Acknowledging Our Past: Race, Landscape and History

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ACKNOWLEDGING OUR PAST: RACE, LANDSCAPE, AND HISTORY

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LAND AND LABOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This book has been produced at an institution of higher learning located in a space where Native American communities have lived and worked for thousands of years. We especially acknowledge the Catawba and Tsalaguwetiyi Peoples who were associated with this space during the early colonial era. We also honor with gratitude the enslaved Africans who labored to lay the physical foundation of the College and have contributed to its development for 166 years. As a result, we commit to actively engage in learning how to be better caretakers of this place and continue to honor the history of Indigenous and enslaved peoples and their descendants.

-co-authored by Cynthia Fowler and Taifha Alexander
January 2020: student researchers Kaycia Best, Alea Harris, Dieran McGowan, Vera Oberg, and Bryson Coleman trained in archival research methods and oral history. The students also read and discussed a wide array of peer reviewed articles and books related to public memory, commemoration, memorialization, and racial violence. In addition, students planned and led a round table discussion with community members at the public library about potential research directions and to hear their feedback before beginning the project. Students took a field trip to study and learn from commemorative sites of racial violence and injustice in Montgomery, AL including the Civil Rights Memorial, the Legacy Museum: From Slavery to Mass Incarceration, the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, and the Freedom Rides Museum.

February- May 2020: Kaycia Best and Alea Harris, spent the semester researching the Wofford College Archives and Special Collections, scanning materials, utilizing the archives at the public library, consulting with the college archivist and the special collections librarian, and conducting oral histories. Kaycia and Alea also presented their preliminary findings to Teach. Equity. Now.

June-August 2020: Alea Harris, Destiny Shippy, and Dieran McGowan created teaching modules for Wofford FYI courses and presented their work at the New Faculty Orientation. Researchers attended Anti-Racism 101: How Did We Get Here? Monuments, Memory, and Memorials with speakers Dr. Felice Knight, Dr. Kim Rostan, and Mr. Brad Steineke and Anti-Racism 101: Honoring Memory by Removing & Renaming White Supremacy with speakers Mr. Jerad Green, Dr. Brandon Inabinet, and Dr. Derek Alderman.
Research Team at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, AL
(L to R) Bryson Coleman, Vera Oberg, Alea Harris, Dieran McGowan,
Dr. Rhiannon Leebrick, Destiny Shippy (not pictured)

"The very call to 'find more sources' about people who left few
if any of their own reproduces the same erasures and silences
they experienced...by demanding the impossible. Paying
attention to these archival imbalances illuminates systems of
power...the layers of domination under which enslaved men and
women endured, resisted, and died."

-Marisa J. Fuentes
RESEARCH GOALS

- To better understand the history of anti-Black racism in its various manifestations on our college’s campus

- To explore what history has been preserved and how it has been told and what has been minimized, ignored, or left out of the historical narrative about our school

- To begin to highlight the lived experiences and histories of those who have been erased from our campus’ public memory, acknowledging that what is not recorded tells a great deal about how systemic racism and other forms of discrimination are maintained

- To learn more about resistance to, survival, and resilience under white supremacy

- To begin the process of acknowledging and reflexively reckoning with our school’s past so that we can start to repair harm and move toward a more equitable, regenerative, and inclusive campus community

WHERE WE’RE GOING

We hope that at the conclusion of this research project, because we have begun addressing our past, the institution will be in a better position to join and build upon the conversations already happening in Spartanburg, South Carolina and at other colleges and universities throughout the United States about the lingering and current effects of slavery and other forms of systemic racism on college campuses today.
GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How did Wofford College and its early stakeholders support and participate in slavery?
- How is the legacy of slavery present in the landscape of our campus (buildings, statues, names, etc.)?
- How can we better understand Wofford as an institution during the time of Reconstruction through the Jim Crow era?
- How did students, faculty, and administration respond to Wofford’s transition from segregation to integration?
- What have the experiences of Black students been like over the past five decades?
- Where is Wofford College now in terms of racial equity and justice?

STUDENT RESEARCHERS SEEKING FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT THE SPARTANBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY, JANUARY 2020.
RESEARCH METHODS

- **Archival Research**: We used Wofford’s Sandor Teszler Library Archives and Special Collections as the basis for this project. We also used resources and collections at the Spartanburg County Public Library, our project’s community partner.

- **Oral Histories**: We also conducted oral histories of former and current Wofford students, faculty, and staff members.
"Based on some of the findings that I’ve discovered...I now understand how tedious archival research is and how limited archival research can be. There were certain parts of Wofford history that I wanted to study but I was unable to because there’s not enough information on it and it frustrates me that there are so many holes that may never be filled...Truth telling to me means giving a voice to those who didn’t have a voice during a certain period of time. I am a black woman and I understand that I have the privilege of having a voice that my ancestors never had the opportunity to have. Truth telling is a duty for me because I understand that if I don’t tell the truth for these people, the truth may never be told. America must understand that in order for us to heal as a nation we have to face the atrocities and injustices of the past."

-Dieran McGowan
KEY FINDINGS

- Archival data show that early Wofford leaders, like many of their peers at other academic institutions, were pro-slavery in their written work and speeches and had ties to well-known anti-abolitionist and pro-slavery leaders.

- Many early Wofford leaders were slave owners, including college founder Benjamin Wofford and Presidents Wightman, Shipp, and Carlisle, as well as members of the early Board of Trustees and some early faculty.

- Wofford's earliest buildings, Main and the five original faculty houses, were constructed by enslaved people.

- Some Wofford alumni participated in and supported racial violence during and after the Reconstruction Period.

- Wofford College, as an institution, was complicit with segregation and Jim Crow laws.

- Integration at Wofford was contentious among the student body, alumni, administration, and faculty. Black students faced overt racism on campus during this period.
"Today, as in the past, systemic racism encompasses a broad range of white-racist dimensions: the racial ideology, attitudes, emotions, habits, actions, and institutions of whites in this society. Thus, systemic racism is far more than a matter of racial prejudice and individual bigotry. It is a material, social, and ideological reality that is well-imbedded in major U.S. Institutions."

-Joe Feagin, Systemic Racism: A Theory of Oppression
"During orientation my first year when all the new students were in Leonard Auditorium, one of the leaders told us in an offhand comment that the fingerprints of the slaves who made the bricks that built Old Main were still visible. Those words have stayed with me. There was no nuance, no background. I don't think she even thought about what those words might mean, especially for the Black students in the room."

- Bryson Coleman
Wofford's Founding

- Wofford College opened its doors on August 1, 1854 because of the vision and a $100,000 donation from Benjamin Wofford.
- During the frontier revivals of the early 19th century, Benjamin Wofford joined the Methodist Church and served as an itinerant preacher for several years (Stone 2020). He was not ordained at this time as he owned two enslaved people, which had been banned by the church in the West; however, upon his return to South Carolina he was ordained as a deacon and later as a church elder (Wallace 1951).
- In 1844, sixteen years before the southern states seceded, the Southern Annual Conferences withdrew from the denomination and formed the Methodist Episcopal Church over the issue of slavery. The Methodist Episcopal Church in South Carolina was pro-slavery (Stone 2020).
- Benjamin Wofford settled in South Carolina with his first wife, Anna Todd, on her family's land near the Tyger River. Anna Todd is said to have planted “in Wofford's mind his interest in education” (Wallace 1951: 23). Upon the deaths of Anna Todd’s parents, the couple inherited their property. At the time local laws meant that “ownership of the wife's personal property, and the management, but not ownership of her real estate, and the control of its income, belonged to her husband” (Wallace 1951: 23). The couple had no children and Anna Todd died in 1835.
- In 1836, Wofford married Miss Maria Sevier Barron, the daughter of a wealthy Virginia family with connections in Tennessee and North Carolina. Benjamin and Maria moved to a home on Spartanburg's courthouse square where he could concentrate on investments in finance and manufacturing (Stone 2020).
- Wofford was "a member of the defeated Nullification ticket for Spartanburg for the Convention of 1832," a precursor to the secessionist movement (Wallace 1951: 26). He was also an avid supporter of John C. Calhoun, the pro-slavery vice president from South Carolina (Wallace 1951).
- Wofford's will shows that he owned eight enslaved people at the time of his death in 1850: Bafsett, Virginia, Frank, Jack, and a couple named Bell and Winey and their two children, Coleman and George.
- Public records indicate that Wofford also owned an enslaved man, named John, in 1827. John was accused of having a relationship with a white woman and executed. Afterwards, Wofford wrote a handwritten note to the state requesting compensation for John.
Below are two pages from Benjamin Wofford’s will listing the enslaved people he owned: Bafsett, Virginia, Frank, Jack, a couple named Bell and Winey and their two children, Coleman and George.
• Benjamin Wofford died in 1850 and was buried next to his first wife and her parents. Wofford and Anna Todd were later buried on Wofford’s campus (Stone 2020).

• Wofford left the house, fifty acres of land, and two enslaved people, Bafsett and Virginia, to his wife Maria, in his will.

• The bulk of his estate was left to start Wofford College. Maria also inherited enslaved people from her mother.

• White women slave owners in the Upstate often rented out the slaves they owned as a way to bring in income.

• Records indicate that Maria Wofford’s great niece sent portraits of Benjamin and Maria to the school with the request that the two be hung together. She said her great aunt had insisted “that her picture hang in the college beside that of her husband, as she considered herself the co-founder because of her not having contested the unfair will of her husband” (Wallace 1951: 34).
Two pages from Benjamin Wofford's petition asking that he be compensated for a slave named John in his possession who was executed, available from the S.C. Dept. of Archives and History.

After Wofford’s death, the trustees named in Wofford’s will met at Spartanburg’s Central Methodist Church and agreed that the college should be located in the village rather than out in the country and acquired the necessary land to build upon on the northern edge of the town. The college charter from the South Carolina General Assembly is dated Dec. 16, 1851 (Stone 2020). Two trustees, Robert Bryce and Simpson Bobo, both owned slaves according to census data. It is likely other Board of Trustee members did owned slaves as well.
EARLY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

In 1850, Trustee Simpson Bobo owned twelve enslaved people, *1850 Slave Schedule.*

In 1850, Trustee Robert Bryce owned eleven enslaved people, *1850 Slave Schedule.*
The trustees retained one of the state’s leading architects, Edward C. Jones of Charleston, to design the college’s Main Building (Stone 2020).

The original structures included a president’s home (demolished early in the 20th century); four faculty homes (still in use today); and Main Building (Stone 2020).

Construction of Main Building (Old Main) began in the summer of 1852 under the supervision of Ephraim Clayton of Asheville, N.C.

The 1850 census shows that Clayton owned seven enslaved people. In 1860, he owned eleven slaves and also had several freemen working for him (Topkins, et al: 2009).

Clayton likely had his slaves and the freemen who worked for him help construct Main Building, it is also likely that he rented enslaved people from local residents.

At least one person died helping build Main Building when the western tower collapsed on him (Wallace 1951).
Construction of the College

- Shortly after his work at Wofford College, Clayton [and George Wesley Shackleford] worked on the original building for Mars Hill College in Madison County, NC (1856-1857). When the college trustees could not pay the cost of $3,875, Clayton and Shackleford had Joe, an enslaved man belonging to one of the trustees, seized and held in the Buncombe County Jail until they received their payment (Topkins, Bullock, Bishir 2009).

- Ephraim Clayton also managed the Asheville Amory during the Civil War. Eight enslaved men that Clayton owned worked at the armory, bringing in money for their owner. Three were armorerers, one as a steam engineer, and one a master carpenter. The master carpenter made $3/day for Clayton. In 1863, a white mob attacked one of the enslaved men from York, S.C. who was outside the armory without a pass and brutally whipped him (Jones and Melton 2014).

- In another example of the institution of slavery at the time, Shackleford offered a reward for a runaway slave, 19-year-old named Enock (Harry) Henry in 1858.
In 2008, Poet Nikky Finney presented her poem “The Thinking Men” at Wofford College to commemorate the enslaved men who worked to build early campus structures, including Main Building. "[Finney] said she wanted to illustrate with her poem that even though no one knows the names of the slaves who worked on the Main Building, they are distinguished by the care they took with their work. Finney said she believes the enslaved workers realized that someday, people who looked like them would attend the college" (Conley 2008).
EARLY WOFFORD

- The first day of classes, Wofford College had seven students in the first year and sophomore classes. By the end of that year the total was twenty-four students (Wallace 1951).

- 1859 records indicate that fifty-two students came from across South Carolina, four from North Carolina, two from Georgia, one from Tennessee, and one from Mexico (Wallace 1951).

- Most early students boarded with families in the town of Spartanburg, however, some students were allowed to occupy empty recitation rooms on campus (Wallace 1951).

- The college’s dining hall in Main Building was started by students who decided to pool their funds to hire a cook, thus saving boarding expenses (Stone and Meagher 2010).

African American staff who worked in the dining room in Wightman Hall 1898, names unknown.
• Born in 1808, William Wightman became the first president of Wofford College after serving on the Board of Trustees.
• He joined the South Carolina Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1828 and served appointments over the next six years.

• In 1839, he returned to South Carolina and in the summer of 1840, he became the editor of the *Southern Christian Advocate*. He served for more than ten years as editor.
• Wightman became a leading member of the South Carolina Annual Conference. He was first elected a delegate to the General Conference in 1840, was a member of the 1844 conference that saw American Methodism split into northern and southern branches based on slavery, and was at the 1845 founding conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Louisville, KY (Wallace 1951).
• Wightman gave the keynote address at Wofford College in 1851, announcing a vision that described the new college’s place in Methodist higher education (Stone 2020).
• As the editor of the *Southern Christian Advocate* he worked closely with William Capers, an outspoken advocate for continuing slavery.
• Wightman spoke on the journal’s birth in 1837, saying that it was created out of self-defense and self-respect by Southern preachers against attacks regarding the domestic institutions of the South (slavery) from northerners.
• Articles within the *Southern Christian Advocate* supported the institution of slavery and encouraged the conversion of all slaves to Methodism through the work of preachers and missionaries.
• Wofford College was a regular advertiser in the Southern Christian Advocate and many early professors and later presidents held prominent positions at the journal including: Dr. Herman Baer, Albert M. Shipp, and John H. Carlisle.
During the Civil War "Citadel and Arsenal cadets were encamped on the Wofford Campus" and at least one Confederate soldier died in a makeshift infirmary in Professor Carlisle's home (Wallace 1951: 70). The college was also used as an armory during this time.

The college was able to maintain itself financially because of tuition from the Wofford Fitting School, however, the college struggled financially after the war having invested most of its money in Confederate War Bonds (Wallace 1951).

Joseph Hamilton, a graduate of Wofford College, was commander of the Blue Ridge Rifles, a military unit of the Confederate Army that began as the “Southern Guard” ROTC group at the college. At least thirty-five students or former students of Wofford College died during the war. There was a plan to build a Confederate Monument at Wofford (funds were raised, some wanted a building). However, the monument never came to fruition (Wallace 1951).
Albert M. Shipp became president of Wofford College in 1859 after serving on the Board of Trustees from 1851 through 1853. Shipp was president during the Civil War, when Wofford was the only college that remained opened in South Carolina. By 1862, there were only eight students enrolled. Many of the students at the time pressured President Shipp to let them join the war effort. The governor would initially not allow it and said that they would need educated men in the South after the war.

- During this time the Board of Trustees invested $85,897 into Confederate War Bonds. The school nearly went bankrupt and it took them years to recover the financial losses (Wallace 1951). In 1877, the net worth of the college was valued only at about $33,000 (Stone 2020).
- Shipp co-owned enslaved people according to the 1850 census, including Tobias Hartwell.
- Shipp owned twenty-two enslaved people shown in the 1860 Slave Schedule
- In 1963, Wofford College named a newly constructed dormitory the A.M. Shipp Hall.
Tobias Booker Hartwell

- Tobias “Tobe” Booker Hartwell was born into slavery around 1840 in Virginia. Records show that he was brought to Spartanburg in 1859 by Dr.A.M.Shipp.

- During Reconstruction, Hartwell served as a magistrate’s constable and as an informal police officer in the city of Spartanburg.

- In 1874, Hartwell purchased over two acres from R.E. Cleveland to build a three-room home on East Cleveland Street in Spartanburg.

- Hartwell was an active church member and involved in the creation of the Lincoln School, one of the first Black public schools in the area.

- He worked for 33 years for the National Bank of Spartanburg and died in 1932 (Spartanburg Housing Authority 2019).

- In 1940, the Spartanburg Housing Authority opened the first public affordable housing property called Tobe Hartwell Courts (Conley 2000).
1865–1877 is called the Reconstruction period. During this post-emancipation period Black leaders joined white allies to bring the Republican Party to power with the intention of redefining governance and making power more equitable.

This was a moment of promise for racial equality and reformation in the United States. At the same time, there was a violent campaign to restore white supremacy in the South as Blacks gained more, although short-lived, freedom.

In the years after the Civil War, Black codes were adopted by southern states to control Blacks and to reimpose the white supremacist social structure. Southern legislatures passed laws that severely restricted the civil rights of emancipated former slaves, for example labor contracts and vagrancy laws.
RECONSTRUCTION

- The wartime letters home of Wofford alumni, Dick and Tally Simpson, both Confederate soldiers, were turned into a book titled *Far, Far from Home: The Wartime Letters of Dick and Tally Simpson, Third South Carolina Volunteers*. (Tally died at the Battle of Chickamauga).
- Dick Simpson was an avid supporter of the Red Shirts during and after Reconstruction.
- The Red Shirts were an armed white supremacist group or “rifle club” who used violent tactics, intimidation, and terror to prevent Black men from voting.
- The Red Shirts supported Wade Hampton III’s gubernatorial campaign. Hampton was one of the largest slaveholders in the region and leader of a group committed to restoring white supremacy called the Redeemers; he later became a U.S. Senator (Fonner 1988).
- The Redshirts were the instigators behind the 1876 Hamburg Massacre in which six Black men were murdered and this event set the stage for the white terror that continued throughout the South through the 1960s, including an estimated 35-100 Black men murdered by white militia in Ellenton, SC that same year (Vandervelde 1998).
DOCUMENTED LYNCHINGS

IN SPARTANBURG, SC

According to the Equal Justice Initiative there were at least 189 reported lynchings of African Americans in South Carolina between 1877-1950. Two of those were in Spartanburg, SC.

- Abe Thomson was lynched on March 3, 1886 "in a grove on Main Street, about half a mile from the Courthouse" (Carolina Spartan 1886).
- Ike Anderson was lynched on December 20, 1893 for "intimacy with a white woman" (Pickens Sentinel 1894).

There were over 4,000 reported lynchings in the U.S. during this same time period.

The National Memorial for Peace and Justice commemoration for recorded lynchings in Spartanburg, SC. Photo taken by R. Leebrick, 2020.
The Lost Cause was an interpretation of the Civil War by white southerners that romanticized the “Old South,” the Confederacy, and slavery and proposed that the Civil War was caused by secession (not slavery), that slaves were faithful servants and white masters were benevolent, that Confederate leader Robert E. Lee was a hero, and that southern white women were sanctified (Janney 2016).

The United Daughters of the Confederacy, labeled by the Southern Poverty Law Center as a Neo-Confederate and white supremacist group, formed in 1894, led a campaign to commemorate Confederate soldiers and military leaders during the early to mid-twentieth century, erecting statues throughout the South.

John George Clinkscales, an 1876 Wofford graduate from Abbeville, South Carolina, grew up on a plantation. He worked as a schoolteacher and then professor before being elected superintendent of education in Anderson, S.C. In Clinkscales’ memoir, On the Old Plantation (1916), he shares memories of growing up on a plantation and “hoped that his book would serve as a counterargument to Harriet Beecher Stowe’s negative depiction of slavery in Uncle Tom’s Cabin” (Henderson 1973).

The book focuses on his childhood memories, his perceived understanding of his father’s benevolence towards his slaves, and also includes several caricatured stories of enslaved people written in dialect that is a romanticized and stereotyped account of the Antebellum South.
JAMES CARLISLE

- James Carlisle served as the third president of Wofford College from 1875-1902 after previously working as a professor since 1854. He was president during the Reconstruction Period and in the years that followed.

- Carlisle was a member of the South Carolina’s Secession Convention in 1861 and is one of the original signatories of South Carolina’s Secession Declaration.

- His house on Wofford’s campus was designed to have servant houses in the back where enslaved people likely lived.

- Carlisle purchased an enslaved woman named Nancy for $175 in 1857, shown in the receipt above.
Wofford’s campus was segregated until the 1960s. Only white men attended (except for a brief period when four white women were admitted between 1897-1904). Women were admitted in 1971 as day students and in 1976 as residential students.

There is not much information that we were able to find on what it was like on campus for African Americans during the early part of the twentieth century.
These two yearbook pictures are all we could find to show Black employees at Wofford College during the early 20th century. It was common for whites to use terms like "boy" or "uncle" as a rhetorical tool of oppression to subordinate Black men. Using city directories we were able to find the following names of Black individuals working at Wofford (1905-1911):

- J. Frank Thompson
- Henry Blake (pictured above)
- Cornelia Butler, cook
- Thos Dolliston
- John Few
- John Foster
- Kershaw Truesdell
- Thos Williams, janitor
WOFFORD WOMEN

- The first women to attend Wofford were admitted in the fall of 1897 but were not allowed to live on campus. Wofford’s “experiment” with admitting women ended in 1904. The first four women were

  - Ione Littlejohn Paslay 1902
  - Carrie Nabors Skelton 1902
  - May D. Wannamaker 1901
  - Puella Littlejohn True 1901

- In 1973, Janice B. Means was the first African American woman to graduate from Wofford College.

Photo of Wofford student body, 1897-98
Lynching of Willie Earl 1947

In 1947, Willie Earle, a 24 year old Black man, was lynched by a mob in Greenville, SC, based on circumstantial evidence related to the murder of a white taxi driver in Pickens County. A lynch mob of at least thirty one men forced Earle’s release from jail and beat, stabbed, and then shot Earle to death. This is considered to be the last racially motivated lynching in South Carolina, although NOT in the United States (Moredock 2007; Gravely 2019). One cab driver “who had refused to go along with the lynch party was called by the state to identify some of the men who did. He was later beaten and forced to leave town” (Moredock 2007: 2). The trial was covered by national newspapers. There was national outrage when all the defendants were declared not guilty. The attorneys for the defendants were John Bolt Colbertson and Thomas A. Wofford. Like other trials across the South in the early twentieth century, the White perpetrators of this crime were declared not guilty. The newspaper clipping below, likely from the Spartanburg Herald Journal, shows Wofford students protesting the verdict (Gravely 2019).
In 1961, there were anti-segregation demonstrations taking place in Orangeburg, SC.

Two Wofford students, Daniel Reed Lewis and Scott Barnes Goewey, joined the demonstrations and were arrested by the Orangeburg police. As a response to these two students attending the demonstration, a group of about 200 Wofford students burned a cross and two makeshift dummies on the steps of Old Main. The students chanted racial epithets while calling for Lewis and Goewey to be expelled. The two students left Wofford shortly after this event.

In 1968, three African American students were killed and twenty-eight others injured when white patrolmen opened fire on 200 peaceful and unarmed civil rights protesters in Orangeburg.
In October 1963, Wofford President Charles Marsh announced that the college would “grant admission to all qualified students regardless of race or creed.”

Wofford was the first private college in SC to integrate. This decision came with a mix of backlash and support from students, alumni, faculty, and other community members.

"Al Gray, a Spartanburg native, was the first black student accepted to Wofford. His first night on campus, he was jumped by white students. When they hit him, he hit back" (Kitzmiller 2013).

In 2013, Wofford College hosted a panel called the "Desegregation Decade" inviting the first African American graduate, Doug Jones, to speak on his experience alongside former college president, Joab Lesesne, Rev. Mike Vandiver, a white Wofford College student during integration and current pastor in the United Methodist Church; and Mitch Kennedy, the director of community services for the city of Spartanburg at the time (Kitzmiller 2013).
Students Joann Franklin and Monica Branch digitized many of the letters that President Marsh received in opposition and support of integration during an interim project at Wofford College in 2017.
In acknowledgment of our past: race, landscape, and history

Integration at Wofford 1963

It was a sad and day for me. It was the day my alma mater died. And, the day many hundreds of people lost their alma mater. I took off my 1921 ring, and will try to forget I ever went to Wofford. Of course I can’t now make any more contributions of any sort. I attended the meeting of the Wofford College Council last May, and at that time warned the Council of what the Northern-controlled church has been planning — at the same time urging the Council that contributions would fade to a shadow if and when this happens, or happened.

I do not dislike negroes. I like them. I love many of them, and have done a great deal for many of them. But I believe we can love, help, and guide them better in their own schools and churches. I feel that we should teach them better morals, better sanitation, and better life within their own community. You will have to admit that the preachers and colleges didn’t want them when they were working for $50 per day, but when the negro got to making $11.00 or $12.00 per day for common labor the dollar mark got into the eyes of some (not all) churchmen.

Southern Methodist University
DALLAS, TEXAS
May 22, 1964

Dr. Charles F. Marsh
Wofford College
Spartanburg, South Carolina

Dear Dr. Marsh:

Claude Jr., called long distance the other night to tell us about the decision of the Wofford trustees to admit qualified students regardless of race.

I know that you will quite likely be the recipient of some hostile, and perhaps a few crude communications about this stance. So I want to get this to you early in the game. I am in hearty personal agreement with the decision of the Trustees and congratulate you and them upon it. I am sure that it was not an easy decision for you and the Board to make; however, it continues to keep Wofford in the tradition of being a leader in embracing Christian responsibility and social concern. Congratulations and blessings on you!

I am enclosing a small contribution to the 1960 Alumni Fund. I wish it could be more, but with three alma maters calling on me and me for support, we will have to spread it around.

Thank you for allowing me to represent Wofford at the inaugural exercises at the University of North Carolina College. If I can be of further help to you, let me know.

Sincerely,

Methodist Center
At Duke University
4574 Duke Station, Phone 386-3230
Durham, North Carolina

May 23, 1964

Dr. Charles S. Marsh, President
Wofford College
Spartanburg, South Carolina

Dear Dr. Marsh:

Let me express my joy— or better still, extreme jubilation— over the announcement of Wofford’s new admission policy. I know that this was not an easy decision for you and the Board to make; however, it continues to keep Wofford in the tradition of being a leader in embracing Christian responsibility and social concern. Congratulations and blessings on you!

I am enclosing a small contribution to the 1960 Alumni Fund. I wish it could be more, but with three alma maters calling on me and me for support, we will have to spread it around.

Thank you for allowing me to represent Wofford at the inaugural exercises at the University of North Carolina College. If I can be of further help to you, let me know.

Sincerely,
adverse effects. Among these would be the following:

1. Sadness and bitterness concerning the College on the part of some of its alumni, supporters, and friends.
2. Loss of financial support from some South Carolina Methodist churches.
3. Loss of financial support from some individual alumni and other supporters.
4. Withdrawal of some students from the College and decline in applications for admission from prospective students.
5. Complications in housing, social life and attitudes of students and faculty toward Negroes who may be admitted to the College.
6. Complications in connection with the new cooperative program with Converse College.

Possible Adverse Effects if Negroes are not Admitted

If the Board decides against admitting qualified Negro students to Wofford, there is little question that adverse effects would be experienced. Among these possible adverse effects would be the following:

1. Ineligibility for substantial financial grants by private foundations and to some degree, private corporations.
2. Ineligibility for National Science Foundation grants for research, equipment, institutes for high school and college students and teachers, and other purposes.
3. Ineligibility for Federal loans and grants for libraries, science laboratories and classrooms, and such other academic facilities as may be authorized by Congress in the near future.
4. Continued ineligibility to HHFA dormitory and dining-facility loans. (In substituting the Liberty Life loan for the HHFA loan on our new Shipp Hall, our interest rates moved from 3-1/2% to 5-1/2%.)
5. Strong possibility that segregated institutions will be declared ineligible by next year for National Defense Loans for students. (These are our largest and most attractive loans to students at present.)
6. Possibility that the 1964 General Conference of the Methodist Church may direct the Board of Education to withhold from colleges that do not admit qualified Negroes such financial support as National Methodist Scholarships and Loans and grants administered by the Division of Higher Education.
Albert Gray '71

- Albert Gray was the first Black student to be admitted to Wofford College.
- He was a graduate of Carver High School and in the top three students in his graduating class.
- In September 1964, Gray enrolled at Wofford.
- In 1971, Gray graduated from Wofford after returning from the Vietnam War.

[Image of a letter from 1964]

To the Faculty and Administration:

I am writing to inform you that the Committee on Admissions has approved the application of Albert Gray, an honor graduate of Carver High School, Spartanburg, for admission to the College. He will be the first Negro student at Wofford College.

Like other entering day students, he will participate in the orientation program beginning Monday, September 7 and will register for classes on Thursday, September 10. I am sure that you will extend to him the same courtesy and assistance you would give to any other student.

Sincerely yours,

Charles F. Marsh
President
DOUGLAS JONES '69

- Douglas Jones was the first Black graduate of Wofford College, class of 1969.
- Jones attended Carver High School and graduated as the salutatorian in 1965.
- In an interview with Mr. Jones he said he was “an avid reader” and in the 5th grade he “got involved with the NAACP youth chapter” where he was exposed to Ebony and Jet magazines and encouraged to become a social activist. He noted that the Civil Rights Movement did not bypass Spartanburg.

PROTESTORS IN FRONT OF THE SPARTANBURG HERALD-JOURNAL BUILDING, SPARTANBURG, S.C.
PROTESTORS SAID THAT “THE NEWSPAPERS DO NOT PUBLISH ENOUGH CONSTRUCTIVE NEWS CONCERNING NEGROES. STORIES INVOLVING NEGROES IN TROUBLE WITH THE LAW ARE OVERPLAYED, WHILE NEGRO ACCOMPLISHMENTS WERE UNDERPLAYED, THEY MAINTAINED. THEY NOTED NEGRO OBITUARIES HAD BEEN SEGREGATED, NEGRO WEDDING NEWS NEVER APPEARED ON SUNDAYS, AND THAT WHITE HIGH SCHOOLS HAD THE EDGE ON SPORTS PAGE SPACE.” SPARTANBURG HERALD JOURNAL, MAY 4, 1968. SPARTANBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY DIGITAL ARCHIVES.
DOUGLAS JONES ’69

RECOUNTING HIS EXPERIENCES AT WOFFORD

“When I left Wofford I had some really hard feelings, I had a lot of hatred in my heart because of the experiences I had at Wofford. The first couple years were very tough, there was a lot of prejudice, open discrimination, and altercations [at Wofford].” Jones admits that the discrimination worsened after Gray left for the military (it wasn’t until Jones’ junior year when another Black man, Adrian Rice, would attend Wofford) and that “there was an increase because the attitude of the kids were, we done ran one n***** away, we gon' run the other one away.”

Jones explains that Spartanburg, “had a system of apartheid” and “black neighborhoods were primarily self contained.” He continues by stating, “in our neighborhoods we were safe.” On campus, "the animosity I received came from students and in some instances parents writing letters to the Old Gold & Black complaining about the fact I was there. In my history class there was a football player, a big guy, that would always sit behind me and he would kick my chair for the hell of it, just irritate me. One day I got fed up with it and I just knocked the sh*t out of him, the professor didn’t say a word. After that I didn’t have a problem with him kicking me."

"One time they [white students] dumped trash in front of my door in the dorm and the use of the N-word was pretty common among students"

"I was in ROTC, we were drilling and an ambulance drove by with the siren on and the ambulance was going slow and somebody made a comment saying ‘why they got the siren on they don’t seem to be in a hurry’ and another guy said, ‘well they must be going to pick up a n*****.’”

Jones said "I carpooled to Fort Jackson with a white student and a car pulled out in front of the white student and he said ‘that f*ckin’ n*****.’ He apologized to me but the thing about it is, the damage was already done."
“[Before coming to Wofford] I was not that exposed to white folk, I knew racism existed, I had never really experienced it as an individual. I could not understand why people would just hate me and say things just because I was Black. I had a hard time dealing with it at first especially my sophomore year, it hit hard.”

“When I was at Wofford the Black community was really supportive and I got a lot of encouragement. They said things like, ‘we all pulling for you’, ‘you’re representing us’, ‘keep up the good work’, that was a burden. When Albert [Gray] left I felt like I had to stay there. I knew I didn’t have to put up with this sh*t and felt like walking away. I felt like I had to prove a point. I felt kind of marginalized because at Wofford around white folk I wasn’t accepted and I felt myself being pulled away from the Black community.”

“After I left Wofford I didn’t even want to set foot back on Wofford’s campus. I wouldn’t even drive down Church Street because I didn’t even like to drive by Wofford because it would bring back memories.”

In 2013, Wofford College named an all purpose room in the basement of the Burwell Building after Albert Gray (left) and Douglas Jones (right).
STUDENT PAPER GRAPPLES WITH BLACK EXPERIENCES AT WOFFORD 1960S
In the late 1960s, there was an increase in the recruitment of Black Students at Wofford.

In 1970, Bobby Leach was appointed as the first African American administrator, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of the Residence Hall Education Program.

In 1972, Bishop James S. Thomas was the first African American to receive an honorary degree.

Dr. Otis Turner was the first African American professor at Wofford between 1972-1977.

Janice B. Means was the first African American woman to graduate from Wofford.

In the 1970s, the Association of African American Students (AAAS) and the Gospel Choir were formed to "meet the cultural needs of Black students."

In 1979, a city-wide Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority was chartered by ten African American women affiliated with Wofford, Converse College, the University of South Carolina Upstate and Limestone College.

In 2020, Wofford College had four full-time, tenure track African American faculty.
A FEW YEARBOOK PICTURES FROM THE 1960-1980S

1964 Bohemian, pg. 25

1969 Bohemian, pg. 104

1969 Bohemian, pg. 24

1981 Bohemian, pg. 31
In 1992, Dr. Gerry Ginocchio of the Department of Sociology (later the Department of Sociology and Anthropology) created several courses related to race and racism in the United States, he created and co-taught the sociology of race and ethnic relations with Mrs. Cheryl Harleston. He also created courses on Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., and W.E.B. DuBois.

Other professors who created programs to diversify Wofford’s curriculum:
- 1981 Intercultural Studies- Dr. Tom Thoroughman
- 1995 Latin American and Caribbean Studies- Dr. Nancy Mandlove, Dr. Susan Griswold, and Dr. Camille Bethea
- 2005 African and African American Studies Program- Dr. Gerry Ginocchio and Dr. Jim Neighbors
- 2005 Gender Studies Program- Dr. Karen Goodchild and Dr. Sally Hitchmough
- 2015 Asian Studies Program- Dr. David Efurd
- 2015 Middle Eastern and North African Studies- Dr. Courtney Dorroll

Student researchers and faculty at the Freedom Rides Museum in Montgomery, AL (L to R) Dr. Rhiannon Leebrick, Ms. Dorothy Walker, Kaycia Best, Vera Oberg, Civil Rights Activist Bernard Lafayette and his wife, Alea Harris, Dr. Camille Bethea, Bryson Coleman, and Dieran McGowan.
ACKNOWLEDGING OUR PAST: RACE, LANDSCAPE, AND HISTORY

BLACK ALUMNI SUMMIT AND STUDENT GROUPS

- Homecoming 2013 and the class of 1983’s 30th reunion sparked the idea of the Black Alumni Summit.

- October 2014 was the First Annual Black Alumni Summit. This organization continues today supporting and raising money for various causes on campus including supporting minoritized students.

- Wofford students have created several groups on campus to support those who identify as BIPOC and their allies:
  - Association of Multicultural Students
  - Black Student Alliance
  - Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. - Nu Chi Chapter
  - Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. - Tau Delta Chapter
  - Organization of Latin American Students
  - Wofford Asian, Asian-American, and Pacific Islander Student Organization
  - Wofford Men of Color
  - Wofford Women of Color
In summer of 2020, national and global protests and organizing against racial injustice were sparked after the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, among other African Americans who were victims of police brutality.

With members of universities, colleges, businesses, and other organizations across the United States speaking out against racial injustice and using their platform to educate and lead, a group of Wofford students teamed up to speak about their frustration at Wofford’s ongoing institutional and structural racism by forming the Wofford Anti-Racism Coalition (WARC).

Several letters were sent to college administration and a list of grievances and demands were created by WARC.

WARC held a protest in October 2020 to protest racial injustice and to demand that their demands be met by the college’s administration.
STUDENT ACTIVISM: @BLACK AT WOFFORD

- In the midst of the Wofford Antiracism Coalition speaking out, an anonymous Instagram page became a platform for students, alumni, staff, and faculty to share their testimony related to having experienced racism on Wofford's campus.

- The Instagram @blackatwofford took off and gained over 2,000 followers in less than a week.
STUDENT ACTIVISM: WARC LEADS ANTI-RACISM PEACEFUL MARCH AND PROTEST OCTOBER 2020

OUR ROSTER OF CAMPAIGNS HAVE GARNERED AWARDS IN LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS.
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Wofford administration and Board of Trustees:
  - meet with, listen to, and learn from a wide variety of students, including members of WARC, faculty, and staff involved in anti-racist work on campus
  - financially support independent collaborative student/faculty research related to

  - Racial Justice in the Campus Landscape
    - changing building names
    - more plaques/statues commemorating Black history and other BIPOC individuals/groups
    - create museum on campus in the Cummings Street School dedicated to preserving history related to systemic racism and Civil Rights in the Upstate

  - Racial Justice in Curriculum and Educational Practices
    - fund a research team of students and faculty dedicated to a five-year in-depth research project on Wofford’s history
    - fund an archeological dig on campus
    - fund student/faculty research on women at Wofford/Title IX, Latinx history, Asian/Asian American history, Indigenous/First People’s/Native American history, Arab/Arab American history, and LGBTQIA+ history
    - provide space for more conversations about decolonizing curriculum across divisions/departments
    - update Wofford College website
    - invite more Black alumni to share their stories with students in the classroom

  - Racial Justice in College Finances
    - Review of institutional investments/institutional partnerships
    - Evaluate relationship with current donors
    - More money channeled to student and faculty led diversity, inclusion, equity work
Bibliography


THANK YOU!

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and so many, many others!

Destiny Shippy at the Anti-Racism Peaceful March and Protest, Wofford College October 2020