the fashion choices of the candidates’ wives. This was especially true for Jackie Kennedy. When campaigning for her husband the comments “isn’t she gorgeous” and the murmur of “isn’t she lovely” were frequently heard. One television reporter even went as far as to say that Jackie “looked like a cover girl.” His comments were not far off base, and it was not the first time Jackie had been so complimented; in 1948 she had been named “the most beautiful debutante of the year” in Rhode Island. Multiple newspapers across the nation printed an article in which it was stated that “while Kennedy wows the ladies,

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7 Question of Character, p.160.
8 Sunday Express and News for You and the Family, October 2, 1960, Section E.
his wife has the same effect on men.” The article, like almost every article in which Jackie was mentioned, began by introducing Jackie as “the dark haired beauty who looks like a fashion model” or some variation of that phrase.

Even articles that were not based around Jackie’s beauty or fashion choices could not help but to include tidbits of personal information for the adoring readers. The comments about Jackie’s physical appearance were not limited to the content of the articles but were often included in the headlines, too, with phrases such as “Pretty Wife” or “Pretty Jacqueline Kennedy.” Not surprisingly, in a special Sunday Family Week piece that ran in the Sunday Lowell Sun and an array of other local newspapers across the country in September, it was said that “Jacqueline Kennedy would perhaps be the most beautiful First Lady ever to grace the White House, and possibly the best dressed too.”

Fashion was a large component of the coverage of the women of the 1960 election. Jackie’s fashion choices were a constant topic of interest, and she always won the highest accolades. Even during the primaries, her fashion was reported on in detail, while Muriel Humphrey, who was also campaigning at the time, did not receive nearly as close attention from the press. Articles sweeping the nation were abuzz with what Jackie was wearing and when she was wearing it; you could hardly make it through a single article on or mentioning her without reading a description of what she was wearing. With this constant attention on her looks and her dress, fashion-forward Jackie had to be careful about not only what she wore but also ‘who’ she wore. Although Jackie did have a couple of favorite American designers to whom she would turn for dresses, her “love for Europe” and her eye for high fashion were reflected in the custom pieces she often wore, designed by her favored French and Italian designers. This fact did not sit favorably with some readers, but no matter what criticism she faced, Jackie was always able to bounce back. Even when it was reported that Jackie spent $30,000 on clothing a year, she was able to rebut the accusation that she was frivolous with her money and in fact gain some sympathy by lamenting that people snipped at her fashion just as much as they snipped at her husband for his religion.

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9 *The Post-Register*, April 6, 1960, p.19. (as well as several other reprints nationwide)


12 *Family Weekly; The Lowell Sunday Sun*, September 6, 1960, p.6.

13 Question of Character, p.160.


There were numerous articles during the campaign that were centered solely around the fashion choices of Jackie and her opponents because as the wife of the commander of the free world, the First Lady’s fashion choices represent the whole of the nation; “if she is overly chic she may lose the common touch … but if, on the other hand, she is too drab, many will complain she is not Fulfiling [sic] her Duty [sic] as a Representative of the American Way of Life[sic].”\(^{16}\) Two fashion focused articles appeared in the *New York Times* in July and September of 1960. Entitled “The Woman Who’ . . . . . Wins High Fashion’s V ote is Jacqueline Kennedy” and “First Ladies—in Fashion, Too?” respectively, these two articles dug deep into the fashion choices of the First Lady candidates, offering readers an inside look at the wardrobes and stylistic choices that Jackie Kennedy and Pat Nixon made. Pat Nixon’s style was often described as “conservative perfection”,\(^{17}\) while Jackie Kennedy’s was “fantastically chic.”\(^{18}\) Although many thought that both women dressed spectacularly, especially after the reported dowdiness of the Hoover, Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower administrations,\(^{19}\) each woman was criticized by some because a potential first lady was expected to accomplish the impossible feat of dressing for everyone.\(^{20}\)

As noted, Jackie Kennedy was very well educated. She attended Miss Porter’s School, and Vassar College; she studied abroad at the Sorbonne, and graduated from George Washington University. A lover of languages, Jackie was fluent in French, Spanish, and Italian, and could also speak some Polish. These skills were an asset to both her campaign and her husband’s campaign as the “stunning egghead,” as Jackie was often fondly referred to as, could reach out to thousands of voters who did not speak English well or at all and make a connection with this often forgotten about demographic. Multiple articles in the *New York Times* cited the fact that Jackie would be recording “some foreign language broadcasts for use in her husband’s campaign for President.”\(^{21}\) The most popular of these broadcasts was a commercial in Spanish urging Spanish-speaking voters to come out and vote for her husband. Jackie’s education and intelligence not only helped in reaching previously passed over demographics but also boosted her husband’s image as an intellect.\(^{22}\) Articles centering on Jackie’s intelligence were not as frequent and as sweeping as articles centered

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\(^{18}\) *New York Times*, July 15, 1960, p.L-17

\(^{19}\) A Woman Named Jackie, p.220.


\(^{21}\) *New York Times*, September 20, 1960, p.34.

\(^{22}\) Question of Character, p.144.
on her beauty or fashion, but when combined Jackie seemed “the model of good looks, good taste, modesty, femininity, poise, and dignity.”

Jackie’s fashion-forward style was counterbalanced by her traditional views on family and the role of a wife. Having had only one paying job as a newspaper photographer and column writer before she met Jack, at heart Jackie was a homemaker. She believed that it was her job to support Jack and make sure that the house ran smoothly so that he could focus on his job and not have to worry about managing a household. In a column series in the *Oakland Tribune* Jackie was quoted saying that she felt “a woman should give half of her time for her husband and half to her children—and never let either one suffer.” In another article in the same series Jackie supported her beliefs and showed the nation how thoroughly devoted she was to being a good wife. As a politician’s wife she claimed that she could always expect to have a number of guests for any given meal, sometimes announced ahead of time, though much of the time these gatherings were convened on the spur of the moment. In order to accommodate this and to be sure that her husband never worried about inviting anyone over for dinner, Jackie “stocked the freezer with ‘a couple of roasts, chicken, hamburger, and a frozen cake and muffins that [she could] heat quickly and frozen vegetables [so that she could] always serve eight with no notice.” Jackie was an accomplished hostess, in order to artfully manage the large volume of guests that passed through for dinners, she skillfully kept a notebook of who dined with the family, when they dined, and what they ate so that if and when they returned they would not be served the same meal twice.

Although she was the mistress of the house, Jackie was not so old fashioned as to do all the cooking and cleaning herself. She had cooks and maids take care of the more mundane tasks so that she would be free to plan meals, decorate, and play with Caroline. She was very devoted to her family, and whenever she was travelling with Jack she would constantly remark on how she missed Caroline, the couple’s two-year-old daughter. While campaigning in Wisconsin Jackie mentioned Caroline while talking to a group of teachers and parents at a school and undoubtedly gained their vote. This love and devotion to her family gained Jackie a lot of support during the campaign as it helped average American women feel like she could relate to a person who otherwise

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23 Question of Character, p.148
24 *Oakland Tribune*, August 31, 1960, p.8-S.
25 *Oakland Tribune*, August 30, 1960, p.10-D.
26 *Oakland Tribune*, August 30, 1960, p.10-D.
seemed somewhat of a princess or a vision of the American dream that they could never hope to obtain.

Although Jackie’s public appearances were meant to further her husband’s campaign for presidency, much of the coverage of the candidate’s wife went towards portraying her as the best potential First Lady. In a series that ran in Family Weekly, a nationally added section to the Sunday edition of many local newspapers, a series entitled “The Women Behind the Candidates” did spotlight sections on Pat Nixon and Jackie Kennedy. The title of the section on Sunday September 10, 1960, read, “Jacqueline Kennedy: What Kind of First Lady Would She Be?”28 The articles focusing on Jackie ran the gamut of fashion and beauty, to family life and upbringing, but they never explored in any depth the issues surrounding the campaign. The closest one could say that the media came to discussing the important issues of the day with Jackie is in an article entitled “Kennedy’s Wife Replies on ‘Chic’” in which she talked about why she thought her husband was the best candidate for president and why the people should vote for him, finishing with the statement that “if my country were in Jack’s hands …I’d feel safe.”29

While campaigning, Jackie was frequently compared to her opponent, Pat Nixon. Articles focused on comparing these two women became more popular after the primaries were over and as the election itself began to approach. The media attention was so great surrounding the race for First Lady that on October 17, 1960, the cover of the periodical Newsweek, as well as a substantial article, were dedicated to this closely watched race. The Newsweek cover had a head shot of both women side by side and the caption underneath read, “First-Lady-lady-to-be: ‘Pat’ Nixon or ‘Jackie’ Kennedy.”30 The following article set up a profile of each woman, characterizing Pat Nixon as a world traveler who was experienced in politics, hard working, and self disciplined and characterizing Jackie as a well educated beauty who lacked the political experience and maturity of the other presidential and vice presidential candidates’ wives.31

Jackie and Pat did not have much in common other than their good looks and devotion to their families. Pat Nixon was raised on a farm and at a young age had to set off on her own after both of her parents died.32 Pat worked her way through school, holding down several jobs at once. As a mother she was very strict with her two adolescent daughters but tried her best to be home to

28 Family Weekly; The Lowell Sunday Sun, September 6, 1960, cover.
30 Newsweek, October 17, 1960, cover.
31 Newsweek, October 17, 1960, p.33.
32 Her mother died when she was twelve followed by her father when she was seventeen.
eat breakfast with them and greet them when they came home from school in order to preserve a resemblance of normal family life during the campaign. Pat accompanied her husband Richard Nixon to most if not all of his campaigning events but try as she might, she was never able to win over the hearts of the American people quite like Jackie. Readers wrote into newspapers and periodicals such as *Newsweek* to complain about Pat Nixon and the perfect image she portrayed. One woman wrote into the *New York Times* claiming that “Pat Nixon looks too good to be true. I get the feeling that she has never in her life held anything up with safety pins, and it irritates me.” Many thought that she was putting on a show for the election and did not think that she was a real and down to earth as she tried to suggest. Readers seemed to prefer the authenticity of Jackie Kennedy, who although she was wealthy, did not try to hide it from the people. She also did not flaunt it in the faces of the public. During the campaign, there were not as many negative reactions to pieces about Jackie Kennedy. The main thing that female readers seemed to dislike about Jackie was her bouffant hair-do. One woman went as far as to say that she had “better looking floor mops than the bouffant coiffure Jackie sported.”

Unlike Pat, who seemed to be extremely outgoing and to enjoy being in the spotlight with her husband, Jackie was more reserved and shy, and felt like the spotlight belonged to her husband. Inevitably she did participate in newspaper and television interviews and some photographic sessions in order to help her husband’s career, but usually Jackie valued her privacy and tried to avoid excessive publicity. The nation, however, was taken with her, and in her attempts to avoid publicity she drew more and more attention to herself. This was especially true in the later months of JFK’s campaign. Jackie was unable to travel extensively with her husband due to her high risk pregnancy. The articles that Jackie wrote and that were written about her during this time, combined with her television appearances and the radio tapes she recorded, really set Jackie apart as they were largely centered around who she was rather than on her role in her husband’s campaign. In many ways Jackie’s pregnancy helped

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35 Question of Character, p.144.
37 *Family Weekly; The Lowell Sunday Sun*, September 6, 1960, p. 3.; *New York Times*, September 15, p.29. - Jackie’s pregnancy was considered high risk because she had lost multiple babies previously with the most recent miscarriage at the time being shortly after the Democratic Convention in 1956. Her doctors thought that constant excitement, heat, crowds and the lack of rest that was undoubtedly a large part of campaigning contributed to her recent miscarriage and thus they did not want to take any risks with her current pregnancy.
distinguish her as an individual, which helped her campaign for First Lady as she was not simply seen as an asset of her husband’s campaign.

Jackie did accompany Jack on a couple of occasions during his campaign, most notably to Wisconsin and West Virginia during the primaries and New York after JFK was selected as the Democratic nominee. Her presence during the campaign and the media’s coverage of her was a huge asset to her husband’s campaign. Kenny O’Donnell, one of the organizers of Jack’s campaign, was quoted remarking that “When Jackie was travelling with us, the size of the crowd at every stop was twice as big as it would have if Jack was alone.”

Although she disliked politics and campaigning “she played the adoring wife” and “did her duty . . . braving the handshakes” at the numerous luncheons, dinners, and speeches she attended. Even though her doctors advised against it, Jackie went to a parade and several speaking engagements in New York. As election day grew nearer, Jackie tried to do everything she could to help her husband win the Presidency and said in protest to those trying to convince her not to go to New York that “If I don’t go and Jack loses, I’ll never forgive myself.”

During the campaigning in New York Jackie spoke to multiple crowds on her husband’s behalf; “she spoke Spanish in Spanish Harlem, Italian in Little Italy, and French in a Haitian neighborhood.” With Jackie’s help, JFK carried New York.

New York was not the only spot on the campaign trail where Jackie’s presence was a vital asset to her husband’s success. During the primary vote in Wisconsin it appeared to many people that it was Jackie’s presence that gave her husband his victory margin. At some stages during this campaign leg Jackie had filled in for her husband when he went back to Washington D.C. to fulfill his responsibilities in the Senate. Her engagement with people, especially with a group of parents and teachers and at a number of black churches on the outskirts of Madison really made a connection and furthered her husband’s popularity in the state. Furthermore, in the state of West Virginia, the public’s reaction to Jackie was unimaginable. Charles Peters, a democratic political organizer for the Kennedy camp in West Virginia, originally opposed the idea of Jackie accompanying her husband for the campaign trip as he felt that “Jackie would compare unfavorably with Muriel Humphrey, Hubert’s wife, who was down-to-
earth and much more like West Virginians.” Much to Mr. Peters’ bewilderment, however, the people of West Virginia wanted Jackie; “instead of identifying with the woman who was like them—Muriel Humphrey—they identified with the Princess.” The people of West Virginia, like much of America at the time, were fed up with the dullness of the prior administrations and with a wondrous look in their eyes were looking towards the Kennedy’s to find the aristocratic image they were so badly craving.

In West Virginia, while the young handsome couple campaigned together, and in the numerous televised performances in which Jackie took part, she tried not to look “too rich” or “too New York” in order to maintain the affection of the public. In order to accomplish this, Jackie wore “white gloves, little hats, a simple and short blown-out hair style, very little jewelry, and very little makeup.” On television, as in an interview piece, “Jacqueline Kennedy Speaks to Dr. Spock,” she appeared in a simple but form fitting, short sleeved, dark dress and low heels. She had on three conservative strands of pearls and modest earrings. This image of Jackie as a wholesome mother greatly assisted in Kennedy’s campaign as it contrasted with some images of Jackie in which she was described as ‘too chic’ and it quelled statements of the couple being too ‘Hollywood.’

The media attention that Jackie Kennedy received as a result of the race for First Lady, and her decided victory, was an enormous asset to JFK’s campaign. Not only did she help to win over the hearts of American men and women alike, her language skills helped her husband to win in demographics that he would not have been able to reach without her. Jackie’s fashion-forwardness and striking good looks put this “stunning egghead” in the cross-hairs of the press time and time again, charming everyone she met and helping her to win over the hearts and minds of the public. The media’s portrayal of potential First Ladies since Jackie Kennedy has grown extensively. Even today, as gender norms change and evolve, the fashion choices of the potential First Lady are often commented on by the press and undoubtedly influence voter decisions.

44 A Woman Named Jackie, p.220.
45 A Woman Named Jackie, p.220.
46 A Woman Named Jackie, p.220.
47 Question of Character, p.147-148.
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About the Authors

Ryan Dickinson is a senior from Canton, Georgia, majoring in History and Spanish. This year, she received the Carlos Flick Award for Historical Writing at Honors Day. Next year, she will be working with the Teach for Thailand Corps in Thailand.

David Ellis is a third-year senior from Brunswick, Georgia. A History major and English minor, he is a member of Phi Eta Sigma and Phi Alpha Theta. His paper on Russo-German Relations has been presented at BEAR Day and the Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference. He is interested in further research into the Weimar Era of Germany and Imperial Germany. After graduating from Mercer, David plans on improving his German, traveling to Germany, and eventually achieving a Ph.D.

Sean Rayburn, a senior, hails from Newnan, Georgia. He is pursuing double majors in English literature and Creative Writing as well as a minor in Theatre. He has presented his research and creative projects at Mercer’s Bear Day and has also presented a collection of poetry at the International Sigma Tau Delta Literary Conference in New Orleans. Last year he won Tarver Library’s Valerie B. Edmonds Award for Undergraduate Research and has been published in Mercer’s art and literary magazine, The Dulcimer. After graduation, he leaves to teach English in Thailand as part of the Teach For Thailand Corps.

Shaynna Rodrigues comes from Chattanooga, Tennessee. She is currently a senior History major with double minors in English and Theater and has won an award as the outstanding History major. After graduation, she plans to teach history at the high school level. She was, she says, “lucky enough to have teachers to inspire me to do better and pursue my interests, and I want to pay that forward to my students when I teach. In addition, I want to establish a respect for history in my students.”
Rebecca Webb, from Westborough Massachusetts, is a senior majoring in Communication Studies and History with minors in Education and Photography. She is a member of several academic honoraries and has presented her research at the 2012 National Conference for Undergraduate Research, the 2012 and 2013 Mercer BEAR Day events, the Regional Phi Alpha Theta Conference, the 2011 Symposium for History Undergraduate Research, and before the Mercer University Board of Trustees. She was awarded Best Undergraduate Research Paper at the 2011 Regional Phi Alpha Theta Conference. Rebecca’s research interests lie in the media’s portrayal of historical events and people. After graduation, she plans to pursue a master’s degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs.