

## *History of Integration of Black Students at Henderson State University: 1955-1975*

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### **Historical Background**

The accepted policy in the South after Reconstruction was that blacks could not enter any school, public or private, that was set aside primarily for whites. To nearly all white Southerners the thought of blacks receiving an integrated education was barely tolerable. Also, a majority of Southern whites did not want black and white students to interact and receive the same type of education. They were afraid that educated blacks would challenge white supremacy in the South. This doctrine was supported in Arkansas with the formation of a branch of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff in 1873. At that time the institution was known as Branch Normal College of the University of Arkansas; it was understood to be the black university.

Black efforts to achieve higher education in Arkansas were stifled for several reasons: the loss of black political power due to the 1891 Election Law and the 1892 Poll Tax Amendment which, together, annihilated the black voice in politics, and the opening of the Branch Normal in Pine Bluff. The 1891 Election Law prevented illiterate males from voting and according to the 1890 United States census, over 50% of black males in Arkansas were illiterate.<sup>1</sup> For those that were literate the 1892 Poll Tax Amendment diminished their hopes of voting because it required the voter to pay a \$1.00 poll tax in order to vote. Most blacks were in dire poverty hence; they could not afford to pay the poll tax. In addition, the whites thought the opening of Branch Normal in Pine Bluff was already a decisive concession to black education.

Furthermore, the “accommodationist logic of Booker T. Washington and the *Plessy* doctrine”<sup>[1]</sup> prevented blacks from pursuing higher education. Washington’s believed that blacks should acquire a knowledgeable expertise in a field to advance economically and work to improve conditions for the rest of the race. In *Plessy vs. Ferguson*, the Supreme Court in 1896 ruled that “equal but separate” facilities was legal between the races; this ruling was used to justify racial segregation in public schools and colleges/universities. For those who continue to advocate integration the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* doctrine made it very hard to do so; the Supreme Court was the law of the land. In addition, segregation between blacks and whites in higher education was enforced by the Arkansas Legislative Act 345 (1943), which established a State Tuition Fund for Negroes. This act was designed to “enable black students to pursue graduate or professional training-out-of-state, training available to Arkansas’s white students but not to black ones.”<sup>[2]</sup> This act allowed blacks to receive an education out of state. Many of those graduates never came back to Arkansas to work.

Despite the limitations imposed on black Arkansans, the quest for higher education by blacks in the state was not organized. The black private sector, usually consisting of churches and local businessmen, stepped in and established private institutions for themselves. The Methodist Episcopal Church (North) founded “Walden Seminary (now known as Philander Smith College) in Little Rock in 1877; the Baptist Church founded Arkansas Baptist College in Little Rock in

1884; and the African Methodist Episcopal founded Shorter College in North Little Rock in 1886.”[3]

In spite of the early imposition of segregation in higher education, over time, integration started to take root in Arkansas. It began as a response to the practical problems of providing the same training for blacks that performed certain kinds of state-related work, such as teaching and nursery. Black teachers and nurses had to be state-certified and because there weren't many facilities for them, they were reluctantly admitted to white institutions. Around this time the Arkansas legislature realized that it would be less expensive to train the black students in state than out-of-state. Therefore, they began to stop sending black students out-of-state. Moreover, the black students admitted to white institutions were always very small in numbers. One of the earliest instances of integration was in the “early or mid-1940s when Mrs. Inola Childress, a social worker, and Mrs. Endo Cox, a Little Rock teacher, were the first two blacks to sit in integrated classes”[4] in Arkansas institutions of higher education.

### **Brown Ruling as a Catalyst**

Integration became a reality after World War II as veteran servicemen returned to the United States and demanded the benefits of democracy, for which they had fought so hard. The millennial milestone that permitted blacks to take steps in their mile-long

drive of economic and education opportunities for equality was the historic 1954 *Brown vs. the Topeka, Kansas Board of Education* ruling, which stated that “separate educational facilities are inherently unequal”[5] and that they violated blacks’ guarantees of equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment. The *Brown* ruling dramatically shifted the racial status quo regarding public education and reversed the *Plessy* canon. In addition, it served as a paradigm for the civil rights movement and illustrated that blacks could utilize the federal government in attaining their constitutional rights.

Regardless of the changing attitudes among blacks and whites concerning integrated education, blacks in Arkansas experienced resistance in pursuing “equal” education, as evident in the Little Rock Central High Crisis in 1957. When the *Brown* ruling was announced, some school districts vowed to defy the ruling. Through blacks were now legally granted entrance to white schools, the process of integration did not happen overnight. In general, the areas with a small black population and in the northern parts of Arkansas integrated smoothly and quickly; whereas, in southern Arkansas or areas with large black populations, whites fiercely resisted integration, as exemplified in the Forrest City and Helena integration efforts during the late 1960s.

The *Brown* ruling not only paved the way for blacks to enter public schools but public universities as well. Henderson State University, located in Arkadelphia, finally enrolled its first full-time black student, Maurice Horton, in 1955. Henderson State University has a rich history regarding the enrollment of blacks. It was founded in 1890 as Arkadelphia Methodist College as an alternative Methodist institution for Arkadelphia and her surrounding region.[6] Over the years the university has undergone numerous changes; it has operated “for a century under six names: Arkadelphia Methodist College (1890-1904), Henderson College (1904-1911),

Henderson-Brown College (1911-1929), Henderson State Teachers College (1929-1967), Henderson State College (1967-1975) and Henderson State University (1975-).”[7]

Henderson has an unusual history with black student. Before the *Brown* ruling Henderson allowed blacks to attend classes on campus and to receive their teaching certification. In short, it can be argued that Henderson was ahead of its time; however, it should be noted that Henderson was the premier teachers’ institution in Arkansas pre-*Brown*. Moreover, Henderson was the nearest collegiate institution for blacks in Southern Arkansas. The University of Arkansas at Monticello, “founded in 1909 as an Agricultural and Mechanical College...was to serve the white constituency of southeast Arkansas.”[8] In the face of these circumstances, blacks attended Henderson.

### **Maurice Horton**

As mentioned earlier, it wasn’t until 1955 that Henderson enrolled its first full-time black student, Maurice Horton, who transferred from University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff in fall 1955. Horton transferred from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, which was formerly known as Arkansas Agricultural, Mechanical and Normal College (Arkansas A M&N) because he wanted to be closer to his family. Horton was originally from Curtis, a small town located near Arkadelphia. Another reason why he enrolled was because he was asked by the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), and regional black leaders to “pioneer the way in Arkansas.”[9] According to Horton, his experience at Henderson was “cordial. I was treated very fairly.”[10] When asked about his social experiences through those years, Horton remembers “mostly playing ping-pong with John Taylor or visit [visiting] the bookstore.”[11]

Henderson seemed to accept integration within its campus. In a May 1954 editorial, the Oracle, the student newspaper, asked, “Can We Meet the Non-segregation Challenge?” The liberal editorial commented, “mature young adults can have a greater effect in this trying time to come than perhaps anyone else.”[12] The writer noted that his generation has a “more liberal education, and that has brought to us a more tolerant attitude—in spite of still widespread prejudice—than most of our parents have.”[13]

By the time Horton had graduated from Henderson in May, 1957, the enrollment of black students (part-time and full-time) had increased from “three or four to fifteen-twenty”[14] Despite the increase in their numbers, Horton recalled that the black students did not socialize much: “We went on our separate ways.”[15] Perhaps the lack of socializing and bonds between the black students can be attributed to the fact that they were all commuters, who lived in Arkadelphia or nearby. The black students were not like the traditional college students, who lived and socialized on campus. Housing was not available to them.

Interestingly enough, they were able to attend school-sponsored events and functions such as games and freely move on the campus; however, they were denied access to the cafeteria. Horton drove home for lunch or “went to his [John Taylor’s] house for lunch. His mother would usually cook something for us.”[16] In short, blacks had made strides at Henderson, yet barriers

still existed.

## 1960s and Civil Rights

During the early 1960s the presence of black students increased to “about 50 to 60 students”<sup>[17]</sup> according to Ms. Jannese Helm, class of '62. According to Ms. Martha Mitchell, class of '63, Henderson “hadn't changed from his [Maurice Horton's] time.”<sup>[18]</sup> Race relations had remained unaltered from what they had been in the late 1950s. According to Helm, “You knew who hated you, didn't want you here. We pretty much knew what teachers you could take and which ones not to take.”<sup>[19]</sup> Mrs. Gracie Newborn Neal, a lifelong Arkadelphia resident, who attended Henderson from 1964-1968, echoed Helm's comments: “We were told the teachers to stay from.”<sup>[20]</sup> Before attending Henderson, Neal had heard from other black students that they “had encountered racial slurs there...bad but, [I] don't recall any incidents. We [black students] basically kept to ourselves.”<sup>[21]</sup> Betty Buffington, who attended Henderson 1964-1966, shared Neal's sentiments: “Everyone kind of segregated outside, blacks congregated with blacks, whites with whites. Always this separation.”<sup>[22]</sup> Buffington recalled her tenure at Henderson as troubling: “At that time, they had just to begun to integrate. I didn't really care for it. It was just hard to make your grades. You had to work twice as hard.”<sup>[23]</sup> Buffington eventually transferred to Arkansas Agricultural, Mechanical and Normal College (AM & N) in Pine Bluff. Comparing, Arkansas Agricultural, Mechanical and Normal College to Henderson she found that the atmosphere at the all black school was more encouraging and supportive. “The teachers were lot friendlier; they were more helpful. The atmosphere's completely different. Different [difference] in how they answered you in the tone of voice.”<sup>[24]</sup> Mitchell recalled race relations in the early 1960s: “Civil rights at that time didn't hit Arkansas hard like other parts of South. To most of us it was enough that we went to school.... Arkansas did not want to draw its [the media's] attention after Little Rock.<sup>[25]</sup> All of us were aware of the news—the boycotts, marches...and were secretly glad.”<sup>[26]</sup>

Like other colleges and universities across the South, Henderson did not want to attract attention from civil rights organizations. School administrators, like many people across the nation, were glued to the news about the events unfolding in the 1960s, such as the riots at the University of Mississippi when James Meredith tried to enter or the increasing political activism of college students. Perhaps it was this “zero policy” and fear of unrest at Henderson that led to the arrest of a couple on campus. A “Mrs. and Mrs. Joe Neal of Fayetteville, state travelers for the Southern Student Organizing Committee<sup>[27]</sup> were found guilty and fined \$500 each and sentenced each to six months in prison.”<sup>[28]</sup> Their prison sentence was suspended on the condition that they not return to Arkadelphia.<sup>[29]</sup> The Neal's appealed their case. Mrs. Neal stated that they were talking to a group of white and black students in the union when the dean of students [Thomas Scifres] came and told them to leave.<sup>[30]</sup> Mrs. Neal said she and her husband did not pass out any leaflets. When they refused, she said, a policeman with the dean told them he was arresting them for failure to obey an officer.<sup>[31]</sup>

Mrs. Neal stated that she and her husband were at the campus at the invitation of a student, who had invited other interested students to talk with them. She said that the group had talked quietly and that no crowd gathered until the dean of students and police arrived. Mrs. Neal said later that she and her husband had “decided there was no reason we should sit there

and talk to the students about rights and then let ourselves be bullied out a town by a threat.”<sup>[32]</sup> She said that the city policeman originally told them that he was not arresting them but was going to escort them out of town. “So we told him that we were not ready to leave the Union until the students were ready to stop talking or until the Union closed.”<sup>[33]</sup> They were arrested for “refusing to obey an officer. They were later charged with creating a disturbance on school property.”<sup>[34]</sup> “We were told that everything was fine in Arkadelphia, that the Negroes there liked it and that the dean of students had a complete open door policy to the students,” she said.<sup>[35]</sup>

According to Police Chief Marvin Miller, “Mr. and Mrs. Neal were passing out leaflets at the HSC Student Union and their conversation was ‘anti-ROTC’ (Reserve Officers Training Corps).”<sup>[36]</sup> “They were talking in terms of rebellion toward the faculty and this irritated some of the students and they [the couple] were asked to leave by the dean of students,” Chief Miller said.<sup>[37]</sup>

The arrest of the Neals received national attention. Their \$500 bond each was paid for by SSOA headquarters at Nashville. The recently formed American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)-Arkansas chapter dispatched Jim Guy Tucker, a Little Rock attorney, to post bond for them and “would decide whether an ACLU lawyer would defend the couple.”<sup>[38]</sup> The Arkansas Gazette in a scathing editorial, “Lesson in Intolerance,” noted:

“Across town in Arkadelphia, at a time when Henderson State College still was trying to get the Legislature to declare it a ‘university’—and in spite of the fact that the first definition of a university is that it is a place of free inquiry—college administrators and city police combined to run out of town (rather in the fashion that labor unions were run out of town in Eastern Arkansas not so many years ago) a husband-wife team from Fayetteville....they were fined \$500 each—the maximum—on a disturbance charge. Six-month jail sentences—also the maximum—were suspended on condition that the two stay out of Arkadelphia. “The Law West of the Pecos”; or, “Vigilantism Rides Again.”<sup>[39]</sup>

There were no further significant incidents at Henderson in the early 1960s, but a significant milestone occurred in 1964. The passage of the Civil Rights Act “forbade discrimination in most places of public accommodations.”<sup>[40]</sup> A significant aspect of this act was its controversial provision requiring “elimination of discrimination in federally assisted programs, authorizing termination of programs or withdrawal of federal funds upon failure to comply.”<sup>[41]</sup> In short, it threatened to cut off financial aid to public institutions, such as Henderson, if they did not comply with the act. Henderson complied with the federal guidelines by desegregating the residential dormitories the following year. According to Alvin Futrell, “the girls lived in Pines or Mooney, the guys at Womack.”<sup>[42]</sup>

Despite dormitories being available to blacks, blacks continued to live off campus with the exception of the students who lived too far away to commute. Perhaps it was because the students wanted the support and comfort of family members and close friends. In addition, living off campus was less expensive. Another factor mentioned was the “sense of isolation at Henderson. Isolation in the classes...with the white students”<sup>[43]</sup> during the late 1960s. Charles Cobbs echoed Thomas sentiments by remembering “the dead silence that greeted you when you

walked by whites.”[44] This sense of isolationism led the black students to develop comradeship among themselves. Interestingly enough, some of these friendships occurred through eating.

“Eating together,” said Charles Cobbs, “was a way for us to become friends. That’s how we got to know each other.”[45] According to Thomas, the black students would “eat in the car or went to each other’s houses if nearby.”[46] Dining in a restaurant was not a possibility because they were segregated in Arkadelphia. Thomas recalled that the restaurants were “very antagonistic.”[47] Blacks were simply not served, or they had to get their meals from the restaurants’ back door. Treatment from the businesses’ in town was similar. Gracie Newborn Neal remembered, “there were black and white water foundations. They may not have liked you but they wanted your business.”[48]

The local black churches played a significant role for the students in the development of personal ties. The churches provided a place for blacks to gather and were among the few places blacks could gather to socialize. Black students from Henderson and the nearby Ouachita Baptist University (OBU) regularly attended the local churches and met there for functions. In fact, the first collegiate organization available to the black students was the Angelic Voices of Christ at the Greater Pleasant Hill Church. The choir was specifically established as “an outlet for black students,” according to Alvin Futrell.[49]

Regardless of how one viewed the historical events, not everyone has the same memories or summaries of the 1960s integration at Henderson in the same context. According to Dr. John Hall, who began to teach history at Henderson in 1963, the integration process “was very peaceful.”[50] Another interpretation of the 60s at Henderson came from Alvin Futrell, who attended Henderson in 1966-1970. Futrell was one of the first black students to live on campus. Futrell shares Thomas’s isolationist theory regarding race relations, “I was treated fair overall. There were some challenges. I viewed those obstacles as challenges.”[51] The most difficult thing for him at Henderson was “not being allowed to progress as I should.”[52] Futrell cited as an example the hardship of his basketball days and being forced to play behind people he knew he could beat.

Curtis Sykes and Mrs. Neda Parker express agreement with Alvin Futrell’s assessment of Henderson presenting challenges for black students. Their recollection of Henderson was more similar to Betty Buffington’s experience. Sykes and Parker attended Henderson during the summer of 1968 as graduate students. They were fellowship recipients. Parker asserted, “You had to do more [than the other students] but, I was used to that.”[53] Sykes remembering having to convince successfully one of his teachers as to why he deserved a higher grade in the class, “I had done everything I was supposed to. There was no reason for a C.”[54]

Sykes and Parker agreed that Henderson was not “receptive” to black students.[55] They recalled the time when they and “Martha Maples, a white lady and another lady” went to the gym to play basketball and were asked to leave by a staff or faculty member. “They told us we could not play in the gym because we were a mix group. I doubt if we’d been an all black group, it would’ve been different.”[56] Parker recalled, “Martha Maples was very upset but, we were used to these events. We gave him an earful before we left.”[57] When asked if they addressed their grievance to the administration, Sykes replied, “I don’t think [President Martin] Garrison

would have cared either way.”[58]

## **The 1970s: Increase in Activism**

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As the nation entered a new decade, the 1970s, clashes and violence anointed with race relations escalated across the nation. Henderson would have its share of race-related problems as well because during the 1970s, “it [Henderson] had the largest number of blacks 30% in [of] Arkansas universities.”[59] From the interviews, explanations for the increase in black enrollment were the ongoing Vietnam War, “kids trying to avoid the draft;”[60] Henderson’s recognition in the surrounding areas; and the Pine Bluff’s Agricultural, Mechanical and Normal (A M&N) merger with the University of Arkansas system in 1972.

“When the ’71 [Arkansas] legislature reincorporated A M&N. When black students saw that happened they decided to come to Henderson,” John Hall commented.[61] A survey showed that only “5.3 per cent of the Black Henderson students polled Monday favor the proposed merger.”[62] An overwhelming “78.9 per cent oppose the merger...while 15.8 per cent gave no comment on the question.”[63] Like John Hall, black students at Henderson foresaw Henderson’s black enrollment increasing:

“They (the students) don’t seem to want it and if they don’t want it, well, sooner or later there won’t be an AM&N at all. They are either going somewhere else or coming down here. I’ve heard from the students themselves that they’ll either come to Ouachita or Henderson, rather than have a UAPB.”[64]

The vast majority of the blacks feel that the “predominantly white-controlled University of Arkansas taking over what has long been an institution solely for Blacks” would result in blacks “losing a vast part of our heritage. If the Blacks want to stay Black...And if they don’t want to integrate, they shouldn’t have to integrate cause integration ain’t the only thing.”[65]

The increase in black enrollment caused a “sense of uneasiness” to develop on campus. The 1970s at Henderson, according to Charles Cobbs, was also the time when “black students began to take the initiative in their affairs.”[66] An explanation offered on why the black student activism’s was because of their limitations. Cobbs observed, “Henderson has always been a suit-case college. People went home on the weekends.”[67] The lack of social activities in small town Arkadelphia must have been restraining to the black students because “Blacks didn’t have autos. They were confined to campus.”[68]

Simultaneously, the black power movement was spreading across America. Black youths challenged the system. The national movement could be felt at Henderson. John Hall, who joined the Henderson faculty in 1963 reflected: “When I first came to Henderson, the small number of black students were very polite...accommodate...students were considerate to one another...while...black increased enrollment...[the] attitude [was] less civil. I failed to take into consideration that this was not the same student body.”[69]

This new student body’s attitude toward integration can be evidenced in an Oracle editorial. The editorial writer, a black student, Cornell Brown, noted the common view shared by many:

“Complete integration would give the black man better educational facilities and equal opportunities; however if anyone (Black or white) does not want to succeed, integration nor anything else would be of importance.”[\[70\]](#) Yet, Brown offered a differing view on integration:

“I do not look at integration as a blessing because in the course of complete integration the black man’s identity is completely destroyed. To me, integration—as the establishment defines it—would involve preserving white society at the expense of the destruction of black culture...In short, success in the white world would require failure as a black, that is, denial of one’s black heritage...The Supreme Court declared that separate but equal schools were unconstitutional. That was 16 years ago, and full integration has not yet occurred...The American Dream has not yet worked for the black man. He should not give up his heritage and identity. He should remain black and be accepted as a black man within the dominant society. But none of this will be possible with complete integration, and anyone who is proud of being black should realize this.”[\[71\]](#)

Brown’s editorial strikingly contrasts with an earlier student editorial:

“we, as Americans, are certainly involved. Involved with misled teenagers, with racial disturbance, and with the most depressing of all—war...Our constitution is made for the people. Does it not seem right to reverse that and say that we, as Americans hold a big responsibility to our country. A song we sing often in our lives state, “land of the free, home of the brave.” Those are lines to be proud of.”[\[72\]](#)

The two editorials illustrated the optimism and bitterness of two student writers in evaluation the direction of the country and Henderson.

Brown’s disillusion is echoed by Ms. Virginia M. Smith, who became Henderson’s first black staff member in January 1971. Smith was hired as the Assistant Dean of Women. Ms. Smith recollected that when she arrived at Henderson, the black students had “long feeling of no representation” on campus.[\[73\]](#)

Eventually, the black students’ feelings of no representation on campus came to a high when on April 12, 1971 an estimated 150 black students met in front of McBrien Hall and presented the administration with a list of demands with a two-day limit for action. The demands included:

“black cheerleaders; an end to alleged job discrimination; a special black section in the school newspaper, the Oracle; better treatment of blacks in dormitories, and for the administration to refrain from taking disciplinary action against students involved the “black movement” at the college.”[\[74\]](#)

The students demanded “proportional representation in all aspects of campus activities and administration; more black-studies courses and more financial aid for black students.”[\[75\]](#) Other demands of the black students included “fuller representation of black Americans on faculty/staff; social groups identifiable to black American students; SGA (Student Government Association) and Student activities representation for activities and for governance; recognition



of Black (Negro) history; weekend student union availability for students who remain on campus; residence hall government representation”[76] Smith recalled that “there were no riots...they were controlled protests. I don’t recall any one thing particular that set this off.”[77] Remembering the protest, John Hall noted, “It involved the selection of some black students who tried out for cheerleading...They were promised a spot. None of them got selected and an outcry.”[78]

The student newspaper, The Oracle agreed, the “sudden call for action is a result partially of the recent cheerleader elections. Of the 14 girls who tried out for the positions, four of them were black. Because of this percentage and an unwarranted promise to black students concerning the election of at least one of the four girls, many Blacks were angry at the results of the election”[79] The response to the black student demands varied. The Oracle responded,

“True, Blacks represent the student body as well as other students in the field of athletics...But no one is entitled to anything simply because of color, sex, or belief. Black cheerleaders should be selected, but on the basis of ability, not color or minority affiliation. By allowing all those girls who tried out for cheerleader to serve in that capacity, the need for quality is eliminated...No one has the right to ask that something be handed to them on a silver platter simply because they think they are being discriminated against. The group should be commended, however, for forcing the administration into action probably faster than it has ever done anything in its history.[80] But this swift action could become detrimental to the administration if other special interest groups decide to take advantage of the administration’s apparent attempt to see everyone else’s side of any issue and act accordingly.”[81]

Dr. Martin Garrison, the President of the college,[82]replied to the list of demands in a letter to the Oracle acknowledging, “Most of these problems were known. Several groups of students, faculty, and administrators have been working constantly to alleviate these discomforts. Obviously not enough had been done.”[83] Some of the demands were quickly implemented.

Garrison stated that “Arrangements have already been made by the Student Senate to include a significant number of Black students in the cheerleader team for next year...The Student Senate has accepted, for later vote, an amendment to its Constitution which will assure Black membership and avoid the complexity of restructuring the entire base of Senate membership.[84] The College will employ additional Black personnel and can now assure, based on vacancies known to be coming, at least one person in the secretarial category. The College has directed that there be continued care to publish a balanced report of all student groups and individuals...Efforts are continuing to improve the curriculum with additional emphasis on Black studies. The need for financial assistance is well known.”[85]

The following petition was signed by some Henderson students who protested the administration’s quick response to the black student demands and who perceived implementation of a double standard.

“Most of the blacks on this campus, I have observed, are content to take the disruptive role, rather than the constructive role...Yet now because a group of blacks, many of whom upon close

questioning did not have a real working knowledge of the questions involved, have gone crying to our suddenly liberal administration and Student Senate who have given in on almost all major issues...when a vast majority of white students used a peaceful election to voice views on ROTC enrollment, our turnabout dyed in the wool conservative administration turned a deaf ear...Yet the blacks presented their demands one day and received assurance that they would be met the same day”[86]

Black—white relations did not quickly settle down after the black demands. Many whites felt that the blacks were given special privileges. The next week, a black student, Brenda Hanks, wrote that during the annual Spring Fling concert, “There was apparently some organized effort on the part of the whites in the audience to embarrass the black performers and the black students in the audience. As long as the white group performed everyone sat and listened but as soon as the black group started there was a mass exodus toward the exit by most of the whites in the audience as if by signal.”[87]

In the end, the black student demands were quickly met. Four new positions were created on the Student Senate for black students. The Confederation of Black Students better known as “the black student senate”[88] was organized and sponsored many black student oriented activities such as Black Emphasis Week. Black Emphasis Week occurred a month after the student demands; the week’s events celebrated black heritage and included many prominent black leaders, entertainers; distinguished black alumni and notable speakers such as Joanna Featherstone and Dr. Gordon Morgan were invited to speak on campus on black-related themes.[89]

Another black administrator was included on staff. John Taylor, the “first Black graduate was appointed assistant to the vice-president for student affairs” [90] and served as assistant dean of men.[91] During this time, blacks began to be active and mobilize themselves in social organizations. Thomas recalled, “The students took initiative for breakthroughs.”[92] Black Greek organizations began to grow. The oldest black Greek organization on campus, Omega Psi Phi, had a charter class in May 1971. Alpha Phi Alpha followed in February 1973 and Phi Beta Sigma had a charter class in March 1975. The first black sorority on campus was Delta Sigma Theta on February 1972. Alpha Kappa Alpha had a charter class in December 1973; the last black sorority organized at Henderson was Zeta Phi Beta; they formed a charter on May 1977.[93]

It appears all the student demands were met, but in consequence, it seems the black students had become a separate entity on campus. Instead of one annual Miss Henderson beauty pageant, the blacks would hold a separate one, instead of blacks and whites competing for one Miss Henderson crown. Even the selection of the homecoming queen echoed this practice. “The homecoming queen would alternate. One year it would be a white one, the next year there would be a black queen.”[94]

### **Black Faculty/Staff**

Henderson hired its first black staff member, Mrs. Virginia M. Smith in January 1971, and hired its first black faculty member, Paul Stein, in 1971 as an instructor in mathematics. Dr.

Minnie M. Rogers was hired in 1972 as professor of elementary education. The next year, 1973, Kenneth G. Harris was hired as an instructor in education. Stein left Henderson after the 1971-1972 school year to earn his doctorate at Oklahoma State University. He came back to Henderson as an associate professor of mathematics during the 1977-1978 school year. When asked about his experience at Henderson, he remarked, “I did not leave Henderson because of race problems. I left Henderson to grow professionally and academically.”[\[95\]](#)

Dr. Minnie Rogers shared Stein’s view, stating that, “I never felt race had to do with anything with my teaching.”[\[96\]](#) However, Rogers quickly pointed out that for black faculty “isolation is really a problem.”[\[97\]](#) Rogers cited as an example that her specialty was in developmental learning and that if she was to attend a conference, she wouldn’t basically know anyone: “There were other blacks in education, but there was one in remedial learning at Conway...[whereas,] I’m in developmental learning.”[\[98\]](#) In assessing her twenty-year teaching tenure at Henderson, Rogers remarked, “[I’ve] seen very little progress in hiring black faculty members.”[\[99\]](#) The shortage of black faculty restrains the intellectual exchange of ideas and work among black educators in Rogers’ judgment; for black faculty there is a “serious disadvantage of isolation.”[\[100\]](#)

Harris confirmed Drs. Stein and Rogers view that race was not a problem at Henderson although noting; “I’ve worked with people who told me to my face they were racists. That’s their problem not mine.” When questioned about his initial treatment by the administration and faculty, Harris responded, “there were initially some positive spots.” During the course of the interview, Harris echoed Rogers’ observation that there was a shortage of black faculty at Henderson, despite Henderson’s efforts to recruit them. Yet, Harris concentrated on the activism of the black students when he first joined the faculty at Henderson and his involvement as mentor in their activities.

## **Concerned Youth of Arkansas**

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The black students’ activism was not limited to the college campus. Their actions affected the town, for many black students at Henderson joined the Concerned Youth of Arkansas (CYA), a “newly formed organization whose purpose is to politically mobilize young people between the [ages of] 18 and 25 into a cohesive political unit in Arkansas.”[\[101\]](#) Along with black students at Ouachita Baptist University and with the support of the Arkadelphia black community, black youths began an effort to integrate the town’s businesses through boycotts and marches. Henderson was led by “two very well organized, charismatic student leaders—Jesse Simmons and Clarence Curry. The students would announce each week, which store to boycott. They would position themselves at the corner of the street with signs reminding people not to go inside.”[\[102\]](#) The boycotts would continue “until each store hired a black.”[\[103\]](#) “Back then you’d get your bus ticket [by] use [using] the back door. The grocery stores were the first ones to bring in black help. Safeway, Krogers, Tom Chambers, West Brothers, Sterlings Store, Quality Shoe Store, Dew-Orr’s, Fuller Drugstore. Then the restaurants ‘til it permeated the banks last. We’d go in and check and see if there was [were] blacks there and see if we got served. Waffle House held out to the ‘80s. They’d was a hard case.”[\[104\]](#) Smith and her family was the first to integrate Henderson’s Faculty Row.[\[105\]](#)

Besides leading boycotts, the Concerned Youth of Arkansas marched to City Hall in February, 1972, to discuss grievances the group had put together. “A group of about 50 black students... from the two colleges and the high school in Arkadelphia met informally with city officials Saturday in City Hall.”[\[106\]](#) Grievances or rather questions the students had were “why so few blacks were employed in the downtown businesses; legal counsel being offered to all residents in court cases; the question of ‘have provisions or plans been made to increase federal housing projects within the city’; the cost of living in Arkadelphia and the question was raised as to whether this was a means of exploiting the city’s young adult population; what county college students would be allowed to register and vote; and alleged double standards in law enforcement with regard to young adults.”[\[107\]](#) Mayor Bill Neel emphasized that almost all of the grievances were “ones the city authority has no legal authority and questions concerning city policy should be addressed to the City Board of Directors who, as the elected representatives, make city government policies.”[\[108\]](#) The group agreed to be scheduled on the agenda for the next city board meeting. However, at the next city board meeting, “a spokesman from the Concerned Youth of Arkansas failed to appear.”[\[109\]](#)

## **Arkadelphia Race Riot**

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In Arkadelphia, the public schools remained completely segregated until the 1965-1966 school year, when steps for minimal integration were taken. The school board implemented a “freedom of choice” plan for its students. Under this plan, students would be given the choice of which school they wanted to attend; however, separate schools for the black and white students still maintained. From 1965 until 1968 this plan was followed; Arkadelphia high school students were given the choice of attending Peake High School (the black school) or Arkadelphia High School (then known as Central High School, the white school).[\[110\]](#) According to the interviewees who were high school students at that time, the “freedom of choice” plan did not work. “There were maybe one or two black people in my school,” recalled Katrina Rogers.[\[111\]](#) “I don’t think there was a single white in my school,” Lottie Ware asserted.[\[112\]](#)

Some people believe that this “freedom of choice” plan was just a waste of time and money on part of the school district.[\[113\]](#) Dr. Joe T. Clark, who was president of the Arkadelphia School Board during 1964-1974, remembers some folks stating, “Federal government won’t require it [forced integration]. [Just] Hang in there.”[\[114\]](#) Legally mandated integration was enacted in the Arkadelphia school district during the 1969-1970 school year. Some think integration resulted from the selection of the new superintendent, Robert W. Stephens, who stated his goals when he arrived in Arkadelphia were “to build a new high school, and my second goal was to integrate the schools.”[\[115\]](#)

As events would have it, the transition to integration would not transpire smoothly. Several violent incidents precipitated a race riot. Fighting broke out in March, 1971, between six black students and one white student. When two or more teachers got assaulted while trying to separate the students, the police were called. The students involved in the altercation were charged with “ ‘breach of peace’, ‘disobeying an officer’, and ‘assault and battery.’ ”[\[116\]](#)

On February 10, 1972, “about 125 white students from Arkadelphia High School assembled on the Church of Christ parking lot on Pine Street” as a protest over recent school incidents.[\[117\]](#)

An incident had happened the day before in which “two students were struck several times and injured by black students as they left the principals office;” the incident was followed by “an alleged fight off campus over the weekend between a white and black student.”[\[118\]](#)

Lottie Ware, a ninth grade student attending Arkadelphia High School at that year, recalled the racial tensions as arising out of “a lot of little things. The blacks wanted to keep their mascot as the Buffalos, from Peake High School while the Central wanted to keep theirs, the Badgers. [To] Tell you the truth, we didn’t want to be integrated. We were happy just [with] the way things were.”[\[119\]](#) Katrina Rogers, a tenth grader at that time remembered, “fights going on, couple of interracial couples. People were having problems with that.”[\[120\]](#)

On March 16 a riot broke out at the school, stemming from a fight the previous day between a white and black student on the parking lot. Earlier in the morning, “another fight...occurred between two students,” and at noon “there was another fight on the parking lot and black students began to mass and started in the school”[\[121\]](#) [\[122\]](#) When the officers from the sheriffs office, city police, and state police arrived, “windows were already being knocked out and much of the damage to the school and injuries to the students had already occurred.”[\[123\]](#) There was extensive damage in the interior of the school, including “kicking down many of the classroom doors, desks and teachers’ desk overturned and torn apart, handrail on the stairs were torn off the wall, a supply closet was ransacked, a trash can thrown down the stairs, and numerous windows knocked out.”[\[124\]](#) Twelve people were injured, including the school’s band director. Three Henderson students and one former student were charged and sentenced for their actions, along with thirteen black Arkadelphia High School students. The black high school students were expelled from the school district. No white students were expelled because of the riot.

Black Henderson students were involved with the riot because “they had taken a mentoring role to the black high school kids at that time. Being older, they had more experience, patience with the events. I think some of the them got arrested for violating the curfew,[\[125\]](#)” recalled Charles Cobbs.[\[126\]](#)

Besides getting arrested for violating the curfew, Alvin Hugh Pearson of Wynn, a Henderson State College student, was arrested along with Rev. I.V. Chapman for inciting a riot at the Clark County jail. This incident was sparked when a crowd of blacks gathered outside the jail began to demand that the “black youths who were arrested at the Arkadelphia High School Thursday for tearing up the school and beating whites be released without bond.”[\[127\]](#) Pearson had been identified as one of the protesters who had been picketing Arkadelphia merchants. When arrested “Pearson had a highly decorated club, about two and half or three feet long, on his person.”[\[128\]](#)

Dr. Charles Hughes, Professor Emeritus of English, at Henderson remembers the incident and the following trial. Hughes recalled that “he [Pearson] was a student of mine. We had talked about the protests and I knew Alvin was against violence of any sort.”[\[129\]](#) Hughes remembered that “he [Pearson] had asked [a ] couple of other professors to testify for him, but they had refused. Being new, I agreed to it.”[\[130\]](#) Pearson was initially found guilty.[\[131\]](#)

The aftermath of the race riot influenced various people differently as to whom they felt were

the instigators of the violence. Katrina Rogers recalled, “Things settled down, but I started to carry a brick at [in] my purse. I never had to use it, [but] I felt safer. Both [races were instigators], you had a lot of redneck people.”<sup>[132]</sup> Lottie Ware disagrees with Rogers’ assessment of the instigators, “mostly whites.”<sup>[133]</sup> Virginia Smith echoes Ware’s belief, “white students drove to school with guns in the back of their trucks. Guns and weaponry provoke violence.”<sup>[134]</sup>

As for Henderson black students, the high school riot was a turning point for some of them. “It came back to us that civil rights—integration, boycotts, marches—did not work in our town. The efforts that we put in—helping the [black] high school kids—were fruitless. There was a lot, a sense of defeat among us. I don’t think any white students got expelled for their part [in the riot]. After the riot, militancy settled in,” recalled Charles Cobbs.<sup>[135]</sup> “Some of the black students thought of walking out on classes as a protest. I think some did, [but] there wasn’t enough support,” recalls Kenneth Muldrew.<sup>[136]</sup> To John Hall, the riot led to “uneasiness; it created a big stress.”<sup>[137]</sup>

With the increase of black student involvement, political activism, and the increase in black enrollment mixed with the national violent trend in the mid-1970s, it was not a surprise that Henderson encountered racial tribulations. In 1976 the dean of students, Bob Johnston, was recorded asking the Radio Subcommittee of the legislative Communications Study Committee, which reviews requests from all state agencies, to buy new radio equipment. Johnston wanted approval to buy five two-channel walkie-talkies for Henderson’s security force to improve its campus security. Henderson had “\$10,400 in student and faculty property [that] has been stolen in the past six months at the school, which is a record.”<sup>[138]</sup> Johnston said Henderson had had “a killing, a rape, and a sexual assault occurred behind a building the night before last.”<sup>[139]</sup> Henderson administrators, such as Bob Johnston, repeatedly denied the increase in campus security problems was owing to race<sup>[140]</sup> and the spiraling black enrollment, which at that time was at a record 26%.<sup>[141]</sup> However, Thomas recalled, “the races eyed each other with mistrust.”<sup>[142]</sup>

The sense of mistrust between the races led a group of about 150 black students to peacefully congregate outside the administration building “to protest a statement made by Bob Johnston, dean of safety.”<sup>[143]</sup> The black students felt that Johnston’s statement to the legislative subcommittee, “black enrollment at the school had risen and that campus security problems have increased, though, ‘I’m not sure they’re related.’” was defamatory. The students signed a grievance petition calling Johnston’s statement, “a blatant and wholesale assassination of the character of each black student presently enrolled” and implying that Johnston should apologize.<sup>[144]</sup>

Dr. Kenneth G. Harris, a faculty member and an organizer of the student protest recalled, “his [Johnston’s] statement was inappropriate” and reflected “negatively” upon all blacks on campus.<sup>[145]</sup> Johnston responded to the crowd’s petition by stating, “I want to assure you that implications to recent reports are not my personal feelings, or those of the University.”<sup>[146]</sup>

## **Mid 1970s-Present**

Gradually, race relations improved in the years ahead but a “white flight” occurred in the early 1970s to mid-1970s. Dr. Larry Frost, a faculty member at that time, remembers, “Many more of the black students stayed on campus. They were more visible, I would say. They would utilize the campus student center. Someone visiting Henderson would think it was 75% not 33%. Many [of the whites] left for Ouachita [Baptist University].”<sup>[147]</sup> In the mid-1970s and the rest of the decade, black enrollment started to decrease. According to Charles Cobbs, “in the mid70s hundreds of black students left Henderson for other state colleges.”<sup>[148]</sup> Reasons suggested for the decline of black enrollment were “they left to get farther away from this region,” according to Charles Cobbs<sup>[149]</sup> to “better financial aid programs elsewhere,” according to Kenneth Muldrew.<sup>[150]</sup> Virginia Smith reflects that the decrease in black enrollment was because of the new academic standards for admission to Henderson. “[It was to] restrict further black growth, eliminate those who I saw [were] not qualified. The first few years blacks and whites were affected.”<sup>[151]</sup>

Dr. Larry Frost concurs, “I don’t think it had a thing to do with the blacks.”<sup>[152]</sup> Frost pointed out that at that time, Henderson did not have entrance standards: “We had students reading on the fourth grade level. Henderson was academically on the rocks. People called it Henderson High School. Previously people could practically stay with no grade point at all for two years. Faculty senate recommended to toughen [the] entrance standards, made Henderson more academically demanding. Then it didn’t matter what the ACT [score] was.”<sup>[153]</sup>

In the 1980s the average black enrollment was around “15-19%,” according to Futrell.<sup>[154]</sup> However, by the late 1970s and 1980s, black enrollment had become accepted practically everywhere in the United States. Integration was an accepted reality. Segregation at universities, whether public or private ones, was a rarity.

## **Conclusion**

However, as historians we must evaluate the accomplishments and shortfalls in history. Henderson successfully and peacefully integrated throughout the years. Black students have increased their presence in all aspects of campus life and in leadership roles in student organizations. Academically, the average ACT score for black students has increased through the years as well as their grade point averages. Minority enrollment is down; currently there are 14% blacks and 2 % other on campus.<sup>[155]</sup> However, college enrollment is down as a whole. Those figures are similar to the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville’s minority statistics; however, Fayetteville’s demographics include a largely white local population while Southwest Arkansas, where Henderson is located, has a significant black population.

Yet, it has not successfully ‘integrated’ in various forms. Blacks have not increased their presence in the faculty and administrative positions at Henderson. Throughout the years 1986 to 1994, black full-time faculty ranged from 1.9% to 5.3%.<sup>[156]</sup> According to the 1998 Henderson State University’s Factbook, of the 170 full-time faculty employed at Henderson only 6 were black, or 3.5%, while whites hold of 156 out of 170 positions, or 91.8%. <sup>[157]</sup> Currently, there are no black administrators in the President’s Cabinet. This shortage can best be summarized by a black senior, “Blacks have made a lot of improvements on campus, but we still need more

black faculty. Who do we have to look up to in our classes?"

Although, blacks have become integrated into Henderson, they have not become socially integrated. As an alumna of Henderson and a student conducting this research, I was amazed by the challenges presented to black students at Henderson forty-five years ago and how in a lifespan civil rights have changed greatly for blacks. Now black students at Henderson have the ability to stroll around anywhere in campus, have the right to use the gym and other facilities and its equipment without fear of censure. However, upon my arrival at Henderson, I was struck by the segregation at Henderson. What Virginia Smith and Dr. Larry Frost had noted for an earlier era is still true: "blacks are a separate entity on campus." The same applies for the white students on campus. In social functions (sports activities, dances, and other extracurricular activities) on campus, I have yet to witness a heterogeneous mixture of the student population at Henderson.

True, people today have the right to choose with whom they wish to associate, but it is ironic, that during the previous generation blacks had to struggle to gain equal entrance with whites. Now, it seems that after the entrance has been extended to them, they do not care to interact with others. Or perhaps it is the other way around. The reality may be that whites have grudgingly accepted and granted blacks their civil liberties but will not go further in extending them their fellowship.

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[4] Morgan and Preston, *The Edge of Campus*, 5.

[5] Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren qtd. In John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro America*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1994), 411.

[6] The people in Arkadelphia were disappointed in their failure to win Hendrix College to Arkadelphia. However, they remained steadfast to their initiative to have a Methodist college in Arkadelphia and were very much spurred on by an *Arkansas Gazette* article advising that towns that failed in attaining the Hendrix bid should “support institutions of this kind, and there is abundant room for them.” quoted in Bennie Gene Bledsoe, *Henderson State University: Education Since 1890* 2 vols., (Houston: D. Armstrong, Co., Inc., 1986), vol. 1, 34.

[7] Henderson State University: *A Brief History of Henderson State University*  
<http://www.hsu.edu/hsu/history.html>

[8] Morgan and Preston, *The Edge of Campus*, 5.

[9] Horton was asked by the NAACP and other regional black leaders to test the *Brown* decision at Henderson. Horton was interviewed by the author, November 29, 1999. Herewithafter, all references to the interview will be cited as Maurice Horton, interview.

[10] Horton believes that because he was from the surrounding region and knew some of the people at Henderson, he was able to succeed on campus. Horton graduated from Henderson in Spring 1957 with a BSE in mathematics.

[11] Horton’s response when asked about his memories of social activities on campus. John Taylor graduated from Henderson in 1958.

[12] “Can We Meet the Non-segregation Challenge?” Oracle. May 19, 1954.

[13] “Can We Meet the Non-segregation Challenge?” Oracle. May 19, 1954.

[14] Maurice Horton, interview.

[15] Horton’s response when asked about his interaction with fellow black students. At times he was referred to for guidance by the faculty when black students needed tutoring or a role model.

[16] John Harold Taylor became a Henderson student shortly after Horton. Taylor lived in Arkadelphia. He graduated with a BSE in 1959. Later Taylor joined the staff at Henderson in 1972.

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- [40] Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom*, 473.
- [41] Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom*, 473.
- [42] Alvin Futrell interview with the author, November 17, 1999 at Henderson State University, Womack Hall. Futrell attended Henderson 1966-1970 and graduated with a BSE. Futrell has an Ed.D. and currently serves the Assistant to the President for Diversity and is a Professor of Education. Herewithafter, all references to the interview will be cited as Alvin Futrell, interview.
- [42] Eula Thomas interview with the author, October 28, 1999. Mrs. Thomas attended Henderson as an undergraduate in Fall 1965 until transferring to Ouachita Baptist University in Spring 1966. Here she recalled the mentality of the approximately 100 black students who attended Henderson when she was a student here. Mrs. Thomas was interviewed at Womack Hall at Henderson State University. Mrs. Thomas has been employed at Henderson since 1977 as an Instructor/Counselor. Herewithafter, all references to the interviewed will be cited as Eula Thomas, interview.
- [44] Charles Cobbs interview with the author, December 2, 1999. Mr. Cobbs attended Henderson in 1967-1972. Herewithon, all references to the interview will be stated as Charles Cobb, interview.
- [45] Charles Cobbs, interview.
- [46] Eula Thomas, interview.
- [47] Eula Thomas, interview.
- [48] Gracie Newborn Neal, interview.
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- [50] John G. Hall, interview with the author, October 7, 1999, and July 26, 2001, at Henderson State University, Arkadelphia, Arkansas. Hall is Professor Emeritus of History and is chairman of the Henderson Foundation.
- [51] Alvin Futrell, interview.
- [52] Ibid.
- [53] Neda Parker and Curtis Sykes was interviewed jointly by the author on September 19, 2001. Tape recording. Mrs. Parker is a retired school counselor. Herewithon, all references to the interview will be stated as the interviewee responding, i.e., Neda Parker, interview.

- [54] Neda Parker and Curtis Sykes was interviewed jointly by the author on September 19, 2001. Tape recording. Mr. Sykes is a retired school administrator and currently serves as Chairman of the Black History Advisory Council. Herewithafter, all references to the interview will be cited Curtis Sykes, interview.
- [55] Neda Parker and Curtis Sykes, interview. Both voiced agreement on Henderson's unenthusiastic reception to black students.
- [56] Curtis Sykes, interview.
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- [71] Ibid.
- [72] "Nation Has Problems." Editorial. Oracle. October 4, 1968.
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- [74] "150 blacks demand Henderson actions." Arkansas Democrat. April 13, 1971, 7A.
- [75] ibid.
- [76] Virginia M. Smith, interview.
- [77] Virginia M. Smith, interview.
- [78] John Hall, interview.
- [79] "Student Demands." Editorial. Oracle. April 16, 1971.
- [80] The demands were presented Monday afternoon and the Student Senate met that night with suggestions from the administration to guide them in their actions.
- [81] Ibid.
- [82] Dr. Martin Garrison was President of the Henderson 1970-1986. During his tenure as President, Henderson was known as Henderson State College. Henderson became Henderson State University in 1975.
- [83] Garrison, Dr. Martin B. "Garrison States Policy." Editorial. Oracle. April 16, 1971.
- [84] Student Senate later approved of the vote. Four new positions were created on the Student Senate for black students.
- [85] Garrison, Dr. Martin B. "Garrison States Policy." Editorial. Oracle. April 16, 1971.
- [86] Tresher, Howard. "Letter to Editor." Editorial. Oracle. April 16, 1971. Tresher is listed as the author because his name was the only one printed. The editor noted that due to limited space other students' names could not be printed.
- [87] Hanks, Brenda. "Readers Express Opinions." Editorial. Oracle. April 23, 1971.
- [88] Virginia M. Smith, interview.
- [89] "Black Emphasis Week will feature top names." Oracle. March 9, 1973.
- [90] "1<sup>st</sup> Black student: Taylor returns after 13 years, added to staff." Oracle. April 7, 1972.
- [91] The heading of the Oracle was incorrect. Taylor was not the first black student at Henderson nor was he the

first full-time black student to graduate from Henderson. Maurice Horton graduated from Henderson in 1957, whereas Taylor graduated in 1959.

[92] Eula Thomas, interview. Thomas on the social changes and opportunities for black students in the early 1970s.

[93] Information for the black fraternities and sororities came from Virginia M. Smith, Interview, Charles Cobbs, Interview, and Steve Elder, Student Programs Coordinator at Henderson State University.

[94] Virginia M. Smith, interview.

[95] Dr. Paul Stein interview with the author on September 19, 2001. Tape recording. Stein is currently a professor of mathematics at Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi. Stein left Henderson for Jackson State University. Herewithafter, all references to the interview will be cited as Paul Stein, interview.

[96] Dr. Minnie M Rogers interview with the author on September 17, 2001. Rogers taught at Henderson 1972-1992. She is retired and currently lives in Little Rock. During her tenure at Henderson, Dr. Rogers commuted from Little Rock. Herewithafter, all references to the interview will be cited as Minnie Rogers, interview.

[97] Minnie Rogers, interview.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Minnie Rogers, interview.

[100] Ibid.

[101] The description of the Concerned Youth of Arkansas came from the following article. "Blacks oppose UA-AM&N merger." Oracle. March 10, 1972,1.

[102] Virginia M. Smith, interview.

[103] Gracie Newborn Neal, interview.

[104] Virginia M. Smith, interview.

[105] Henderson's Faculty Row was the rows of faculty housing. Currently, Whispering Oaks, a student-housing complex has replaced Faculty Row.

[106] [107] Ibid.

[108] "Blacks Meet At City Hall To Meet With City Officials." Daily Siftings Herald. February 2, 1972, 1.

[109] " "Concerned" Youth Fail To Appear At Meeting." Daily Siftings Herald. March 3, 1972, 1.

[110] Stephen Smith. "Desegregation and Integration of Arkadelphia High School." Research Paper on Reserve at Riley-Hickingbotham Library. Ouachita Baptist University. 1995.

[111] Katrina Rogers interview with the author on August 22, 2001. Tape recording. Henderson State University. Rogers is currently a staff member at Huie Library at Henderson State University. Herewithafter, all references to the interview will be cited as Katrina Rogers, interview.

[112] Lottie Ware interview with the author on August 21, 2001 at Henderson State University. Ware is currently a staff member at Henderson State University. Herewithon, all references to the interview shall be stated as Lottie Ware, interview.

[113] Stephen Smith. Research Paper.

[114] Dr. Joe T Clark interview with the author on July 8, 2001 at Henderson State University. Clark is Professor Emeritus of Education and former Vice President for Academic Affairs at Henderson State University. He was President of the Arkadelphia School Board 1964-1974. Herewithon, all references to the interview will be cited as Joe T. Clark, interview.

[115] Stephen Smith. Research Paper.

[116] "Police Called to high school to stop fights." Daily Siftings Herald. March 9, 1971, 1.

[117] "High School Is Closed After Racial Disorder." Daily Siftings Herald. February 10, 1972, 1.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Lottie Ware, interview.

[120] Katrina Rogers, interview.

[121] "12 Injured, Damage Heavy After Riot At High School." Daily Siftings Herald. March 17, 1972, 1.

[122] Ware disputes with the official events at the riot. In her recollection, the blacks students were originally planning to stage a walk out of the school, similar to the one the white students had done earlier but the events of the day led to a "run out." Lottie Ware, interview.

[123] "12 Injured, Damage Heavy After Riot At High School." Daily Siftings Herald. March 17, 1972, 1.

[124] Ibid.

[125] Arkadelphia was immediately placed upon a curfew after the riot and continued to be for a week. "Curfew is

Continuing.” Daily Siftings Herald. March 20, 1972, 1.

[126] Charles Cobbs, interview.

[127] “Two Charged With Inciting a Riot.” Daily Siftings Herald. March 17, 1972, 1.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Dr. Charles Hughes interview jointly with Dr. Larry Frost and Mrs. Lorene Frost on September 12, 2001 by the author. Tape recording. Herewithafter, all references to the interview will be cited as the interviewee responding, i.e., Charles Hughes, interview.

[130] Charles Hughes, interview. Hughes joined the Henderson faculty in 1971.

[131] Hughes recalled that Pearson was found guilty and then had his initial ruling overturned on appeal. Pearson later came back in subsequent years to thank you Hughes for testifying on his behalf. Hughes recalled that Pearson’s lawyer was Richard Mays, one of the foremost African-American civil rights attorney’s in Arkansas.

[132] Katrina Rogers, interview.

[133] Lottie Ware, interview.

[134] Virginia M. Smith, interview.

[135] Charles Cobbs, interview.

[136] Kenneth Muldrew interview with the author on December 2, 1999. Muldrew is currently an administrator with Hope Yerger Junior High School in Hope, Arkansas. Herewithafter, all references to the interview will be cited as Kenneth Muldrew, interview.

[137] John Hall, interview.

[138] “Extra security measures are requested for HSU.” Arkansas Democrat. April 16, 1976, 11A.

[139] ibid.

[140] “Race and crime increase not related, officials say.” Arkansas Democrat. April 18, 1976, 18A.

[141] “Extra security measures are requested for HSU.” Arkansas Democrat. April 16, 1976, 11A.

[142] Eula Thomas, interview.

[143] “HSC Blacks Protest Johnston’s Statement.” Daily Siftings Herald. April 23, 1976, 1.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Kenneth Harris, interview.

[146] “HSC Blacks Protest Johnston’s Statement.” Daily Siftings Herald. April 23, 1976, 1.

[147] Dr. Larry Don Frost was interviewed jointly with Mrs. Lorene Frost and Dr. Charles Hughes by the author on September 12, 2001. Frost retired at the end of the 2000-2001 school year as Professor of English. He joined Henderson’s faculty in 1970. Herewithafter, all references to the interview shall be cited as the interviewee responding, i.e., Larry Frost, interview.

[148] Charles Cobbs, interview.

[149] Charles Cobbs, interview.

[150] Kenneth Muldrew, interview.

[151] Virginia M. Smith, interview.

[152] Larry Frost, interview.

[153] Larry Frost, interview.

[154] Alvin Futrell, interview.

[155] John Hall, interview.

[156] EEO Statistics from the Henderson State University’s Office of Planning and Research.

[157] Henderson State University: *Fall 1998 Factbook*, (Arkadelphia: Henderson State University, 1998), 31.