DESEGREGATION AT AUBURN UNIVERSITY: A HISTORICAL LOOK AT THE USES OF MEDIA

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DESEGREGATION AT AUBURN UNIVERSITY: A HISTORICAL LOOK AT THE USES OF MEDIA

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L. Anne Willis, daughter of Marsha Beeland Willis and William C. Willis, II, was born May 11, 1982, in Houston, Texas. Anne graduated in 2002 with highest honors from the University of Texas's School of Communication with a Bachelor of Science degree in Radio/Television/Film. In 2003, Anne began her two years of study in the Department of Communication and Journalism at Auburn University. She will graduate in August 2005 with her Master of Arts degree.

THESIS ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines desegregation at Auburn University, focusing on the role of the media. Why is the desegregation of Auburn University less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this? In addition to employing a communication history methodology, this thesis uses the Westley MacLean model of communication and boundary spanning theory to explain why Auburn's integration did not result in the same notoriety as other southern universities. Auburn's integration is less well known than the attempts at the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi because Auburn University's

president heavily controlled the media's access to information. The media therefore played a significant role to the extent that their messages were controlled by Draughon.

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CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

In the midst of the strengthening Civil Rights Movement in the late 1950s and early 1960s, southern colleges fiercely resisted attempts to attain equality for Black Americans. Violence erupted throughout the South as the legality and morality of longstanding segregation laws were tested. Much of the outrage resulted from White southerners who resented the pressure to desegregate public schools in America. While the Supreme Court declared segregation laws unconstitutional, southern schools, especially colleges and universities, continued to remain segregated as southerners vehemently opposed the change. When the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi attempted to integrate from 1955 to 1963, riots broke out as students and community members protested against allowing Black students to enter their respective universities. As the anger swelled, the media broadcast the violent images to the rest of the country and world. Forty years later, the schools are enduring reminders of the civil rights struggle and are examples of the South's reluctance to change. Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama, however, also unwillingly desegregated but is not associated with the violence and anger that occurred at other major institutions. Why is the desegregation of Auburn University less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this? Auburn's integration is less well known than the attempts at the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi because Auburn University's

president heavily controlled the media's access to information. The media therefore played a significant role to the extent that their messages were controlled by Draughon.

Preview of Chapters

Auburn University peacefully desegregated in 1964, a task with which many other southern schools struggled. This thesis explores the various factors that affected Auburn's integration in order to answer my research question. Segregation became engrained in American society, giving way to both unrest and the emergence of the modern Black civil rights. Resistance to integration, particularly in schools, disrupted southern universities and created an atmosphere of violence and uncertainty for Auburn's desegregation. As integration neared, Auburn University's President Ralph B. Draughon developed a plan to successfully lead the school through a major obstacle.

The organization of this thesis focuses on Auburn's integration efforts. Chapter two establishes the historical context during which Auburn University desegregated to demonstrate the conditions surrounding Auburn's attempt and provide an understanding of the tension that dominated life in the 1960s. The history of segregation practices and attempts to end them, the legal system's role in creating and ending segregation, and the unsuccessful integration attempts of other universities created a set of circumstances that affected Auburn's desegregation. In 1896, the Supreme Court established legal segregation in *Plessy v. Ferguson* through the "separate but equal" doctrine whereby facilities could be separate for Black and White people as long as they were equal. Equality, however, was overlooked. While the *Plessy* decision focused on segregated railcars, the practice spread to all aspects of life as Jim Crow laws, which consisted of actual laws as well as social norms and which flourished in the South.[1] Segregation laws

were applied to streetcars, steamboats, entrances, pay windows, water fountains, toilets, neighborhoods, churches, hospitals, prisons, cemeteries, and many other areas, thus establishing a racial hierarchy dominated by White people.[2]

Segregation quickly spread to the education system as well, creating separate but inherently unequal facilities for Black students. Excluded from public schools, Black students faced overcrowded schools with inadequate supplies and facilities.[3] Although states were required to allot the same amount of funding to Black and White schools, discretion in providing money was left to school boards who designated the majority of finances to White schools.[4] Since Black schools lacked the same finances offered to White schools, the segregated education system created an inferior learning environment for Black students.

Fifty-eight years after *Plessy,* the Supreme Court's landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling abolished the "separate but equal" doctrine. But, the *Brown* decision resulted in little immediate action to desegregate schools, especially in the South. As a result, civil rights activists took action to end discriminatory practices. Protests, boycotts, and sit-ins became successful strategies for calling attention to the discrimination that was ingrained in society. While the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum in the 1950s and 1960s, violence and retaliation frequently occurred in the South as integrationists were beaten and murdered while they tested segregation laws.

Despite the threat of violence, challenging the legal system became a useful way to force integration in southern schools. Several Supreme Court cases slowly chipped away at the "separate but equal" doctrine and eventually allowed the Supreme Court to make its historic *Brown* decision. In *Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada* (1938), the

Supreme Court ruled that colleges could not deny a student the opportunity for law school based solely on race if no equal facilities existed within the state. Ten years later, in *Sipuel v. Oklahoma* (1948), the Court held that states with segregation laws could create new schools for Black students. Additionally, the Supreme Court ruled in *McLaurin v Oklahoma State* (1950) that Black students must be treated the same as White students, thus schools could not segregate within the school by admitting Black students but forcing them to sit in segregated areas. Finally, in *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950), the Supreme Court held that separate facilities for Black students must actually be equal, not just promised to be equal. In 1954, the Supreme Court applied the precedent established in *Sweatt* and *McLaurin* to all education levels. Holding that separate schools for Black students were inherently unequal to White schools, the Supreme Court declared segregation unconstitutional in *Brown v. Board of Education.*

Southern universities did not immediately comply with the *Brown* decision and were forced through the courts to admit Black students, which resulted in mobs and violence at the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi. When Autherine Lucy successfully sued the University of Alabama in 1953 because the school discriminated based on her race, anger escalated into violence on campus while the media broadcast the riots to an anxious country and world.[5] In response, the university expelled Autherine, and the University of Alabama remained segregated for another eight years.[6] In 1961, Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter sued the University of Georgia for admission, becoming the first Black students to attend the university, and as the media again took interest in the event, frustrated students gathered on campus, throwing bricks, rocks, and firecrackers.[7] One year later in 1962,

James Meredith also used the legal system to force the University of Mississippi to integrate, and James enrolled at the university where the media recorded every aspect of the event, and mobs became restless, throwing any objects possible to protest James' enrollment.[8] The University of Alabama was again ordered to integrate in 1963, and Governor George Wallace vehemently opposed the ruling, pledging to stand in the schoolhouse door. Wallace protested integration in front of over 400 members of the media, and his actions became the example of the South's struggle against change.[9] Thus, because of strong opposition to integration, many southern schools forcefully fought against desegregation, and the media captured the resistance and broadcast the struggle to the country and world.

While chapter two describes the circumstances leading up to Auburn University's desegregation attempt, chapter three explains two communication theories, the Westley-MacLean model of communication and boundary spanning theory, that will be used to interpret the event at Auburn and answer why the desegregation of Auburn University is less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, the media played in this. Theories help us both interpret what we experience and describe and explain what happened at Auburn. The Westley-MacLean model explains the process through which events are communicated to the public through advocates and the media.[10] According to the model, events take place each day that compete for attention. As the events occur, they have stimulus qualities that can be responded to by advocates, which can be an individual, organization, or social system.

This thesis focuses on the advocate, who has a vested interest in both selecting and transmitting particular messages about an event or object. The advocate seeks

information to protect her or his needs, therefore benefiting in some way by controlling what information is transmitted about the event. The more control an advocate has over the flow of information, the more power s/he has over how the event is perceived. By reducing the number of competing advocates and limiting the information s/he provides, the advocate obtains more control over the flow of information about the event. Once the advocate gathers information about an event or object, s/he adapts and frames the information to fit her or his interests, transmitting the new message to a medium. Thus, the Westley-MacLean model of communication broadly explains the mass communication process that applies to Auburn University's desegregation attempt and will be used to answer why the desegregation of Auburn University is less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, the media played in this.

Boundary spanning theory further explains how authorities in an organization span organizational boundaries during times of crisis as they process information and represent the organization externally to influence the environment. All organizations have boundary spanning roles that may be formal or informal and may be the organization's head, a few roles, or an elaborate set of roles. Furthermore, boundary spanners occupy powerful positions within an organization as they become gatekeepers for incoming information, and they control outgoing information presented to the public. Collecting information and protecting the organization's image are therefore crucial responsibilities of a boundary spanner. Additionally, member compliance is crucial during turbulent times, and an authority many constrict or expand boundaries to achieve compliance. Constricting a boundary allows the authority to exclude members, which encourages conformity in the organization. Expanding a boundary allows the authority to

include other groups in the organization's boundaries so they will assist in representing the organization. As a boundary spanner, an authority therefore protects the organization's interests and attempts to manage the organization's relationship and reputation with its public. Boundary spanning theory thus provides a theoretical framework for interpreting the actions taken by Auburn University to deal with its impending integration attempt.

In addition to explaining communication theories, chapter three describes the methods used in this analysis. Because of its occurrence in the past, this research project examines Auburn's desegregation from a historical perspective, which is important for many reasons. Histories detail historical causes resulting in social change, and this project examines a major point of social change and is removed from political and social pressures that existed during desegregation. Histories also depict the failures of a community. Since violent integration attempts were the standard in the South, a history is important in understanding Auburn's lack of attention and failure to result in riots and protests. Finally, local histories are important because they remain mainstream longer than other types of histories. This project therefore provides insight into desegregation at Auburn. Furthermore, since communication is so intertwined with the context of modern society and the two cannot be isolated from each other, this project also examines the event from a communication history perspective. Because of the emphasis and importance of various aspects of the media, this methodology is important in my research.

Chapter four describes how Auburn prepared for desegregation and the result of the university's efforts to maintain a peaceful atmosphere. Preparation began in 1953 as

the university's President Ralph B. Draughon and Alabama Governor Gordon Persons anticipated the Supreme Court's possible decisions in *Brown v. Board of Education*.[11] Once segregation was abolished in 1954, southern colleges refused to act in accordance with the decision since many White school officials opposed integration. Although Draughon firmly opposed desegregation, Auburn University's student newspaper, *The Auburn Plainsman*, became a forum for openly discussing the implications of integration. Draughon acted quickly to suppress extreme attitudes on the issue in the publication. In 1957, Draughon publicly chastised a professor whose support for integration was communicated in the newspaper.[12] In 1961 *The Plainsman* again became a forum for discussing integration, and when editor Jim Bullington spoke out against anti-integrationists, Draughon punished the editor and established new guidelines for *The Plainsman* that forced a member of the Student Publications Board to examine all content of the newspaper before being published.[13] A year later, however, *Plainsman* staff member Jim Dinsmore wrote an article published in *The Plainsman* advocating integration at Auburn.[14] As a result, publications of *The Auburn Plainsman* were suspended during the summer of 1962, and Bullington and Dinsmore were no longer allowed to take part in the publication.[15] As integration efforts escalated, Draughon took decisive action and effectively controlled media messages about the desegregation of Auburn University.

On January 4, 1964, Harold Franklin became the first Black student to register at Auburn University. Though the media were allowed to cover Harold's registration, visual and audio recordings were banned from campus.[16] A crowd of 200-300 students gathered to watch the historic event, but the students quickly dissipated.[17] By the end of

Harold's first day as an Auburn student, no riots occurred and the campus remained peaceful. The next few days continued to provide no incident, and Auburn University officially successfully desegregated by January 9, 1964. Thus, desegregation at Auburn University was markedly different than desegregation attempts at other major southern universities.

Chapter five answers why the desegregation of Auburn University is less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, the media played in this. Auburn's integration is less well known than the attempts at the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi because Auburn University's president heavily controlled the media's access to information. The media therefore played a significant role to the extent that their messages were controlled by Draughon. According to the Westley-MacLean model of communication, Draughon functioned as an advocate for Auburn University and consequently sought information about desegregation. By gathering all available information about the event and controlling the media's access to the information, Draughon became the single advocate for Auburn University so his message was the only one communicated by the media. Using his influence to eliminate the presence of other advocates, Draughon effectively communicated his message through the media to the public. Controlling the flow of information and the media's access to information accomplished Draughon's main objective to avoid the media and therefore allowed Auburn's desegregation attempt to be less well-known than attempts at other southern schools.

As a boundary spanner for Auburn University, Draughon collected information about desegregation to create a successful strategy for peacefully guiding the school

through an important event that went wrong at many other major southern universities. Realizing the possible impact the media may have, Draughon strategically excluded or included them at appropriate times to ensure a peaceful integration. As a result, Draughon's message communicated through the media was simple and consistent- violence would not be tolerated. Desegregation was therefore different at Auburn University, and the media played a significant role as Draughon's warning of disobedience was consistent and reinforced time after time in his statements to the media and as he restricted the media's access to the event.

Significance

Understanding why desegregation at Auburn University differed significantly from other schools' attempts contributes to the body of knowledge on mass media and organizational communication. Exploring the role of the press, this research project reveals a case study focusing on the importance of gathering and controlling information during turbulent times and developing a single, unified plan that is communicated to the entire organization to ensure compliance. Also, it is important to understand the ways in which media may be useful tools for organizations during times of crisis because they provide the public with information. The type of information they convey may affect the outcome of a situation or event.

While understanding the causes of violent reactions to desegregation is very valuable, understanding why the Auburn community did not experience the same riots and violence is also important. Oftentimes the South is stereotyped as a racist community because of turmoil during the Civil Rights Movement. However, Auburn University experienced a relatively smooth desegregation. The aspects that made Auburn

different from other southern schools might serve to contradict stereotypes, thus changing the way outsiders as well as southerners view the South. Thus, this research is important to both the academic and mainstream communities.

In order to set the foundation for answering my research question, why is the desegregation of Auburn University less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this, the next chapter introduces the historical context in which Auburn desegregated. The history of segregation, court cases that chipped away at the practice, and the unsuccessful attempts of the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi combine to form a specific set of circumstances that significantly affected Auburn's integration.

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[1] C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Michael J Klarman, *From Jim Crow To Civil Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004). (Hereafter cited as Klarman); Harry Morgan, *Historical Perspectives on the Education of Black Children* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995).

[4] Klarman, *From Jim Crow To Civil Rights*.

[5] "Demonstration erupts on university campus," *Birmingham News,* 4 February 1956, sec. A, p. 1,2.

[6] E. Culpepper Clark, *The Schoolhouse Door* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[7] Calvin Trillan, *An Education in Georgia* (New York: The Viking Press, 1964).

[8] James Meredith, *Three Years in Mississippi* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1966); Russell H. Barrett, *Integration at Ole Miss* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965).

[9] Al Fox and Jack Hopper, "Auburn Mixing contrasts with 'Bama Furor," *The Birmingham News,* 5 January 1964, sec. A, p. 4. (Hereafter cited as Fox and Hopper).

[10] Bruce H. Westley and Malcolm S. Maclean, Jr., "A Conceptual Model For Communications Research," *Journalism Quarterly* 34 (1957).

[11] Gordon Persons to Ralph B. Draughon, 18 December 1953, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 13, Civil Rights 1951-1953, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al; Ralph B. Draughon to Gordon Persons. 22 December 1953, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 13, Civil Rights 1951-1953, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al.

[12] "Professor Expounds on Integration." *Auburn Plainsman* , 20 February 1957, p. 4.

[13] "Annual Meeting," Board of Trustees Minutes, 5 June 1961, Board of Trustees Minutes, Record Group 521, Accession # 1979, vol. 16, 1960-1965, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al.; "Choice- Reality or Anarchy," *Auburn Plainsman*, 4 May 1961, p. 1.

[14] Jim Dinsmore, "Cluttered Heart Cries for Expression on Issues. God, Country, Integration, Alabama, Auburn University," *Auburn Plainsman*, 9 May 1962, p. 4.

[15] Robert. C. Anderson to John W. Overton, 18 May 1962, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 25, Publications (*Plainsman*) 1962, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al.

[16] Press Changes Made by Lingo," *Auburn Plainsman*, 8 January 1964, p. 1.
[17] Fox and Hopper, "Auburn Mixing contrasts with 'Bama Furor."

II DECADES OF DISCRIMINATION

In an inherently racist society, Black people have faced discrimination for centuries. Part of this discrimination resulted from legally sanctioned segregation that separated Black and White people in nearly all aspects of life. Because segregation was institutionalized in America, the process of desegregating schools was a difficult challenge. Many southern universities resisted desegregation until they were ordered by the courts to admit Black students. The eventual admission of Black students angered many students and residents of southern communities where desegregation was forced on colleges. The intense emotions led to riots that were televised for the world to see. The University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi became the subjects of media attention when the campuses erupted with demonstrators and anti-integration crowds. Auburn University, however, desegregated in the same time period but did not receive as much media attention as many other southern schools. Why is the desegregation of Auburn University less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this?

Understanding how segregation became institutionalized and the attitudes towards desegregation will provide the historical context for interpreting why events occurred as they did during the integration of Auburn University. Although the historical, legal, and social aspects surrounding Harold Franklin's admission at Auburn University are all intertwined, each one has a unique significance that should be addressed individually.

The history of segregation provides a background for the important legal rulings that led to the social backlash at the universities. Recognizing the contributions of each context will set the foundation for understanding desegregation at Auburn. Thus, I will explain the historical basis for and practices of segregation as well as illustrate the legal and social contexts that preceded Harold Franklin's admission at Auburn University in 1964.

Historical Context

In order to understand the attitudes of White Americans towards Black Americans and tensions that dominated life in the South, and to place Auburn's desegregation within a broader historical context, I will examine the historical context through Jim Crow laws. The Supreme Court set the precedent of segregation in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) that was legally enforced for over 50 years.[1] The laws created after *Plessy* shaped an every day life for Americans that consisted of separation and inequality for Black people and legitimized segregated practices. The so-called Jim Crow laws spread to every aspect of United States' social, cultural, economic, and political systems. More specifically, the education system produced Black schools that were consistently inferior to White schools and in which Black students received substandard education compared to White students. Within this context of segregation and inequality, the Black Civil Rights Movement solidified in an effort to create a more equal America. As this movement became more unified, however, activists were met with violence, especially in the South. Hence, when Auburn University and other southern colleges began to desegregate, they did so within a context of violence.

Precedent of Segregation

In the landmark case *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), the U.S. Supreme Court established the "separate but equal" doctrine by which institutions could legally provide separate facilities to Black and White people as long as they were equal, thereby institutionalizing and ratifying both racism and segregation. Before 1896, many states enacted laws requiring segregation in various aspects of daily life, particularly in transportation. In Louisiana, a statute prohibited Black passengers from sitting in the same section as White passengers. When Homer Plessy, a man 1/8th Black and 7/8th White, violated this statute, he was asked to leave the White only railcar or face being thrown off the train and possible imprisonment. Plessy refused to move to the Black section and was forcibly ejected from the train and immediately arrested. Although the plaintiff argued that forced segregation "stamps the colored race with a badge of inferiority," the Supreme Court discredited this argument and held that:

> Legislation is powerless to eradicate racial instincts or to abolish distinctions based upon physical differences, and the attempt to do so can only result in accentuating the difficulties of the present situation. If the civil and political rights of both races be equal one cannot be inferior to the other civilly or politically. If one race be inferior to the other socially, the Constitution of the United States cannot put them upon the same plane. [2]

The Court, then, felt that it was not the government's duty to promote commingling among the races. As a result, the statute was found to be constitutional because it did not interfere with the personal rights of anyone and because the legislature referred to "the established usages, customs and traditions of the people, and with a view to the promotion of their comfort, and the preservation of the public peace and good order" in creating the statute.[3] Along with social custom, the Court gave another

explanation why the statute was reasonable by declaring that the Louisiana statute is "no more obnoxious to the Fourteenth Amendment" than school segregation laws, of which the constitutionality had not been questioned.[4] This ruling created precedent that was used over the next 50 years to justify legally segregating the school system.

Jim Crow Laws

After the Supreme Court declared railcar segregation constitutional in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), Jim Crow laws, which took the form of social norms as well as actual laws, emerged all over the country but became especially prevalent in the South.[5] The abundance of segregation laws meant that discrimination was institutionalized into nearly every aspect of daily life. These practices led to separate, inferior facilities for Black people and exemplified a racial hierarchy dominated by White people.[6] Segregation laws were applied to streetcars, steamboats, entrances, pay windows, water fountains, toilets, neighborhoods, churches, hospitals, prisons, cemeteries, and many other areas.[7] This segregation, however, was not limited to separate facilities for Black and White people. In the South, many unions excluded Black workers from their organizations.[8] Discrimination by the Federal government placed Black employees, though equally qualified as White employees, in low, frequently segregated positions for a variety of jobs in federal government agencies.[9] Black people were discouraged from voting or holding office through several means, including intimidation, terror, poll taxes and literacy tests.[10] Participation in government was virtually abolished, so disenfranchised Black people had few opportunities to politically speak out against the problems of segregation and the lack of equality afforded to Black citizens.

Segregation and Education

Inevitably, segregation spread to the education system. Nearly all Black students were excluded from southern public schools even though two states' constitutions prohibited this type of segregation.[11] Some White people advocated completely eliminating Black education.[12] Although the constitutions of many southern states mandated segregation, the constitutions also prohibited providing unequal funds to Black and White schools. However, many states gave local school boards discretion in providing schools with money.[13] Consequently, many White schools received much more funding than Black schools. Furthermore, while Black people were taxed the same as White people, the segregated schools and colleges did not receive equal funds.[14] Even if Black schools could receive money, they were at the mercy of White school board members and superintendents who determined where and when money was allocated. Sometimes the White school officials used the Black school officials to do work for them, such as chauffeuring or gardening.[15] In some areas, money that could have been spent improving Black schools was instead spent on creating new secondary White schools, which substantially reduced access to college for many Black students.[16] Only when White schools feared integration did they begin offering finances to Black schools, but the money was not enough to bring many Black schools to the same level of quality as White schools.[17] By the time Black schools received the necessary funding, they were so substandard that the money was not enough to make the schools equal. Since Black schools lacked the same finances offered to White schools, the segregated education system created an inferior learning environment for Black students. By providing White schools with adequate funds while denying the same treatment to Black schools, states

communicated a racial hierarchy dominated by White people and their educational needs. The lack of funding illustrated the states' attitudes that Black people were not worthy of the same education as White people. Thus, the government's actions conveyed the socially accepted idea that Black people were inferior to White people.

As a result of these monetary issues, Black and White children had completely different educational experiences, a disparate inequality that was particularly clear in public schools. For example, some southern Black schools received discarded materials from White schools. Used schoolbooks with White children's names still on them were handed down along with used sports uniforms that were not the school's colors.[18] Some Black schools were in rundown buildings without basic items, like desks and chairs, and without proper lighting and heating. Even if classrooms were adequate, students faced poorly prepared teachers and a "lifeless curriculum," or schools suffered from overcrowding.[19] For example, in Prince Edward Country, Virginia, there were 386 Black students and 346 White students.[20] Although Black children accounted for 59% of the county's students, they were sent to Robert Moton High School where the campus consisted of one brick building and three hastily built temporary buildings. The school for the Black students therefore suffered from substantial overcrowding that led to inferior education compared to White students in the same county. Furthermore, although the NAACP encouraged Black schools to sue because of their inequality, many teachers and administrators were intimidated by White supervisors and school board members into remaining quiet about the disparities.[21] Thus, the institutionalized inequality resulted in the impossibility for Black students to attain the same education as White students. The lack of adequate education for Black students had a ripple effect on

the rest of their lives, one of which effect was that they were far less likely to be able to meet the same college requirements that White students were more prepared to meet.

After integration was legally ordered in 1954, many colleges found ways to avoid admitting Black students. One tactic of resistance used in Georgia at the collegiate level included passing laws that a state could not spend money on desegregated schools.[22] Thus, schools did not admit Black students because they faced losing funding. Moreover, other efforts were made to avoid integration if no Black schools in the state offered the subject a Black student wished to study. For instance, schools provided scholarships to Black students to attend out of state Black schools and also created new inferior Black schools within White colleges.[23] Additionally, some colleges resisted integration by narrowly interpreting judicial decrees and only admitting named plaintiffs, but continuing to exclude other Black students that were similarly situated.[24] While the colleges fought to remain segregated, the courts assisted in this effort as well. Lower courts in many southern states refused to follow precedent set by the Supreme Court. Thus, the courts would also narrowly interpret high court rulings to avoid integration.[25]

Other tactics were used to resist integration. Many schools required applicants to attain letters of recommendation from alumni.[26] Since there were no Black alumni, colleges used this criterion to continue to deny admission to Black students since they were unable to acquire these letters. Some colleges chose violence and intimidation to ensure their campuses would remain segregated. A Black applicant at Mississippi Southern College was arrested and convicted of false charges so that he could not attend the school.[27] Another Black applicant at the University of Mississippi was ordered committed to the state mental hospital for examination, and was threatened to either

remain in the hospital or be prosecuted for disturbing the peace. Finally, if White universities admitted Black students, much of the time they were only admitted to classes that were not offered at Black colleges.[28] Thus, although segregation was declared illegal by the Supreme Court, White schools continually denied Black students the same access to education that was afforded to White students. As a traditional stepping-stone to enhanced social status and wealth, the White elite were invested in prohibiting access to a college education for Black people.

The Civil Rights Movement

As the result of decades of Jim Crow laws and institutionalized racism, civil rights advocates unified to fight the inequality that Black people faced. During the 1950s and 1960s, the movement quickly began to change strategies to attack racism and seek change through protests. Several conditions resulted in the modern Civil Rights Movement. With the explosive growth of media, the Civil Rights Movement was able to gain national attention and further its cause.[29] News of Black protests spread quickly to other southern as well as northern communities, so others could see the problems that many Black people faced. Additionally, southern Black people moved from farms to cities and were therefore better able to organize because of better communication and transportation facilities.[30] Education also played an important role in the formation of protests.[31] More Black colleges produced leaders who could organize protests as well as Black students to participate in the protests. When White people became more educated, there were fewer diehard segregationists who were willing to use violence to promote their cause. Finally, after Black soldiers returned from fighting in for the country in World War II, many were both disgruntled by the racial inequality they faced at home and simultaneously not as

easily "intimidated by the threats of white supremacists."[32] As a result of the various conditions, the Black Civil Rights Movement became more unified and began using protests as a means for furthering their cause.

Because of its fierce resistance to change, Alabama became a hotbed for civil rights activists to protest their inequality. Public transportation represented a nearly unavoidable aspect of daily life for many Black Americans. Black riders paid fare in the front of the bus and were then forced to board in the back, the only part of the bus where they were allowed to sit. When buses filled up and White passengers needed seats, Black passengers were forced to give up their own for the White riders. In 1955, after years of being insulted, shortchanged, and thrown off buses, Rosa Parks, who was a secretary at the NAACP and active in the Civil Rights Movement, stood up to the system, which led to the beginning of the Montgomery bus boycott.[33] Rosa Parks' arrest for failing to give up her seat to a White patron gave way to the Montgomery Improvement Association, headed up by a young man named Martin Luther King, Jr. who later became the most prominent leader in the Civil Rights Movement. At this time, King and other Black leaders organized, preached, and sent out leaflets to Black citizens advising them to boycott Montgomery buses.[34] The boycott lasted over a year as Parks and the NAACP used a common tactic used by the Black community to expose inequality; they used the legal system to question the constitutionality of Montgomery's transportation seating laws. Through a legal victory, Parks and the NAACP successfully struck down a prominent practice that continually discriminated against Black bus riders. Thus, the bus boycott marked an important triumph for civil rights activists and a new beginning of the Civil Rights Movement.

While one civil rights strategy involved boycotting, another strategy involved sit-ins in continuance of nonviolent protest tactics advocated by King. On February 1, 1960, four Black college students in Greensboro, North Carolina, asked to be served lunch at a Woolworth's counter.[35] When the waitress refused to serve them, they remained at the counter until the store closed. These protests were covered by the media and became successful strategies for bringing attention to the way Black people were treated in the South. By the end of the month, sit-ins spread to Alabama. On February 28, 1960, Alabama State College students in Montgomery went to the cafeteria in the state capitol building and asked for food, only to be forced out by the sheriff.[36] On March 31, students from Miles College, a Black school in Birmingham, gathered for a sit-in at the five largest food-serving stores in downtown. The two students sitting at each counter were quickly arrested and taken to jail on charges of vagrancy.[37] The sit-in tactic therefore became a way for younger civil rights activists to participate in the Civil Rights Movement while adding a new dimension by creating a unified, mass effort in hopes to end discrimination that could be broadcast to an entire nation through the media.

Because the bus boycott was ultimately successful and the sit-ins garnered national attention, the Black Civil Rights Movement gained momentum and began protesting other discriminatory practices. However, these protests against the institutionalized racial discrimination were often met with violence and retaliation. When a group of both Black and White integrationists from Washington D.C. decided to test segregation laws throughout the South in May 1961, the two busloads of people were met with anger and violence in both Birmingham and Anniston, Alabama.[38] Ku Klux Klan members and other segregationists collaborated with law officials to express their outrage

of integrationists.[39] The first bus of "Freedom Riders" planned to travel through Anniston, Alabama, but was stopped and the bus burned several hours prior to the second bus arriving in Birmingham.[40] Police officers did little to stop the violence; rather they promised the anti-integrationists that their actions would go unpunished as they turned a blind eye from the brutality.[41] As the second bus pulled into the city, violence erupted and protestors viciously attacked the group with blackjacks, pipes, and other objects. The riot escalated and the mob attacked almost anyone in its path. Even the media present were severely beaten and their equipment seized and destroyed. Police failed to arrive to the scene, even though the fight was just two blocks from the city hall and three blocks from police headquarters.[42] Bull Connor, the infamous chief of Birmingham police, was a segregationist with connections to the KKK. Consequently, he informed Klan members that when the buses arrived to the depot, he would give them 10 to 15 minutes to attack the Freedom Riders before police would become involved.[43]

Two years later in 1963, the Civil Rights Movement used large numbers of demonstrators in Birmingham to attract attention to the cause. After a month of continuous demonstrations, the police officers were demoralized and exhausted.[44] On May 2, 1963, nearly 800 children joined in the demonstrations. Meeting at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, the demonstrators began clapping and marching in waves down the streets, some even making it to city hall where they were arrested. The next day 1,500 students were absent from school, taking part in the demonstrations. Subsequently, Bull Connor asked the fire department to position trucks at strategic corners where the demonstrators marched. On May 3, Connor gave the fire department permission to use their fire hoses against the crowd. Initially the firefighters misted the crowd to warn

them, but the hoses were turned on full force and children were swept into gutters and pinned against doors.[45] At the same time, Connor called for six German shepherd police dogs to be sent into the crowds where they attacked Black demonstrators as they tried to flee. Two hours later the demonstration was over, and firefighters resumed fixing broken windows and doors broken by their hoses. The still and moving images of this event have become iconic representations of segregation and the civil rights struggle.

Just three months before Auburn University admitted its first Black student, racial tensions were still at a crisis level in Alabama. On Sunday, September 15, 1963, Black members of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, a gathering place for the Civil Rights Movement, were preparing for their inaugural Youth Day that involved youth ministry and fellowship.[46] As the young members prepared, an explosion blasted through the church, killing four young girls and injuring many others. While the police and FBI promised to find the bombers and began efforts immediately to find the people responsible for the bombing, it was nearly 40 years later when an arrest was finally made.[47] Hence, fierce resistance to integration efforts led to violence in the South, and the state and local governments often failed to take action to stop the attacks. This same sentiment transferred to schools attempting to desegregate and led to similar violence in those communities. So, although the Black Civil Rights Movement was becoming more unified, violent opposition threatened those involved with the efforts to desegregate. Thus, the legal system was forced to intervene.

Legal Context

Because court decisions carry many consequences for the way people behave, I will provide a review of court cases that led to the desegregation of schools to form a

basis of why schools began to integrate. When the Supreme Court established the "separate but equal" doctrine, the government and citizens were bound to comply since the Court interprets the constitutionality of laws. Because the Court interpreted segregation laws as not violating the rights of Black Americans, states passed new laws requiring separation of White and Black people. Segregation laws communicated the inferiority of Black people and demonstrated the inherent racism in American society. In addition, these laws led to unequal facilities for Black Americans, which led to the movement for equality. As a result of the Civil Rights Movement that advocated equality among Black and White Americans, many of the country's laws were scrutinized. When the laws that applied to the education system were challenged, the Court refused to overturn the "separate but equal" doctrine, thus states continued to practice segregation in education. Finally, after the Court gradually ruled that segregation was a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment that called for equal treatment, they reversed their decision and held segregation to be unconstitutional. Thus, challenging laws through the Supreme Court was an effective strategy for civil rights lawyers because the legal system establishes if laws are constitutional. When the laws were deemed unconstitutional, the rulings contributed to a change in social norms that helped Black people attain access to adequate schooling. The cases that forced racial integration in America by addressing the inequality of education are therefore responsible for much of the social change that has taken place.

Erosion of Separate But Equal in Education

Between 1896 and 1938, the structure of educational systems developed according to "separate but equal" guidelines established in *Plessy*, with Black schools

being fundamentally inferior. Because of this inequality, Black students began to file lawsuits against White schools for admission. Several court cases contributed significantly to the erosion of the "separate but equal" doctrine and reveal the changing attitudes of the Court towards segregation. In *Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada* (1938), *Sipuel v. Oklahoma* (1948), *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State* (1950), and *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950), the Supreme Court slowly acknowledged the inherent inequality that resulted from the "separate but equal" doctrine established in the *Plessy* decision. Although these decisions gave some Black students access to White educational institutions, they fell short of overturning legalized segregation.

By 1938 the Supreme Court realized the inferiority of the Black school systems, specifically at the graduate or professional school level of college. In Missouri, the only law school in the state admitted White students only. However, as part of the state's effort to ensure a separate but equal education, Black students could attend a Black law school in an adjacent state, or a Black school could create a law school when "necessary and practicable."[48] The constitutionality of this policy was questioned in *Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada* (1938) on the grounds that the state was offering a legal education to White students, but denied Black students equal education, thus violating the Fourteenth Amendment. The Court ruled that denying a student the opportunity for law school based solely on race was unconstitutional and held that the University of Missouri was required to admit Lloyd Gaines to its law school because no equal facilities existed within the state. Although school segregation was not declared unconstitutional, *Gaines* represented a significant precedent in the Supreme Court's reconsideration of the issue of separating White and Black students.

Ten years later the Supreme Court again reconsidered the "separate but equal" doctrine. Again, a Black student was denied admittance to the only law school in Oklahoma solely because of her race. In *Sipuel v. Oklahoma* (1948), the Court reaffirmed *Gaines* and decided that the state must provide equal education to Black students. Although the Court ordered the Black student admitted to the White law school in *Gaines,* the court in *Sipuel* did not do so. Instead, the Court held that if no equivalent school existed, states with segregation laws could create new schools for Black students; however, the new schools must be provided for Black students as quickly as schools provided for White students. Although this ruling was meant to promote equality in higher education, the decision along with the *Gaines* decision led to two problems.

First, students were admitted to White schools, but segregated within the schools. In *McLaurin v Oklahoma State* (1950), the University of Oklahoma admitted a Black student to graduate school in the field of education. Upon attending the school, however, the student was forced to sit in a specific seat during class, at the cafeteria, and at the library. Because this practice inhibited the student's ability to study, engage in discussions with fellow students, and his general ability to learn his profession, the Court found that Black students admitted into a graduate program could not be required to sit in sectioned off areas away from White students in the classroom, cafeteria, or library. Thus, any Black student admitted with a White school must be treated the same as the other students.

The second problem associated with the *Gaines* and *Sipuel* decisions was that states were hastily creating inferior facilities to serve as schools for Black students. The Court ruled in *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) that separate facilities must in fact be equal, not

just promised to be equal. Intangible and immeasurable differences existed that rendered the Black law school greatly inferior to the White law school. The Court held that:

> In terms of number of the faculty, variety of courses and opportunity for specialization, size of the student body, scope of the library, availability of law review and similar activities, the University of Texas Law School is superior. What is more important, the University of Texas Law School possesses to a far greater degree those qualities which are incapable of objective measurement but which make for greatness in a law school. Such qualities, to name but a few, include reputation of the faculty, experience of the administration, position and influence of the alumni, standing in the community, traditions and prestige.[49]

These legal rulings that applied mostly to graduate and professional programs were important steps towards integrating the education system. The key to overturning decades of legal segregation rested with the Supreme Court, which affirmed the constitutionality of segregation established in 1896. So, if Black students worked within the legal system to create change, they would be able to invalidate the idea of segregation in schools. While small victories brought promise to Black students who hoped for the same educational opportunities as White students, these small victories were not enough to reverse the "separate but equal" doctrine. Although the Court was developing a new view of segregation, the justices still refused to completely overturn the "separate but equal" doctrine that was established in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. As a result, colleges continued to discriminate based on race.

Segregation in Schools as Unconstitutional

Until 1954, higher learning institutions could still choose to admit Black students, and many refused. With the legal victories beginning with *Gaines,* tensions grew as the Black Civil Rights Movement gained momentum. The inferiority of Black schools was apparent, and Black students grew tired of the inequality. Finally, when Linda Brown

was forced to walk several miles out of the way to attend a Black school when a White school was located much closer, her parents engaged in a lawsuit with other angry parents that significantly influenced American society. The Supreme Court had final judgment over the constitutionality of segregation and in a landmark ruling completely reversed the precedent established in *Plessy.* In *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the Court applied precedents established in *Sweatt* and *McLaurin* to all levels of education. For the first time in deciding school segregation cases, the Court examined the effects of segregation on public education. Citing the importance of educational opportunities in America, the Court held that segregation deprived minority children equal educational opportunities since separate educational facilities for Black and White children were inherently unequal. Thus, the "separate but equal" doctrine was overturned, and public schools, including public colleges and universities, were required to desegregate. However, in its original ruling, the Court set no time limits and offered no advice on how schools could begin the overwhelming integration process. Instead, the judges heard arguments from a variety of sources about the best way to carry out their landmark decision. In 1955, in what is known as *Brown II*, the Court reexamined Brown and acknowledged that one particular method of desegregation would not be feasible due to the varied conditions at each school. Because of this realization, the court simply ordered that integration occur with "all deliberate speed."[50]

When the Supreme Court declared in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) that separate facilities for Black and White people were constitutional as long as they remained equal, Americans quickly applied the decision to schools. However, as the Black community became increasingly alarmed at the inherent inequality present in the segregated schools,

individuals used the same legal system that denied them adequate education to grant them access to a better education. Beginning in 1938, the Supreme Court slowly began to recognize the inadequacy of the Black education system established in 1896. Supreme Court decisions in *Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada* (1938), *Sipuel v. Oklahoma* (1948), *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State* (1950), and *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) indicated a changing attitude towards the constitutionality of segregated schools and set precedent that would be used to overturn the inequality created in *Plessy.* After 16 years of slowly eroding the "separate but equal" doctrine, the Supreme Court reversed its *Plessy* decision in the landmark ruling in *Brown v. Board,* and schools were ordered to integrate. While the legal system acknowledged the inequality of segregated schools, society was much less willing to change.

Social Context

Despite the landmark decision in *Brown v. Board*, obstacles to end segregation in the South did not disappear. Although *Brown* seemed like a victory in the civil rights fight, colleges, especially those in the South, were loath to comply with the decision. Angry school board members and trustees vowed that their schools would never integrate, and because of this opposition, Black students used the court system to force desegregation upon schools. From 1955 to 1964, southern schools began to integrate, and many Black students were met with violence. Desegregation attempts occurring at the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi resulted in particularly violent riots and protests. While all of the turbulence on campus occurred, the media recorded and broadcast to the rest of the country the troubles facing the admission of Black students in the South. During this same time period, Auburn

University was also ordered to admit its first Black student, but the university did not face the same upheaval as other schools.[51] Thus, in order to understand why desegregation at Auburn was different than other similar schools and the role that the media played, it is necessary to understand what exactly happened at the other universities.

The University of Alabama, 1955

The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa became one of the first southern colleges to admit a Black student, and the media were present to cover the event. Autherine Lucy filed a lawsuit for undergraduate admission to the University of Alabama in 1953 prior to the *Brown* decision. Because the university's stall tactics resulted in lengthy delays, a ruling on Autherine's admission still was not made a year after the suit was filed. During this time of waiting, the Supreme Court ruled segregation unconstitutional, however, officials at the University of Alabama continued to deny admission based solely on race, thus refusing to desegregate the school. Finally, in 1955, the Supreme Court required the University of Alabama to admit Autherine and other qualified Black candidates in *Lucy v. Adams* (1955).

Autherine Lucy's first day at the University of Alabama was Friday, February 2, 1956. Police were posted outside her classes and reporters and photographers were banned.[52] Around 11:15 p.m., a three-hour protest started on campus against Autherine's admission. No damage or violence occurred, and no arrests were made.[53] The next day, Saturday, resulted in 24 hours of peace. But on Sunday, crowds of angry students and community members began mass demonstrations that included wearing rebel flags and burning crosses on campus.[54] By Monday, large crowds formed on campus, comprised mostly of non-students.[55] When police drove Autherine to campus that day for class, her

car was bombarded by eggs, stones, and mud balls, but no one was injured.[56] When her classes ended, her car windows were broken out as the angry mob tried to reach in to drag Autherine out of the car. On Tuesday, campus was again full of angry protesters, armed with stones, rocks, eggs, and firecrackers.[57] Unlike previous days, however, reporters and photographers were on campus, some of whom were harmed by the thrown objects. The increasing escalation of violence caused university officials to bar Autherine from coming to campus. Although she became the first Black student at the previously all White school, Autherine was soon expelled after only three class days at the University after riots and violence ensued.[58] Therefore, although the University of Alabama attempted to desegregate, as the media conveyed to the rest of the country, the attempt was ultimately unsuccessful, and the school remained segregated for another eight years.

The University of Georgia, 1961

By 1961, five years after the University of Alabama's failed attempt at desegregation, many southern schools still refused to integrate, and their refusals continued to be broadcast to the rest of the country. While only four Black students had applied to and been rejected by the University of Georgia in Athens since 1950, two of those Black applicants sued the school for admission.[59] The US District Court for the Middle District of Georgia found that the university avoided Black applicants and refused their admission based solely on race since they were as qualified as the White students that were admitted. The university gave the excuse that they could not admit Black students because the school had limited facilities and therefore could not admit any new students, even though they continued to admit White students. Similarly, interviews conducted with one of the plaintiffs were treated in a much different manner than

interviews with White students, and the court found that if the applicant had actually been White, he would have been accepted to the university. Also, the university offered advice and helpful information to White applicants who were not admitted about how to better their chances of admittance in the following semesters. Black applicants, however, were not given this same opportunity. In *Holmes v. Danner* (1961), the district court found that the two applicants were qualified for admission and would have been admitted if they had been White. This ruling forced the University of Georgia to integrate its campus through admitting Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter.

At the University of Georgia in January 1961, Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes were initially met with three relatively nonviolent days.[60] Hamilton's first day on campus for registration on January 9 was uneventful. Among various members of his entourage, he brought with him a reporter from a new black newspaper, the *Atlanta Inquirer.*[61] Reporters and onlookers lined the hallways of the registration office, and Hamilton successfully registered for his classes. Similarly, when Charlayne arrived for her registration the same day, the hallways were lined with reporters and anti-desegregation students shouting remarks at her. Charlayne, however, was not allowed to register because the court issued a stay on the Black student's registration. This ruling was shortly overturned, though, and the registration process continued.

Television newscasters and northern newspapers reported on the good behavior of the Athens community concerning the initial lack of violence during Hamilton and Charlayne's registration.[62] On Charlayne's first night staying on campus, student leaders used the school's newspaper to urge the students to avoid violence. Some of the national media were present on campus waiting outside Charlayne's dormitory on her first night

on campus when a small crowd met outside to chant anti-integration phrases at her as well as set off fireworks. During this gathering the media covering the event were also pushed around by the protestors.[63] On their first day as University of Georgia students on January 11, Hamilton and Charlayne faced only a few jeers and taunts from other students, but they were mostly besieged by reporters.[64] That evening, optimism about the desegregation attempt was reported on national television and even Hamilton was feeling positive about his experience.[65]

Although the mood seemed upbeat, onsite reporters warned university officials of possible rioting and violence.[66] However, the warning did not avert plans for a riot following a school basketball game that night, and the school failed to ban students from gathering outside the dormitory despite warnings from the media, faculty, and students. Racial tensions along with a loss to Georgia Tech, archrival of the University of Georgia, led students to vent their frustrations. Students and protesters threw bricks, rocks, and firecrackers.[67] In an effort to stop the riot, a school official confiscated student identification cards, and Athens police used tear gas to help disperse the crowd. Because of miscommunications about sending the state police to the campus, they did not arrive until an hour and a half after the riot ended.[68] Attempting to save the school's reputation, university officials blamed the reporters for the violence, even though the journalists warned the school about the impending danger.

Charlayne received much more media attention than Hamilton throughout their admissions process at the University of Georgia. One afternoon when Charlayne arrived on campus, a crowd of jeering students surrounded and harassed her. Although the incident was relatively brief and had long dispersed by the time a reporter came by, the

correspondent asked the crowd to reenact the scene for the camera crew.[69] Thus, the media played a role in how the desegregation attempts were understood by the country. Because of the widespread media coverage, the world was able to see the violence and anger at the University of Georgia.

The University of Mississippi, 1962

Similarly, Black students sought admission to the University of Mississippi in Oxford, but were continually denied. One Black applicant sued the college and was inundated by media presence. When James Meredith applied, the registrar ignored him and his requests for admission for months.[70] In an *ex post facto* rationalization of turning down James' application, the college made several claims against the applicant that the court deemed as frivolous. First, the defendants alleged that James illegally registered to vote in a county where he did not live. However, the court found that there was no evidence of this activity, and James followed proper voter registration procedure in the matter. Second, the defendants claimed that James was a troublemaker, and the court again found these claims unsubstantiated. Finally, the defendants attacked James' character and questioned how he obtained his letters of recommendation. Again, the court found these assertions to be trivial and inconsequential, and in *Meredith v. Fair* (1962), the court ruled that the University of Mississippi must allow Black students to enroll, and James Meredith became the first Black student admitted to the university.

The enrollment of James Meredith provoked similar violence to that which occurred at other southern universities, though the university had a plan in place to use the media to help avoid rioting. The campus newspaper attempted to become a mouthpiece in favor of desegregation and criticized other press coverage that focused on

sensationalizing the events surrounding James' enrollment.[71] School officials planned to send messages through the student newspaper advocating proper behavior during integration. In addition, the campus radio station broadcast messages from the chancellor and the dean of students against violence.

All of these measures, however, could not stop Governor Ross Barnett and other officials from banning James' registration. Opposition to desegregation had been prevalent in the South, and the media reported to the rest of the country on "the mobs, the violence, the intolerance, the hate, and the indignities" that southern Black people faced.[72] The media again became an important tool for both sides to communicate their messages to the world. Shortly after he was initially denied admission, James had his first interview with the press in February 1961, and the media continued to be fascinated with the man making history in Mississippi.[73] When James sued the university for admission, local journalists waited outside the courtroom and James' picture made the front page of the *Meridian Star* next to an editorial criticizing desegregation and James' admission attempt.[74] After winning the court battle, James knew he would have problems enrolling at the university because of Governor Barnett. The newspapers printed rumors that President Kennedy and Barnett struck a deal regarding the registration procedure.[75] Barnett would allegedly allow James to register with federal marshals, however, the marshals would withdraw so James would not be able to remain in Mississippi without their presence. This rumor, however, was unsubstantiated.[76]

While James and his entourage pulled into a gas station shortly before his first attempt to enroll on September 20, 1962, two Black reporters followed them, and several White reporters took pictures.[77] Prior to registration, Governor Barnett used his power to

temporarily declare himself the school's registrar. As a result, when James arrived for his first attempt at registration, Barnett banned James from enrolling. Upon realizing that the best option for James would be to leave the scene, he and his entourage quickly went to their car and sped away. As they were leaving there were "hordes of shouting, rock-throwing students hot on the chase."[78] Consequently, the school's registrar, chancellor, and dean of the college of liberal arts were charged with civil and criminal contempt on September 21, and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals instructed the university officials to admit James.[79]

When the court ordered the university to allow James' enrollment, Governor Barnett set up a special enrollment meeting at the state capitol where the media were constantly reporting. Media presence was so prevalent that James' airplane to the capitol sent out another flight at the same time "to fool the newsmen," and even when the group took the back road away from the airport, the press and mobile radio units followed.[80] Moreover, the media were present inside the capitol building where James' registration was supposed to take place. James was still not allowed to register, however, and Governor Barnett and others were taken to court again for contempt.

By September 25, 1962, during the second contempt trials, "all the world had seen Barnett on TV or heard him on the radio or read about him in the newspapers."[81] The media coverage was so pervasive that many people viewed the unfolding events as they happened. On September 26, when James landed at the airport for his third attempt at registration, he was met by "a whole battery of newsmen, U.S. marshals, highway patrolmen, and local antagonists."[82] The journalists continued to take pictures of James and ask him questions. About a half mile away from campus, James was stopped at a

roadblock where television camera crew and radio and news reporters were waiting. Again, university officials denied James enrollment and were taken to court for contempt for the third time.

During yet another futile attempt at registration on September 27, James and his entourage were forced to turn around due to a possible mob situation. By now the local radio stations ended regular programming in order to devote all their time to the "upcoming battle."[83] Because of the heavy media coverage, James' caravan to campus was easily identified and the group had to turn around to avoid the angry crowds. The media kept reporting, making a "sorry fight sound as though the two men are tearing each other apart, and, in fact, they are hardly raising a hand."[84] Though they were supposed to be simply relaying the events, the media exaggerated reports and created problems for James.[85]

Although the press was previously banned from campus, the lack of effective security allowed nearly anyone access during James' final attempt to peacefully register.[86] Federal troops were ordered by President Kennedy on September 30 at the last minute to help maintain peace, and the state highway patrol left because they thought that federal forces had taken over. Since the marshals were not distinguishable from anyone else, some journalists convinced guards they were inspectors, and one reporter even secured a horse to fit in with the troops.[87] Two of the journalists who reported for a well-known media agency tried to flee the ranks when they thought they would be discovered. When they were found, however, the marshals simply asked James to let the reporters conduct an interview with him.

On September 30, the media were given permission to return to campus, although some media never left.[88] Mobs consisting of both students and outsiders became restless as some groups turned on the media and smashed cameras and harassed other media personnel. The violence, which was broadcast to the nation, escalated as protestors threw rocks, bricks, bottles, pennies, lighted cigarettes, eggs, and other small objects at federal troops.[89] The crowd became so violent that tear gas was fired in an effort to halt the fighting. When the ordeal was over, two people were killed and many others were injured.

Though a plan to use the media was in place, school officials did not anticipate riots before James' registration on October 1, 1962.[90] The special edition of the campus newspaper asking students to remain calm was not sent out to students until the morning after the riot. Similarly, President Kennedy prepared a statement to the students advocating peace on campus, but this statement was released only after the riots had begun.[91] The next day marked the registration of the University of Mississippi's first Black student, and the press was there to cover the event. As soon as James left the registration room, the press again stopped the student, asking for yet another interview. Whether at airports, courthouses, or especially on campus, the media constantly covered James from the time he applied to and was rejected from the university to his actual registration process.

The University of Alabama, 1963

When other Black students sought admission to the University of Alabama several years after Autherine Lucy was expelled, George Wallace, the Governor of Alabama, publicly vowed to block the doorway so they could not register and used the

media to send his anti-integration message. In *United States v. Wallace* (1963), the court affirmed their *Lucy* ruling that Black applicants must be considered for admission. In addition, the court found that although Wallace was the governor, he could not violate the court's ruling because when the "judicial process of a state or federal court, acting within the sphere of its competence, has been exhausted and has resulted in a final judgment, all persons affected thereby are obliged to obey it."[92] Thus, the court again ordered Wallace to integrate the campus.

Governor Wallace continued to pledge to stand in the doorway of the University of Alabama's Admissions Office to prevent the school's second court ordered Black students from desegregating the school. Although Wallace's plan was to refuse admission to the two Black students, he pledged to do so while also maintaining the peace.[93] He told President Kennedy that he would have 500 National Guards on standby to help preserve a peaceful campus.[94] As he stood in the doorway, large crowds of people gathered at the unpredictable event. Onlookers included students, outsiders, and the media who anxiously anticipated the outcome of another southern college integration.

Although no violence was directed at the Black students, in accordance with Wallace's demands, President Kennedy took precautions to prevent another incident similar to the one in Oxford, Mississippi by surrounding the campus with federal troops.[95] In addition to increased security, over 400 members of the press attended the event at the University of Alabama, many of whom were from foreign nations and broadcast Governor Wallace's stand throughout the nation and world.[96] Students were instructed not to speak to reporters, and media were banned completely from the buildings on campus.[97] Eventually, with the media covering the event, Governor Wallace

stepped aside from the door and allowed the students to enter the school, and the day continued without the mobs and violence seen previously at the university as well as in other southern education institutions.[98]

Thus, many southern universities forcefully fought against desegregation, a fight that was applauded by many people in the South. A common feature among the events at the universities of Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi, was the significant media presence and news coverage. Thus, the southern universities found their struggle broadcast to the nation and world by the media present on campus. Understanding the events surrounding integration at other major southern schools provides a basis for some of the actions taken by Auburn University during its desegregation and illustrates some of the influences on the event.

Auburn University, 1964

Although desegregation was inevitable and had been court ordered at other southern schools, Auburn, like other southern universities, refused to willingly admit any Black students. In *Franklin v. Parker* (1963), the school lost its final battle against integration. Harold Franklin, a Black student seeking a masters degree in History, became the first Black student admitted to Auburn University on January 4, 1964. Following in the footsteps of Black applicants to nearby colleges, Harold used the legal system to gain admittance to Auburn. Thus, when Auburn University was forced to admit its first Black student in 1964, it did so within a context of forced segregation similar to other southern institutions that resulted in riots in which White students, politicians, and law enforcement officers participated. Unlike other southern universities,

however, Auburn's desegregation was not marked by riots, violence, or extensive media coverage.

Conclusion

When the legal system established the "separate but equal" doctrine in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), states created laws mandating segregation in nearly all aspects of life. These Jim Crow laws, which consisted of the formal laws as well as social norms of discriminatory practices, dominated American life and led to a separate but clearly unequal culture for Black Americans, which had an enormous impact on the Black education system. Black students were forced to attend rundown schools with few supplies where they received an inadequate education and were consequently less likely to be prepared for college. Those who were prepared for college, however, still faced the same discrimination and segregation. White colleges refused to admit qualified Black applicants solely based on their race. As a result, Black students used the legal system to ensure their right to a quality education.

After several Supreme Court decisions that alluded to overturning the "separate but equal" doctrine, the Supreme Court finally ruled segregation practices as unconstitutional in *Brown v. Board* (1954), thus mandating the elimination of inherently unequal education systems. Though segregation was declared illegal, colleges were reluctant to comply with court rulings, especially in the South. When Black students applying to the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi used the legal system to force the historically White colleges to admit Black students, southern communities were appalled. Protests turned into riots, and the violence made the national news for people across the country to view. Clearly,

desegregation of southern universities was volatile. Unlike other sister institutions, however, Auburn University did not experience riots when it desegregated. The research question guiding this project is why is the desegregation of Auburn University less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this?

This chapter has illustrated the context surrounding Harold Franklin's admission to Auburn University. The historical discrimination, legal rulings, and social unease allow for a greater understanding of what occurred at Auburn. The next chapter will establish the theoretical contexts for understanding Auburn's experience, as well as explain the methodology for this project.

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[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

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[6] Desmond King, *Separate and Unequal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). (Hereafter cited as King).

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[10] Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*; Klarman, *From Jim Crow To Civil Rights*.

[11] Klarman, *From Jim Crow To Civil Rights*. The two states that barred school segregation were Louisiana and South Carolina.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Samuel L. Meyers, Sr., "Black Colleges From Prohibition, Encouragement and Segregation to Desegregation and Enhancement and Integration," in *Desegregation in Higher Education,* ed. Samuel L. Meyers, Sr. (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1989). (Hereafter cited as Meyers).

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[22] Ibid.
[23] Meyers, "Black Colleges From Prohibition, Encouragement and Segregation to Desegregation and Enhancement and Integration."
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[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid, 375.
[33] Diane McWhorter, *Carry Me Home* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001). (Hereafter cited as McWhorter).
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Tom Lankford, "Mob terror hits city on Mothers Day," *Birmingham News*, 15 May 1961, sec. A, p. 1,4. (Hereafter cited as Lankford).
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[40] Lankford, "Mob terror hits city on Mothers Day."
[41] McWhorter, *Carry Me Home*.
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[43] McWhorter, *Carry Me Home*.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] "City pledges all-out hunt for bomber," *Birmingham News*, 16 September 1963, sec. A, P. 1,5; Diane McWhorter, *Carry Me Home* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001).
[48] Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada 205 US 337, 1938
[49] Sweatt v. Painter 339 US 629, (1950)
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[51] Franklin v. Parker 223 F. Supp. 724, 1963
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III. THEORETICAL CONTEXT

In 1963, when Harold Franklin first applied to Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama, the South was experiencing turmoil as a result of the Civil Rights Movement. Discriminatory practices were ingrained in society and many southerners resented efforts to end the decades of discrimination. Colleges and universities became sites of protests and violence after being court-ordered to desegregate. As a result of the fierce opposition by university officials as well as the surrounding community members, the media served as witnesses to the chaos by reporting the resistance and anger to the rest of the nation and world. The media were a constant presence at the schools during the integration of many southern colleges. While the visual messages the media transmitted were dramatic and controversial, little attention was paid to their activities, despite the fact that their presence may have influenced the events that took place. Although the same attitudes toward desegregation were still prevalent in the Auburn community, the school did not face the same violence that plagued other universities. Why is the desegregation of Auburn University less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this?

This research question is partly explained through the use of communication theory. This chapter therefore focuses on providing a theoretical foundation for interpreting Auburn University's desegregation attempt in 1964. Theories play a crucial role in interpreting information around us and provide a "conceptual representation or

explanation of" an event.[1] Thus, when events take place, we use theories to help us interpret what we experience. Moreover, Infante, Rancer, and Womack assert that theories function to describe, to explain, to predict, or to control.[2] For the purpose of this project, theory describes and explains what occurred during integration at Auburn University.

In order to gain a more complete understanding of the events surrounding desegregation at Auburn University in 1964, I will utilize two communication theories: the Westley-MacLean model of mass communication and boundary spanning theory. The Westley-MacLean model explains the process through which events are communicated to the public through advocates and the media. Additionally, boundary spanning theory explains an organizational member's attempt to manage the organization's environment by acquiring and processing information and representing the organization externally, which can be especially useful in conflict situations. Although the Westley-MacLean model developed out of mass communication research and boundary spanning grew from organization communication, these two communication theories share a common element in their explanations of the flow of information about an organization to the media. Because Auburn University was interested in protecting the school's image and reputation during its desegregation attempt, the Westley-MacLean model and boundary spanning account for how the organization tried to present a specific image to its public. Both theories will help answer my research question. These two theories, therefore, create a foundation for understanding exactly what happened when Auburn desegregated in 1964 as well as what set it apart from other southern colleges during the same time period.

Westley-MacLean Model

The Westley-MacLean model of communication provides a deeper understanding of Auburn's desegregation because it explains the different elements involved in a message communicated about an event through individuals or groups to the mass media to an audience.[3] Hence, because my research seeks to answer why Auburn's desegregation attempt is less well-known than other major southern universities and the role the media played, this model is an important tool for interpreting the event at Auburn. Moreover, the Westley-MacLean model provides a broad description of the mass communication process that can be applied to this research. The model therefore explains how information about a specific object or event is transmitted to a public, focusing on the role of advocates and the media in this process [see Appendix 1].

Every day many events take place and objects exist that represent sources of information. These objects of orientation, which the Westley-MacLean model refers to as Xs, compete with each other for attention and may consist of a variety of incidences. For example, at the same time that a corporate scandal (X_1) occurs, a war overseas (X_2) may also occur. Moreover, while X_1 and X_2 happen, a hurricane (X_3) and an art exhibit (X_4) may also compete with the other events at the same time. Thus, each event or object (X) concurrently transmits messages that compete with each other for attention in the same environment. As these events and objects occur, each X has stimulus qualities that can be responded to by advocates, the media, and the public, and messages are transmitted about the events or objects.

Messages transmitted from an event or object (X) may be received by an advocate (A), which can be an individual, organization, or social system [see Appendix 1]. As a

variety of messages about different events or objects are transmitted, the advocate, or communicator, has a vested interest in selecting and transmitting particular messages about an event or object (X). Consequently, the advocate seeks information from the event or object to protect her or his needs and therefore benefits in some way by controlling what type of information is transmitted about the event. Moreover, as the number of other advocates competing to receive information from the same event or object decreases, the amount of control an advocate has over the public's perception of the event or object increases. Thus, the more an advocate controls the flow of information about an event or object, the more power s/he has over the way people will interpret the event or object. For instance, if the president of the corporation undergoing a scandal limits the amount of information available to other potential advocates, then the president has control over how the corporation will be perceived because her/his messages will be the only messages being transmitted. The advocate therefore plays an integral role in shaping the public's perceptions of events or objects in its sensory field.

After information has been gathered from an event or object, the advocate adapts the information to fit her or his interests. Thus, the advocate may occupy a powerful position by framing and dispensing information about an object or event, benefiting the advocate's needs. For example, during a corporate scandal, the president of the organization may act as an advocate (A) and select information from the scandal (X_1), which will then be shaped for transmission (X'). In particular, the advocate may learn about the scandal from inside the company and then attempt to restore the organization's image by adapting the message from the event (X_1). The president occupying the advocacy role (A) may choose to downplay the significance of the scandal (X_1) by

changing a message received from the event (X_1) and emphasizing the positive aspects of the organization. Once the message is adapted to fit the president's interest, the new message that frames the organization positively (X') can be transmitted. It is important to note that because this message (X') about the event or object (X_1) is framed by the advocate (A), it is a different message than that which was originally transmitted from the event or object (X_1). Therefore, the advocate (A) hopes to influence the public's need satisfactions or offer solutions to problems by altering the message to fit the needs of the organization.

In addition to the advocate, the medium (C) seeks information from objects or events in its environment [see Appendix 1]. Messages may come directly from an event or object to the medium, or they may flow through an advocate who has a particular message about a particular event or object that s/he wishes to transmit to a public. When the advocate (A) seeks to transmit the framed message (X'), the advocate must do so through a channel or medium (C), such as the television or newspaper. Enlisting the assistance of a medium (C) may provide the advocate (A) with more power because the medium has the potential to send a message to a large audience. The medium therefore becomes a tool for an advocate to control the flow of information from an event to the public. If the president (A) of the corporation involved with scandal wants to shape the public's perception of the event, s/he must send the message from the scandal that has been adapted to fit her or his interests to the medium, such as a television station, so the medium may transmit the message to the public.

As the advocate sends a message (X') to the medium, the medium receives messages from other advocates about different events as well as from different advocates

about the same event. For example, a television station may receive information about a corporate scandal (X_1), a war overseas (X_2), a hurricane (X_3), or an art exhibit (X_4) while also receiving messages from other advocates like the government, disgruntled employees, and/or presidents of businesses that work with the corporation about the corporate scandal (X1). As the medium (C) receives various messages about events or objects, it chooses which messages to transmit and therefore acts as a gatekeeper. For instance, the television station receiving the variety of information may choose to transmit messages about the corporate scandal and the art exhibit, leaving out any report on the war overseas or the hurricane. In addition, the television station may then choose to transmit information from the president of the corporation as well as the government while excluding information from the other advocates. As a gatekeeper, the medium (C) controls which information is or is not transmitted, thus influencing how an object or event (X) is perceived.

Moreover, the medium does not simply retransmit messages received from various advocates. Because the medium (C) acts an agent for the public, it must frame messages to reflect the interests of the public. The channel (C) may therefore take the message (X') from an advocate and reshape the message (X'') to be transmitted. Thus, the medium not only selects which messages will be transmitted, but the selected messages may then be reframed. Additionally, the message that is transmitted from the medium has therefore been altered by both the advocate and the medium, reflecting the different interests of each role.

When the medium (C) seeks information from its environment, the messages may be either purposive or non-purposive. The act of receiving information directly from an

advocate (A) represents a purposive message where the advocate (A) acquires information from an event or object (X_{1a}) and purposely transmits an altered message (X') to a medium (C) in an attempt to intentionally modify the receiver's perception of the event or object. During this process, the medium thus receives and accepts information (X') from the advocate (A), shapes it to fit the receiver's information needs, and sends the message (X") to the public. Depending on the power of the advocate to control outgoing information about an event, the medium may receive information directly from an object or event (X_{1b}) [see Appendix 1]. When this occurs, the message transmitted by the medium has not been framed by the advocate; rather, the medium (C) alone shapes the message. For example, a television reporter may go directly to the organization experiencing the corporate scandal and actively seek information about the event, framing the message before it is transmitted, rather than seeking information from the president of the corporation (A). The medium (C) thus transmits a non-purposive message (X_{1b}) directly to the receiver without receiving messages from an advocate (A) and therefore lacks the intent of the advocate (A) to influence the public.[4]

All of the events that compete for attention occur within the sensory field of a receiver (B) [see Appendix 1]. Sometimes the receiver may receive information about an event or object directly from that event or object if it is in her or his immediate sensory field. For example, an employee of the organization involved in the scandal may attain firsthand information (X_{1b}) directly from the event. The employee, however, may not be able to receive information directly from the corporation. As a result, the receiver (B) relies on the medium (C) to extend her or his environment. For instance, the employee (B) may watch news on the television (C) about the scandal for information. The

receiver (B) may therefore rely on the medium (C) for messages about events or objects that are outside of her or his immediate sensory field.

Because a medium (C) competes with other media for the attention of the public (B), it must choose messages that satisfy the public's (B) needs or interests. When the receiver is bombarded by the variety of events that take place within her or his environment and a particular medium (C) has previously satisfied her or his needs for information, the receiver (B) will continue to seek information about an event from that particular medium. Consequently, the medium must fulfill several requirements. First, the medium (C) must select messages about an event or object (X_1) that may come directly from the object or event (X_{1c}) or directly from the advocate (X_{1a}) and are appropriate to the public's need satisfactions or problem solutions. The role of adapting the information to a particular public is important for a medium because it competes with other media for the receiver's attention. Second, the medium must transform the concepts or ideas into symbols that create shared meaning between the public and the media. During this process, the medium encodes the information it has gathered into a message to be transmitted. Finally, the medium must transmit the symbols through a channel to the public. Thus, media act as agents of the receiver (B) by deciding which information is important for the receiver to hear while also acting to extend the receiver's environment.

Once the message (X_{1a}, X_{1c}, or X_{1b}) has been received by B, feedback occurs at several points and generally originates from the receiver [see Appendix 1]. Feedback originates from the receiver (B) or medium (C) but never the event or object (X) or the advocate (A). Since the medium (C) constantly competes with other media for the

attention of the receiver (B), feedback flowing from the receiver to the medium (f_{BC}) is especially important. Thus, the medium must know about changes in the receiver's attitudes, behaviors, and/or beliefs in order to successfully create messages that represent the receiver's interests and needs. Additionally, the advocate (A) is interested in feedback from the receiver (f_{BA}) and may use public opinion polls and market research to determine the effects of the messages transmitted to the receiver. Finally, the medium may also send feedback to the advocate (f_{CA}). Feedback therefore plays an important role in the communication process.

Moreover, feedback occurs through purposive and non-purposive messages. Purposive feedback is made by the receiver (B) or medium (C) with intent. For example, the receiver may send a letter to the television station about its coverage of a corporate scandal, or a medium might tell the advocate that it will no longer transmit information from that source. Non-purposive feedback, on the other hand, occurs when the public (B) or medium (C) unintentionally leave feedback. For instance, a receiver (B) leaving non-purposive feedback may change the television station when it transmits messages about the scandal, which is tracked through a ratings service, or a receiver (B) may attend a public forum advertised by the television station about the corporate scandal where the receiver unknowingly becomes part of the advocate's market research on public opinion about the event. The medium (C) may also leave non-purposive feedback by choosing to transmit messages originating from some advocates over messages from other advocates. Thus, the Westley-MacLean model illustrates how messages from an event or object (X_1) flow to an advocate (A) where the messages are framed (X') to benefit the advocate. The modified message (X') is then sent to a medium (C) where the message may be again

modified (X") to fit the medium's interest. Finally, once the medium (C) transmits the message (X") to the receiver (B), feedback occurs (f_{bc}, f_{ba}, or f_{ca}), completing the model of communication.

The Westley-MacLean model is useful because it includes various characteristics that provide insights into how media representations of events are influenced. Because we seek information from the media and they become gatekeepers of the information we receive, the media play an important role in the communication process. Moreover, the model emphasizes the role of an advocate in providing the information to the media that will be transmitted to the public. Thus, the Westley-MacLean model provides a tool for understanding how information flowed from the event of desegregation through an advocate, the media, and finally to the public, thus explaining some of the influences surrounding the integration process at Auburn University. Specifically, it provides a framework for answering the research question, why is the desegregation of Auburn University less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this? In addition to this model, the theory of boundary spanning provides a deeper understanding of how officials at the university responded to and dealt with desegregating the school in the midst of several other similarly situated schools that resulted in destructive integration attempts.

Boundary Spanning Theory

Auburn University functions as an organization, therefore, boundary spanning is a useful theory for understanding the school's desegregation attempt. This theory focuses on how authorities and members of organizations span organizational boundaries to respond to crises as environments become increasingly turbulent and complex.[5] Thus,

boundary spanners link an organization to its environment as they process information and represent the organization externally. As a result, boundary spanners buffer, moderate, or influence the environment.

Aldrich defines organizations as "goal-directed, boundary-maintaining, activity systems."[6] They are goal-directed because members of organizations engage in activities aimed toward some common purpose. As a result, workers engage in task-oriented behavior at least part of the time and therefore do not engage solely in social interaction. Goals within an organization may be contradictory, but a unity of purpose is still evident. Furthermore, organizations are boundary-maintaining because they establish distinctions between members and non-members. This process of maintaining boundaries becomes blurred during power changes in an organization with respect to its population and visible when the process becomes rigorously tested. Finally, organizations are defined as activity systems since they consist of divisions of labor that work together simultaneously. Role differentiation and specialization of function structure how organizations process raw materials or people. Thus, organizations are organized based on differing roles and functions.

Organizations consist of boundaries, authorities, and members.[7] Boundaries emerge as the organization admits some people while excluding others. Moreover, boundaries are distinctions affected by the degree of membership made between members and non-members of the organization. Therefore, organizations create boundaries by designating members and non-members. Authorities are people within an organization that apply organizational rules and decide which people are allowed to enter and which people will be expelled. Hence, power and authority are important aspects

concerning the maintenance of organizational boundaries. A member can then be defined as a person within the organization whose "entry and exit from the organization is controlled by the authorities of the organization."[8]

All organizations have some boundary spanning roles, which may be the organization's head, a few roles, or an elaborate set of roles.[9] Hence, a boundary spanning role may be a part-time activity or a full-time position. An organization's size also influences the number of formally designated boundary spanning roles.[10] Smaller organizations are only slightly formalized and therefore more able to adapt to a changing environment. As a result, small organizations use relatively few differentiated functions and roles. When organizations and their environmental complexity increase, organizations must rely more on differentiated boundary spanning roles.[11]

Additionally, differing technologies within an organization along with environmental pressures create different patterns of organization-environment interaction and role differentiation.[12] Thompson identifies three varieties of technology that are widespread in society and are sufficiently different from each other: long-linked, mediating, and intensive technologies.[13] First, long-linked technology involves repetitive and constant production as in a mass production assembly line.[14] Organizations with this technology seek to buffer roles from the environment and therefore have a lower proportion of boundary spanning roles.[15] Because the roles associated with this technology are interdependent, many boundary roles exist internally within an organization rather than externally linking the organization to its environment. Second, mediating technology links clients or customers who are or want to be interdependent,[16] such as banks, insurance companies, post offices, or schools.[17] Organizations with this

technology have the highest proportion of boundary roles because members must process and monitor the environment to provide information to the organization and other clients.[18] Finally, intensive technology represents a custom technology whereby a combination of techniques is needed to create change in a particular object.[19] For example, hospitals treat patients on an individual basis depending on the state of the patient.[20] Similarly, when constructing a house, the particular combination of building depends on a variety factors.[21] Consequently, organizations with intensive technology also buffer their roles from the environment because they temporarily draw the object or client into the organization where a temporary organizational role is assigned, thus "placing an almost impenetrable boundary around clients."[22]

Moreover, environmental pressures lead to role differentiation in organizations once technology is taken into account.[23] Four aspects affect role differentiation: the concentration of environmental elements, the heterogeneity or homogeneity of the environment, the degree of stability or instability in the environment, and the extent to which the environment is lean or rich in resources. When environmental components are concentrated or organized, an organization may react with a matching response. For instance, consumer, ecology, and other movements have pressured corporations into creating public relations units to deal with these groups. Consequently, organizations with concentrated environments have more boundary spanning roles than organizations where the environments are dispersed.[24] Moreover, organizations will create more boundary spanning roles for a heterogeneous environment than a homogenous environment. This results as an organization attempts to recognize and distinguish

homogenous segments and create units to address each.[25] For example, universities segment students based on undergraduate and graduate divisions.[26]

Furthermore, organizations in stable environments have fewer boundary spanning roles than organizations in unstable environments, depending on whether change occurs at a constant or variable rate.[27] When change consistently varies, organizations need information from the environment and therefore have more boundary spanning roles than when change is constant. Also, stable environments lead to routinized boundary spanning roles that are governed by rules while unstable environments produce flexible boundary spanning roles.[28] Lastly, organizations in environments with rich resources have fewer boundary spanning roles than those in lean environments because a "resource cushion" accumulates and environmental searching and monitoring is less critical.[29] Conversely, organizations in lean environments have a higher proportion of boundary spanning roles because they become less rich in information and therefore need to span boundaries to make use of the small amount of information available.[30] Additionally, boundary spanning roles become formalized within organizations depending upon whether an organization recognizes crucial environmental contingencies. Furthermore, the more critical a contingency, the more attention and boundary roles an organization will give to it.[31] For example, boards of directors may serve as a buffer between the organization members and the public.

Routinization of boundary spanning roles occurs from the need to adapt to environmental constraints and contingencies as well as the need to control the behavior or potentially deviant members.[32] Roles become routinized when standard operating procedures are used, thus increasing the organization's efficiency in handling large

numbers of repetitive interactions as well as in handling human relationships. In addition, routinization acts as a social control function by protecting the organization against "attitudes and behaviors that are not consistent with organizational objectives."[33] Consequently, when work is highly repetitive, has predictable outcomes, is homogenous and stable, and depends on controlling the behavior of the members, the boundary spanning role will be more routinized.

Boundary spanners can occupy powerful roles within an organization. Incoming information is processed by a boundary spanner and is difficult for non-boundary spanners to verify.[34] Thus, the boundary spanner becomes a gatekeeper as the organization relies on her or his discretion. Similarly, boundary spanners occupy powerful positions when target publics depend exclusively on the boundary spanner for information.[35] Additionally, power is enhanced when the boundary spanner's role is difficult to routinize since it limits others from being able to easily become a boundary spanner.[36]

Member compliance is essential during conflict, and there are two strategies for gaining this compliance, expanding or constricting boundaries.[37] Constricting a boundary involves asking more of members through conformity, which strengthens the requirements of participation. If internal conflicts are resolved, this strategy allows the organization to bond together against an external threat. Expanding a boundary involves absorbing, co-opting, or amalgamating challenging groups and organizations into the organizational boundaries. Additionally, an organization's control structure determines which strategy will be employed. Member compliance can be achieved through normative, utilitarian, or coercive control.[38] Appealing to members' beliefs and values,

normative control structures use solidary incentives, intangible rewards that result from associating with others, and purposive incentives, intangible rewards that result from a sense of satisfaction in working for a worthy cause, to gain compliance. Utilitarian control structures gain compliance by offering material incentives, such as money, and material possessions. Coercive control structures offer negative incentives and are not generally entered by choice.[39]

According to Aldrich, boundary spanners serve two main functions within an organization.[40] First, they serve an information processing function whereby they determine which information passes to the organization.[41] Because boundary spanners are exposed to large amounts of information, they must choose the relevant information to prevent information overload within the organization. Thus, boundary spanning personnel both filter and facilitate the flow of information. Important information is then channeled through the organization to its relevant parts.[42] Boundary spanners also scan the environment for new technologies and developments to bring into the organization to adapt to a changing environment.

Second, boundary spanners must represent the organization externally within its environment.[43] External representation of an organization refers to its response to environmental influence, and can function to maintain an organization's image and/or to enhance the organization's social legitimacy through direct persuasion to influence target publics. Hence, boundary roles of this nature may involve "resource acquisition and disposal, political legitimacy and hegemony, and social legitimacy and organizational image management."[44] Boundary spanners involved with resource acquisition and disposal face a one-sided flow of information from the authority to the boundary

spanner.[45] Boundary spanning personnel concerned with maintaining or improving the political legitimacy or hegemony of the organization both represent the organization as well as mediate between the organization and other important organizations. When boundary spanners help maintain the legitimacy of the organization, they provide information to client groups that has been specifically adapted for each client.[46] This process focuses less on mediating between organizations and more on attempting to make the organization visible, often through advertising and public relations efforts. Boards of directors and public advisory committees also serve this function by including members of target groups who come in contact with other members of that group.[47]

Similarly, Adams identified five classes of boundary spanning activities. First, boundary spanners transact the acquisition of organizational inputs and the disposal of outputs through negotiating or bargaining with constituents. This dual role involves understanding the norms and values of the organization as well as the constituent and has the tendency to result in distrust of the boundary spanner. The second activity of boundary spanners is filtering inputs and outputs. During this activity, boundary spanners do not engage in negotiation; rather, they sort inputs and outputs based on criteria set by the organization. Third, boundary spanners search for and collect information. Information is crucial to an organization's ability to adapt to a changing environment. Consequently, boundary spanners seek external information that can come in two forms. One type is relatively focused information, also called "operating information," that is needed for current policy- or decision-making having short- and long-term effects on the organization. The other type of information concerns

"*unpredictable* events which *might* occur and *might* have relevance for the organization if they occurred."[48]

The fourth activity of boundary spanners identified by Adams is the same as the second activity identified by Aldrich; boundary spanners represent the organization to its external environments. The boundary spanner selectively transmits information about the organization to other organizations, groups, and individuals to generate social support and to legitimize the organization. This process includes impression management, public relations, advertising, etc. Finally, boundary spanners protect the organization and maintain a buffer from external threat and pressure.[49] Many groups or movements organize to persuade organizations to adopt new or modify existing practices or policies as the result of "changes in norms, values, mores, political ideology, beliefs, and customs in the social and political environments of organizations."[50] As a result, public relations personnel or organization spokespersons act as buffers by absorbing external pressures on behalf of the organization.

Boundary spanning therefore provides a theoretical framework for interpreting Auburn University's desegregation attempt. Moreover, the theory serves as a tool for providing answers to my research question. Why is desegregation at Auburn less well known than at other major southern universities, and what role did the media play? Boundary spanning explains actions taken by the university in response to the crisis faced by the school. Additionally, the Westley-MacLean model further illuminates the communication process by focusing on the flow of information through the media. The previous section explored communication theory to provide a basis for understanding

desegregation at Auburn. Next I will explain my methods in conducting research and discuss the sources I consulted that offered more insight into the event.

Method

While the previous section examined two communication theories that will help understand Auburn University's desegregation attempt in 1964, this section defines the methods I will use to explore my research question, why is the desegregation of Auburn University less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this? First, I will explain which method I chose as well as the specific aspects that define the method. Second, I will explain which sources form the basis of this project. This section therefore focuses on how and why I gathered evidence in the process of writing this thesis.

Communication History

I approach this research project from a historical perspective because this project is a "form of inquiry into the past that asks questions about the things people have done and elicits answers based on evidence,"[51] concentrating on the communication aspects apparent in the history. Moreover, histories involve three main aspects: evidence, interpretation, and narrative. Evidence involves collecting information that results in "an account of what real people in the past did or failed to do," which must be as accurate as possible.[52] In order to provide an accurate explanation of an event, a history seeks information largely from primary sources, which are sources nearest to the subject of investigation, because using texts written contemporary to the event gives the history authority.[53] Primary sources include memos, diaries, speeches, and other materials that originate from the source. Secondary sources, which are about primary sources, are

useful, but are an interpretation of primary sources, and, in historical research, a "basic maxim is that the scholar must ground the study on primary sources."[54] Furthermore, because a history must be as accurate as possible, the researcher must engage in evaluating the evidence, which can occur through external and internal criticism. External criticism involves determining if documents are genuine, and internal criticism involves establishing if documents are plausible and trustworthy. Questioning sources thus ensures that the history will be a precise and accurate representation of the object being studied.

In addition to collecting and evaluating sources, a historian must interpret the information collected.[55] Finding answers to the "who, what, when, where, and why questions" organizes information and creates a foundation for analyzing gathered data.[56] Events are complex and involve many factors that may not be readily apparent, and focusing on answering these questions helps the researcher concentrate on the important aspects of the research.[57] Moreover, interpretation often involves making inferences from evidence to tell a story of the past. Thus, rather than passively reading sources, a historian actively seeks to fill in gaps that may arise when "documents are missing, prove not every helpful, or seem to be inconsistent" as well as interpret information they have gathered.[58]

Once sources have been gathered, organized, evaluated, and interpreted, the material must be synthesized into a narrative form to tell the story.[59] A historian must not merely list details and data; rather, the history must relate past events based on a current interpretation. The historical narrative moves beyond simple narration, however, as it involves analysis, questioning, and generalization and is therefore an interpretive

narrative.[60] Creating a historical narrative also involves identifying patterns by finding the logical ways that the evidence fits together. In addition to pattern-making, a history must revolve around one central theme and exhibit coherent unity so the narrative easily flows for the reader.[61] Furthermore, narrative involves description, storytelling, exposition, and argument. Descriptions rely on sensory experiences and must "fall into familiar and accepted patterns of thought in an attempt to invoke what your reader might expect."[62] When telling a story, the historian establishes tension and then focuses on resolving or explaining that tension, with a climax where the details all come together. Exposition involves analyzing and explaining to make a text more clear as well as making inferences to make sense of things.[63] Finally, the use of argument allows the researcher to take a position on a controversial topic through research, weighing evidence, and making judgments.

The historical methodology is important for many reasons. First, histories provide an understanding of historical causes that lead to social change.[64] My thesis focuses on a major point of social change by examining desegregation at Auburn University. Because many of the key figures in the integration process are not alive, much of the information about desegregation must come from historical evidence, such as archival material and newspaper accounts. Also, a history of desegregation conducted 40 years later is free of many of the political and social pressures that existed during the actual time of integration. Second, histories also depict the failures of a community, such as losers of wars or disagreements, aborted political movements or events that should have occurred but did not.[65] Violent desegregation attempts were considered the standard occurrences in the South, but some schools achieved nonviolent segregation and received

far less attention. Because of this lack of attention, little is known about Auburn's desegregation attempt. The historical methodology becomes an important tool for analyzing why Auburn did not meet the same resistance as the other southern schools. Third, local history writing remains mainstream longer than any other types of histories.[66] Relating the events at Auburn University through a local history will provide memorable insight into Auburn's desegregation attempt. These important aspects of using the historical method explain its use in my thesis.

Furthermore, a communication history is appropriate for my research because communication is so intertwined with the context of modern society that the two cannot be isolated from each other.[67] Media may influence public opinion and play an important role in political issues. This "fact of interaction between media and society" forms the basis of a communication history.[68] The scope of this method includes anything related to the news of the past, such as content, audience, control, publicity, propaganda, censorship, public opinion, and civil liberties. A communication history, then, encompasses both how people communicated and how communication interacted with society during that time period. Because of the emphasis and importance of various aspects of the media, this methodology is important in my research.

The goal of any history is to relate the past through using language from the present.[69] In order to do this, the researcher must seek an abundance of information since contextualization is the basis of historical understanding.[70] So, the historian must synthesize information to create a way of weaving the past together to form a coherent story.[71] My thesis, then, will consist of a thorough review of a variety of primary sources

to fully understand desegregation at Auburn. I will then piece together the information and create a detailed picture of Auburn University's attempt to integrate.

Additionally, a more complete picture of the event at Auburn University can be drawn using theory as a framework. Other southern colleges desegregating in the same time period as Auburn faced violence and mobs as the media broadcast the event to the world, but Auburn did not have the same experience during its desegregation attempt. This project uses the Westley-MacLean model of communication to explain what happened by focusing on how president Draughon took on an advocacy role during desegregation. Moreover, Draughon focused on messages from the event and adapting them to preserve the image of the university. He controlled the flow of messages from the event to the media, thus controlling the media's access to information. Thus, although the role of the public is important in understanding Auburn's desegregation attempt, this thesis focuses mainly on the flow of information from the event to president Draughon, and ultimately to the media. Boundary spanning further explains Draughon's behavior in restricting media access to information and the university. In order to control the campus during integration, president Draughon spanned the boundaries of the university, seeking information from the environment, and provided the media with information to transmit to the public. Both theories therefore provide a foundation for understanding why the desegregation of Auburn University was less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this.

Sources

This section focuses on the sources that serve as the basis of my thesis and how they are important in an effort to explain why I used certain sources. Because this project

is historical, primary sources form the foundation of the research due to their proximity to the source. Moreover, sources fall into one of eight general categories: original written records, published personal records, published official documents, secondary written sources, statistical sources, oral sources, pictorial sources, or physical remains.[72] Most of the sources used in this thesis include original written records located in various areas within the archives at Auburn University. Studying these records makes it possible to uncover "many nuances of understanding about its author as a real person" as well as to see an individual item in relation to nearby remaining records.[73] Furthermore, archival records are "prime original sources" for examination and therefore comprise the major of the sources used in this project.[74]

The first document consulted for this thesis was an article written about desegregation at Auburn. Though it does not focus specifically on the media's role during Auburn's desegregation attempt, Olliff's article chronicles the historical context of segregation in the South as well as exposes White southerners' attitudes towards Black people.[75] Furthermore, it specifically examines Draughon's attitude towards and role during Auburn's desegregation. The article mainly served as a resource for finding information about Auburn's desegregation attempt.

My initial research stemmed from several of the sources used in the article found in Auburn's RBD Library. An examination of three archived record groups comprise a large area of research: the Ralph B. Draughon presidential papers, the Joseph B. Sarver papers, and the Board of Trustees collection. Documents located in the Ralph B. Draughon presidential papers collection offer insights into the actions of the administration as well as information about Black applicants and how their admissions

applications were handled.[76] The civil rights folder encompassing 1951 to 1953 includes letters and documents to and from Draughon expressing concern over the impending *Brown v. Board* decision by the Supreme Court that threatened to end segregation. Furthermore, the civil rights folder from 1954 to 59 illustrates the university's attempts to assist Black colleges through the Educational Institute on Race Relations while avoiding desegregation at Auburn University. Additionally, this folder provides part of the historical context through a written transcript of a speech given by Hugh G. Grant in opposition to desegregation.

The papers of Joseph B. Sarver, director of the Development Office during integration, also provide a more comprehensive glimpse into the policies of the Auburn administration towards desegregation.[77] File folder 23 in box one provides minutes to a board meeting in which the board discussed their reactions to the problems with integration at the University of Mississippi and their plans for dealing with a qualified Black applicant. Moreover, this folder contains minutes to another board meeting that discusses the board members' attitudes towards desegregation and their plans to control the event. File folder 24 provides the university's plan to meet with students to discuss the upcoming integration and the students' role during the attempt.

The Board of Trustees archives indicate the university's response to and planning of integration.[78] Folders containing materials from several board meetings provided minutes, correspondence between university officials, and newspaper clippings concerning Auburn's integration efforts. The folder with materials from the Board of Trustees Meeting on September 23, 1957 includes information about Auburn's tenure policy in response to a professor who spoke in favor of integration and was subsequently

fired. The folder with materials from the Board of Trustees Meeting on November 16, 1963 contains documents pertaining to Harold Franklin's admission at Auburn University. This folder includes the board's statement about Harold's admission, a school meeting plan to discuss the students' responsibilities during the integration process, a letter from the student senate leader to President Draughon, a copy of the student pledge to act appropriately during integration, a letter of faculty support for the administration's decisions, and minutes from an administrative council meeting. The folder with materials from the Board of Trustees Meeting on January 16, 1964 contains a summary of Harold Franklin's activities with Auburn's specific plans to integrate, letters sent to Auburn students and parents about integration and appropriate behavior during the event, a memo explaining security operations, the policy for news media covering the event, a letter to Alabama's press secretary from Auburn's Director of University Relations, Edwin M, Crawford, ground rules for press coverage, a *This is Auburn* publication outlining the university's position and policies for desegregation, a statement from Draughon to the press about students who violated security guidelines, and a statement of thanks to the community for assisting in a peaceful integration. The folder with materials from the Board of Trustees Meeting on January 17, 1964 provides correspondence between Governor Wallace and president Draughon discussing the presence of Federal police on campus.

In addition, various newspaper sources were analyzed to determine how the presence of media might have affected the integration process at Auburn. By knowing the time of critical events, such as desegregation attempts at other schools, I was able to find information about the events. Newspaper sources consulted include *The Auburn*

Plainsman, Opelika Eagle, Mobile Register, Atlanta Journal, Birmingham News, Tuscaloosa News, Montgomery Advertiser, Birmingham Post-Herald, Jackson Daily News, Mississippian (University of Mississippi's student newspaper), *Crimson-White* (University of Alabama's student newspaper), and *Red & Black* (University of Georgia's student newspaper). I also conducted a personal interview with the editor of *The Auburn Plainsman* in 1964 when Auburn desegregated, Harry Wilkinson, to demonstrate how Draughon attempted to control and/or use the media.

Conclusion

While the previous chapter focused on the historical context surrounding Auburn University's integration attempt, this chapter focused on the theoretical foundation that will be used to understand what occurred. Specifically, I have explained the Westley-MacLean model of communication as well as the boundary spanning theory. The Westley-MacLean model explains the mass communication process by demonstrating ways in which information about an event is transmitted through advocates and the media to the public. Thus, the model assists in describing messages about desegregation were constructed by the university and the media and were sent to the community. Additionally, the boundary spanning theory further provides a context for understanding Auburn's desegregation. Boundary spanners within organizations link the organization to its environment. Hence, this theory demonstrates the process by which officials at Auburn University acted in response to desegregation. The next chapter synthesizes the sources explained in this chapter and explains the event through the theoretical framework established in this chapter to fully understand what occurred at Auburn University in 1964.

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[3] Bruce H. Westley and Malcolm S. MacLean, Jr., "A Conceptual Model For Communications Research," *Journalism Quarterly* 34 (1957): 31-38. (Hereafter cited as Westley and MacLean).

[4] Ibid.

[5] Shirley Terreberry, "The Evolution of Organizational Environments," *Administrative Science Quarterly,* 12 (1968): 590-613.

[6] Howard E. Aldrich, *Organizations & Environments* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1979), 4. (Hereafter cited as Aldrich).

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid., 222.

[9] Howard E. Aldrich and Diane Herker, "Boundary Spanning Roles and Organization Structure," *Academy of Management Review* 2 (1977): 217-230. (Hereafter cited as Aldrich and Herker).

[10] Aldrich, *Organizations & Environments*.

[11] Aldrich, *Organizations & Environments*.

[12] Aldrich and Herker, "Boundary Spanning Roles and Organization Structure."

[13] James D. Thompson, *Organizations in Action* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967). (Hereafter cited as Thompson).

[14] Ibid.

[15] Aldrich and Herker, "Boundary Spanning Roles and Organization Structure."

[16] Thompson, *Organizations in Action*.

[17] Aldrich and Herker, "Boundary Spanning Roles and Organization Structure."

[18] Ibid.

[19] Thompson, *Organizations in Action*.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Aldrich and Herker, "Boundary Spanning Roles and Organization Structure."

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Thompson, *Organizations in Action*.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Aldrich and Herker, "Boundary Spanning Roles and Organization Structure."

[28] Thompson, *Organizations in Action*.

[29] Aldrich and Herker, "Boundary Spanning Roles and Organization Structure."

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] J. Stacy Adams, "Interorganizational Processes and Organization Boundary Activities," *Research in Organizational Behavior* 2 (1980): 321-355. (Hereafter cited as Adams.)

[36] Aldrich and Herker, "Boundary Spanning Roles and Organization Structure."

[37] Aldrich, *Organizations & Environments*.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid., 252.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Adams, "Interorganizational Processes and Organization Boundary Activities."
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] James D. Startt and Wm. David Sloan. *Historical Methods in Mass Communication* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1989), 2. (Hereafter cited as Startt and Sloan).
[52] Ibid., 3.
[53] Richard Marius and Melvin E. Page, *A Short Guide to Writing About History* (New York: Longman, 2002). (Hereafter cited as Marius and Page).
[54] Startt and Sloan. *Historical Methods in Mass Communication*, 114.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Marius and Page, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid., 49.
[59] Startt and Sloan. *Historical Methods in Mass Communication*.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Marius and Page, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*, 64.
[63] Ibid..
[64] Michael Kammen, *Selvages and Biases: The Fabric of History in American Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Startt and Sloan, *Historical Methods in Mass Communication*.
[68] Ibid., 18.
[69] Marius and Page, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*.
[70] Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *Beyond the Great Story: History as Text and Discourse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).
[71] Marius and Page, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*.
[72] Startt and Sloan, *Historical Methods in Mass Communication*.
[73] Ibid., 123.
[74] Ibid., 124.
[75] Martin T. Olliff, "'Just Another Day on the Plains': The Desegregation of Auburn University," *The Alabama Review,* 54 (2001).
[76] Record Group 533
[77] Record Group 379
[78] Record Group 521

IV. FAILURE OR SUCCESS?

Anti-integration sentiment dominated the attitudes of many southerners despite the Supreme Court's 1954 abolition of the "separate but equal" doctrine that established segregation. As desegregation became inevitable, however, Auburn's president Ralph B. Draughon constructed a plan to lead the university through a major change that was unwanted by many students and others in the community. Though he looked to other schools for information on how to deal with the situation, Auburn University did not fall victim to the same anger and protests that occurred at the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi just months before during each school's segregation attempt. Why is the desegregation of Auburn University less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this? This chapter provides answers to this research question by detailing what occurred during Auburn University's desegregation attempt.

As the head of Auburn University, President Draughon was responsible for leading the university through any obstacles that arose. Because the Supreme Court slowly reversed but had not yet overturned its *Plessy* v. *Ferguson* decision that established segregation in 1898, Draughon anticipated desegregation in 1953 just before the Supreme Court overturned the "separate but equal" doctrine. The university, firmly against integration, spoke out against the possible decision and made sure that when Auburn Professor Bud Hutchinson publicly supported integration in 1957 and when

Plainsman staff members spoke in favor of integration in 1961 and 1962, they were punished as an example so people would avoid discussing the issue altogether at Auburn.[1] By 1963, however, desegregation was imminent, causing Draughon to prepare for the situation. After much research and deliberation, Draughon created a plan that involved both excluding the press at key times while accommodating reporters at other times, therefore using the media to communicate his strategy for peaceful integration to Auburn's students and the surrounding community. Consequently, when Auburn finally desegregated its campus in January 1964, it was accomplished virtually without incident. Draughon used his leadership position to guide Auburn University through one of its most trying times.

Fear and Preparation

For nearly 100 years, Auburn University, formerly known as Alabama Polytechnic Institute, practiced segregation, following the Jim Crow laws and customs that existed throughout the country and were especially entrenched in the South. Though the Supreme Court slowly reversed its "separate but equal" decision established in *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1898, it was not completely overturned until the Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. As the *Brown* case made its way to the Supreme Court in 1953, officials at Auburn University became concerned about the possible rulings in the case as well as its consequences. According to Alabama Governor Persons, the "breakdown of segregation in our public schools" represented the "one [thing] that which would most greatly affect us here in the South," and the "problem" of the Supreme Court's deliberation "is bigger than any of us."[2]

Feeling that "Alabama must be prepared" for any decision about segregation, Alabama Governor Gordon Persons saw three possible rulings in the case and expressed his concerns about the decision in a letter to Auburn University president Ralph B. Draughon on December 18, 1953.[3] First, which Gordon saw as "highly unlikely," the Supreme Court might reject the case, ruling that the federal government lacked jurisdiction.[4] Second, the Court might call for "complete abolition of segregation," an "unthinkable" outcome to Governor Persons, especially since the Supreme Court itself established segregation.[5] Finally, the Court might continue the segregation system that was in place and put a time limit in which schools must comply with the "separate but equal" doctrine.[6] President Draughon agreed with Governor Parson's thinking and offered his opinion that the possibility of abolishing segregation would be an "extreme decision on the part of the court" and could lead to a "great danger … of rash and emotional political action … which could destroy the present school system."[7] Though there was no way to know how the Supreme Court would rule, officials at Auburn University feared the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown* and prepared for possible integration.

Anticipating the Court's decision on the *Brown* case in 1953, Draughon turned to the press to communicate Auburn's position. Draughon was interviewed by the *Montgomery Advertiser*, and calling the possibility of the end of segregation "an adverse decision," Draughon explained his plan for conforming to a judgment abolishing segregation in schools.[8] As he urged "Negro leaders" to show "tact and judgment," Draughon expressed his position that "there would be no inundation of Negro students attempted" if Auburn was ordered to integrate; rather, the process of admitting Black

students would be gradual, beginning with graduate students.[9] At the same time, Governor Persons publicly stated that he would allow for a "cooling-off" period before calling the legislature back to Montgomery in an effort to remove emotions from any decisions on the subject.[10] Thus, Governor Persons and President Draughon used the media as an important channel for communicating their positions and expected actions regarding the impending legal decision. It was an effective strategy to which Draughon returned ten years later.

Additionally, Draughon wanted to demonstrate that Auburn was "genuinely interested in the improvement of the Negro Colleges in this area" and interested in providing "more adequate financial support from both public and private sources" for Black institutions.[11] But Draughon was also disinclined to allow Black students on Auburn's campus as he hoped to "maintain their separate connection and entity as Negro institutions."[12] In 1954, the Supreme Court did the "unthinkable" and overturned the "separate but equal" doctrine, but as had been demonstrated, southern colleges and universities were reluctant to comply. Until this time, Black southern colleges were often denied access to the same funding that was afforded to White colleges, rendering the Black college education system substandard. Although discrimination was institutionalized across the South, both Black and White college officials in various Alabama schools recognized the inferiority of Black colleges.

While Auburn president Draughon was "positively opposed to the movement to end segregation," he believed that "the negro schools and colleges should be adequately provided for."[13] Consequently, representatives from Black and White colleges in Alabama discussed forging close relationships with each other to deal with "the problem

of race relations" in the South, creating the Educational Institute on Race Relations for "Alabamians of both races" with the theme of "Negro Progress in Alabama and Its Effect upon Race Relations."[14] The institute discussed the conditions of Black Alabamians, how much of those conditions resulted from past progress and improvements, and how those improved conditions affected relations between Black and White Americans. Scheduled for Thursday, March 21 and Friday, April 1, 1955, the organization offered seminars on the role of church in race relations, progress in Black American health, progress of Black Americans in Alabama culture, business, and industry, Black American police and law observance, housing, Black Americans in the political process, and progress in Black American education.[15] Many Alabama institutions were in attendance, including but not limited to Auburn University, Troy State Teachers College, Alabama A & M College, Alabama State College for Negroes, Talladega College, and the Tuskegee Institute.[16] The emphasis of the institution, however, was on educating people about conditions of Black community members, not advocating integration. Thus, desegregation was an unacceptable option as White community leaders pushed to avoid the court ruling and improve Black American schools instead.

Speaking Out

Auburn's student newspaper, *The Auburn Plainsman*, became an important place for discussing desegregation soon after the *Brown* decision and became a tool for Draughon to implement his plan for handling Auburn's integration. Before desegregation became commonplace in the South, Draughon demonstrated his control over faculty and students as he dissuaded members of Auburn University from openly favoring integration. Moreover, as desegregation neared, the student publication became a place

of controversy as editors used the editorial pages to communicate messages about both sides of the issue. Although attitudes toward integration were slowly changing, the prevailing attitude in Alabama was by no means tolerant of the idea. Because of the emotion involved with the issue, Draughon thought it best to remove the issue from the student publication, and he used his power to censure and censor *The Plainsman* for running articles advocating either side of the issue. After creating new policy for the newspaper and demonstrating that officials would not tolerate controversial topics expressed in the publication, university officials worked with the newspaper to provide it with important information directly from the school. Hence, Draughon saw *The Auburn Plainsman* as pivotal in maintaining the school's image and keeping the peace on campus and actively worked to control the content of the school paper.

Although Draughon was interested in assisting the Black educational system to attain the "separate but equal" standard, Auburn continued to avoid integration despite the Supreme Court's *Brown* decision. In 1957, Bud Hutchinson, an Auburn Economics and Business professor, wrote a letter to the Auburn newspaper endorsing integration efforts in New York schools.[17] When the letter was published on February 20, the Auburn University community disagreed and reacted negatively to Hutchinson's views. Because of the strong anti-integration sentiment that still existed in the South three years after *Brown*, Auburn officials denied the professor tenure. President Draughon released a statement to the media declaring:

> Mr. Hutchinson expressed views which are not in keeping with the viewpoint of Alabama Polytechnic Institute on the question of segregation. In light of the tensions and emotions over this question in Alabama, I felt Mr. Hutchinson could not expect to advance his career at this institution.[18]

The denial occurred so late in the year that Hutchinson did not have an opportunity to find a job for the upcoming academic year.[19] Hutchinson was thus punished by Auburn University officials for supporting desegregation. Consequently, as one journalist asserted, Auburn made it clear that "professors must either believe in segregated schools, or keep their mouths shut, or get out."[20] Officials, however, were not the only members of the Auburn community upset by Hutchinson's endorsement of integration. Some Auburn students were upset by the professor's comments, and one scathing commentary appeared in *The Auburn Plainsman* in which the writer felt that that the actions in New York were forced upon the students and therefore unacceptable.[21]

As desegregation seemed imminent, sentiment changed in *The Auburn Plainsman* even though the majority of students opposed integrating.[22] The newspaper saw itself as a means to communicate diverse viewpoints instead of a vehicle to mirror the community's opinions and therefore began to run stories focusing on various opinions about integration.[23] As the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum, *The Plainsman* became a forum for expressing opinions on the issue. When the Freedom Riders were attacked in Alabama in 1961, the issue was forced into view in the university's newspaper.[24] In an *Auburn Plainsman* front-page article, the paper's editor, Jim Bullington, spoke out against the "white supremacist bigots" and other Alabamians who were scared of the changes that would result from integration.[25] The article called for Alabamians and Auburn students to join together and educate the public about understanding integration through "newspapers, preachers, and other leaders and citizens of good will and good sense."[26] Finally, *The Plainsman* article advocated being ready to

"weather the storm" of the "onward march of integration" and preparing for the upcoming inevitable event in Auburn, Alabama.[27]

President Draughon received numerous letters from concerned community members and alumni about Bullington's article, although the opinions about the article were mixed. One alumni member threatened to withhold a contribution to the fundraising campaign and vowed to "think a mighty long time before we support any undertaking of Auburn University."[28] Many respondents felt that Bullington's viewpoint threatened the "Southern way of life" and were "shocked" and outraged that the university allowed a student to publish material in favor of integration.[29] Others who wrote to Draughon felt that Bullington should be punished to "prevent anything like that happening again."[30] Moreover, several of these letters linked the editorial with communism, an ideology that was seen as a forceful threat at the time.[31] Other alumni, however, spoke in favor of freedom of press and Bullington's article, feeling that *The Plainsman* "has dared to depart from the longstanding tradition of repeating platitudes about the Auburn spirit to engage in worthwhile discussion about Auburn herself."[32]

Because university officials hoped to avoid controversial issues that might lead to anger on campus, Draughon did not hesitate to use his power over *The Plainsman* in response to the article. Within days of the front-page article, pressure from officials and community members as well as threats by alumni to withhold financial support forced Draughon to act.[33] In a meeting with the board of trustees on June 5, 1961, Draughon outlined his position on the school newspaper and discussed the policies regarding the student publication that were in place. First, Draughon felt that the main purpose of the university was to create a climate where students and faculty could "go about their daily

tasks in the classrooms and laboratories without disturbance."[34] Second, Draughon believed that the worst thing that could happen at the university was to make the campus a "cockpit for the extremists on both sides of the racial issue to fight in."[35] Third, Draughon made every effort to keep Auburn free of controversy because "the extremists can destroy the institution and contribute nothing to the solution of the problem."[36] Finally, Draughon wanted to balance "freedom of thought of faculty and students" with "preserving the normal functions of the University so that the student body and faculty can perform the functions they are here to perform with a minimum of disturbance."[37] Draughon therefore was not attempting to silence both sides of the issue despite being in favor of segregation; rather he wanted to avoid controversy altogether to maintain peace and decorum at Auburn University.

Draughon's fear of violence and disruption on campus were legitimate. A cross was burned in front of Bullington's dorm building after two students read the article.[38] Other students burned their copies of *The Plainsman* on campus to express their disagreement with the editor. Moreover, Bullington received phone calls from upset students who did not feel his article represented the views of the majority of students on campus. Students also felt he used his position as editor "to get off a blast that may have represented his personal feelings, but exceeded his responsibility as an editor."[39]

In response to the pressure and fear of more disruptions, Draughon took action with Bullington and created a new policy for *The Plainsman.* Draughon censured the editor and placed him on probation, explaining that his actions were "mild" because the editor was elected by the student body, but his opinions did not represent his fellow students' opinion on the issue.[40] In addition to punishing Bullington, Draughon

recommended that the "Editors of Student Publications at Auburn University be required, before publication, to advise with the Dean of Student Affairs on editorial or news items of public affairs having a bearing on the good name of Auburn University," and his statement was unanimously adopted by the board members.[41] Moreover, President Draughon even considered shutting down *The Plainsman*'s operations if editors did not avoid the issue of integration.[42] Because of its visibility within the Auburn University community, President Draughon saw *The Auburn Plainsman* as a threat to maintaining peace on campus and therefore attempted to control how integration was covered.

On May 9, 1962, *The Plainsman* published another article favoring integration, and Draughon again received varying responses from community members, which again led him to take action against Bullington as well as the writer of the article, Jim Dinsmore.[43] Describing integration as "Christian and moral," Dinsmore predicted that Auburn would be integrated in the future, a move that might "hurt us momentarily … but the final outcome will mean a better America."[44] As a result, publications of *The Auburn Plainsman* were suspended during the summer of 1962, and Bullington and Dinsmore were no longer allowed to take part in the publication.[45]

At the same time that Draughon discouraged professors, editors, and students from expressing opinions about integration in *The Plainsman*, he used the newspaper as a channel to provide information about the university's policy on integration. As Dean James E. Foy explained, Auburn University needed to

> build a *Plainsman* which will be strong, factual, and will represent Auburn in the way which *The Plainsman* has done for many, many years. The value of *The Plainsman* in the campus community cannot be overstated, and it is absolutely necessary that it reflect credit on Auburn and its student body.[46]

When Harry Wilkinson became editor of *The Plainsman* in 1963, he forged a relationship with Dr. Robert Anderson, Auburn University's vice-president. Wilkinson explained that *The Plainsman* wanted weekly news coverage from Anderson's office to "consistently have important information which your office may render."[47] Because of this relationship between the administration and the student newspaper, Draughon gained even more control of what information the newspaper reported.

Draughon attempted to restrict opinions in favor of integration in 1957 through his control of *The Auburn Plainsman*. His control extended as other schools began to desegregate, and he realized that Auburn would eventually have to follow suit. Although *The Plainsman* dedicated itself to providing opposing views on issues, especially desegregation, Draughon used his power as president to punish newspaper staff for publishing controversial articles about integration. His control was further strengthened when "certain students" were no longer associated with *The Plainsman* and a new editor formed a close relationship with the administration through which the newspaper would receive important news from Auburn officials to publish.[48] Because of its ability to impact the image and reputation of Auburn University, the student publication became an important tool for Draughon to regulate and use in an effort to maintain the school's integrity and well-being before integration began.

The Beginning of the End

Integration at other major southern universities resulted in protests and violence, thus officials at Auburn University hoped to avoid a similar situation "if Auburn University should have a qualified applicant."[49] Two key meetings occurred during which Draughon and other board members specifically discussed strategies for dealing

with integration, and officials consistently denied admission to Black students in an attempt to avoid desegregation. When Harold Franklin applied to the school and was not admitted because of his race, he sued Auburn University. As the court ruled in favor of Harold, Draughon synthesized the information he gathered and created a plan for Harold's admission that established clear rules for conduct, security plans, and an off-campus news center.

On November 9, 1962, in the first of two important meetings, Auburn's board of trustees met in the wake of the turmoil at the University of Mississippi to consider the school's options.[50] Draughon urged the board to keep the discussion quiet since a reporter already questioned him about the Black students who the reporter knew applied to the school. To keep Auburn out of the press, Draughon promised that if the reporter withheld the information, he would "give him the word when it came up."[51] Forming a mutually beneficial relationship was an important strategy in controlling the flow of information that Draughon utilized early in the process of integration.

After warning board members about speaking to the press, Draughon and the trustees discussed how they would deal with a Black applicant. Auburn could either follow "the same technique we have been following in the past ten years- avoid having an applicant who is qualified come up," or, if a qualified applicant came up, the university could "go to court and get an injunction" where desegregation would be "rammed down your throat."[52] During the meeting, board member Frank P. Samford explained that his position was to wait for a court order because while Auburn's case would be in court, "the University of Alabama's situation will have been solved and that will change things somewhat in the State of Alabama. Then, too, the Mississippi situation will have been

settled and that will change the situation somewhat too."[53] Until this point in time, Auburn had a strict policy of "avoiding and discouraging applicants wherever possible" and keeping their "heads down" and their "mouths shut" about the issue of permitting Black students at the school, and officials therefore chose to keep following this policy until the court intervened.[54] Additionally, Samford congratulated Draughon for "staying out of the papers," and the group discussed ways to avoid the problems that occurred at other schools.[55] When the topic of screening speakers visiting the campus came up, Draughon suggested that people use discretion when allowing speakers to come and that "the Plainsman is another example of what you can do with carefully waiting and seeing what can be done," implying that the newspaper could be used during desegregation.[56]

The reality of forced integration was clearly understood at Auburn University. In addition to the Supreme Court decision, the university faced losing all federal funds for agricultural extension and research and in contractual research if they continued to segregate.[57] Realizing that Auburn University would have to desegregate to continue receiving funding, President Draughon said that he would "infinitely prefer to <u>select</u> the Negro student" who would attend Auburn than be forced to admit a student "trained by NAACP or CORE."[58] Though Draughon wanted to choose a student to admit, Governor Wallace said that he would never approve of voluntarily admitting a Black student.[59] Based on his concern, Draughon left the responsibility to choose the first Black Auburn student up to Joseph Sarver, director of the Development Office, who "hand-picked" Harold Franklin as the first Black student to attend Auburn University.[60]

In November 1962, Harold Franklin joined several other Black Americans in sending requests for applications to Auburn University.[61] Harold, whose mother was a

maid and father a janitor, dropped out of high school despite participating in football, student government, and choir.[62] Upon realizing the importance of an education, he passed an equivalency exam so he could go to college and give up his insurance sales career. After receiving his Bachelor of Arts in History and Government with honors from Alabama State College in 1962, Harold sought a Masters in History from Auburn University.[63] He requested a catalog and admission forms, but his requests along with the other Black applicants' requests went unanswered. Although Auburn avoided Harold's application, Black students in similar situations at other southern schools fought through the court system to force integration on universities, therefore offering hope that Harold could attend an all-White college.

When other major southern schools began to integrate, strategy was again discussed at an informal board meeting with Governor Wallace at the State Capitol in Montgomery. As Draughon addressed the board of trustees on July 17, 1963 at the second important meeting with the board of trustees, he expressed concern over admitting a Black student and hoped the process could take place "without publicity."[64] Each of the thirteen "serious" applicants to Auburn University was never allowed to complete an application and immediately investigated by the university "without any publicity whatsoever."[65] Because of the increase in Black applications to the school, Draughon felt that the board of trustees needed to decide how to handle the situation.[66] Draughon called for an "attempt to avoid the ordering of troops and Federal Marshals" to Auburn and to avoid "the floodlights of publicity which have accompanied the admission of Negro students at other Southern institutions."[67] Moreover, Auburn's president saw the need for detailed planning and organization, setting aside all other matters and duties until the

issue of integration had been resolved.[68] Governor Wallace concluded that as long as the professors kept quiet, which he was certain they would, he would be able to keep the peace. Additionally, the board members discussed ways to handle "some of the local press problems," which they identified as *The Auburn Plainsman.*[69]

Auburn refused to admit Harold to the university, which resulted in a class action lawsuit on August 27, 1963.[70] Harold alleged that he was denied admission solely because of his race, while Auburn said he was not admitted because his undergraduate institution, Alabama State College, had lost accreditation due to lack of university funding.[71] While the case proceeded through the court system, Draughon was happy that the case received little media attention, and he hoped "to keep quiet and avoid as much publicity and sensationalism as possible."[72] This strategy differed significantly from Governor Wallace's approach to the issue of desegregation at the University of Alabama several months prior to Auburn desegregating since Wallace frequently made use of the media. In the days preceding his infamous schoolhouse stand, Wallace held several major statewide addresses and also addressed the nation during an appearance on NBC's *Meet the Press.*[73]

The U.S. District Court in Montgomery ruled in favor of Harold and ordered Auburn to allow Black students to enroll, a decision *The Auburn Plainsman* supported.[74] The newspaper asserted Auburn was in business to educate, a goal advanced through integration.[75] The article asked students to mentally prepare for desegregation and advocated full cooperation by the students. Furthermore, *The Auburn Plainsman* encouraged students to simply avoid Harold if they were against his presence at Auburn.[76] Even members of the Auburn Alumni Association Committee publicly urged

the community to support the movement.[77] The student publication served as an important outlet for communicating positive integration viewpoints in hopes of reducing some of the tension that occurred at other schools.

Fears of similar violence and outrage that occurred at other southern schools shot through Auburn as President Draughon made every attempt possible to ensure an uneventful day for the first Black student. In order to create a plan for handling integration, Auburn University officials gathered information about the way other southern universities, including the University of Mississippi, Clemson College, Georgia Tech, and the University of Alabama, dealt with the process.[78] Draughon assigned Colonel L. E. Funchess to Security, Dean James E. Foy to Student Activities, and Edwin M. Crawford to Press or Public Relations.[79]

Communication with Auburn students and the surrounding community was a vital part of Draughon's plan. On November 12, 1963, Draughon sent a letter to Auburn "colleagues and students" addressing Harold Franklin's admission.[80] Draughon explained that Auburn did not violate any statute, clearing the school of any wrongdoing. Additionally, Draughon emphasized that the primary concern of the university officials "shall be for the normal educational purposes and functions of Auburn University, for the welfare of the University Community, and for the protection of the good name of Auburn University. No action will be taken which will jeopardize these concerns."[81] Draughon further requested students and faculty to cooperate during the process.

At a meeting of Auburn University's board of trustees on November 26, the trustees

> authorized President Ralph B. Draughon to take such steps as may become necessary for the welfare of the University community, for the orderly conduct of the educational program of the University and for the protection of the good name of Auburn University.[82]

Draughon was therefore officially appointed by Auburn University officials to lead the school through integration. Consequently, preparation efforts were underway as Draughon chose his plan of action for "student control and conduct to insure the normal operation of the institution, safeguard property and lives, and to prevent disorder and confusion."[83] Although Governor Wallace would not stand in the schoolhouse door as he had done months before at the University of Alabama, he vowed that he would not furnish a bodyguard for Harold.[84] Moreover, Wallace did not want to provide federal agents to Auburn because he felt that they "encouraged demonstrations and general unrest in the State of Alabama and have endeavored to exploit their efforts through various news media."[85] Decisions about how to handle the situation were left to Draughon instead of Wallace.

The first step was to hold an unannounced meeting at the football stadium on Tuesday, December 3, 1963. Significantly, the press was excluded. Draughon's mission was to give a "brief historical background of the problem, the immediate problem, and define the situation to students and faculty" and set guidelines for appropriate behavior.[86] Though over 90% of the student body attended, the event was reportedly uneventful at Cliff Hare Stadium as there were no protests or mobs, in part because of the lack of publicity.[87] The next day, *The Auburn Plainsman* published a full text account of

Draughon's speech, a copy of the new rules and regulations drafted by Draughon and the board, and a copy of a pledge to abide by the rules that was to be signed by all students.[88]

Additionally, the December 1963 edition of *This is Auburn*, a monthly publication produced by the university, dedicated the special edition to the issue of integrating Auburn University. The publication included rules and policies, statements from Draughon and other officials about the event, and Draughon's speech from Cliff Hare Stadium. Students were advised that mobs or crowds were prohibited and firearms should be taken home over the winter break. Moreover, students wishing to serve as "reporters, stringers, photographers, or newspaper representatives for news or TV media must be properly registered with the University Relations Department," and newspapers, circulars, posters, or other unauthorized publications were not permitted on campus.[89] In addition, all students were given ID cards that they were required to keep with them at all times.

Students were warned that any actions not following the rules and regulations would be met with immediate and appropriate disciplinary action. Meetings with student government, fraternity and sorority presidents, local ministers, organization presidents, dorm counselors and senate, and *The Auburn Plainsman* were ordered to "build a climate of obedience through law."[90] In the days following the speeches at the stadium, students were required to sign the pledge to abide by regulations meant to assure normal university operations and safety. Students were also warned about the "danger or rumors and the spreading of rumors" as well as "cautioned against the wiles of the news media."[91]

Security plans were also established in collaboration with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to ensure a peaceful event.[92] Outsiders were banned from campus from Saturday, January 4 through Friday, January 10 during Harold Franklin's registration and his first few days of school. Colonel Al Lingo, Director of the State Public Safety Department and Colonel L. E. Funchess, head of Auburn Security, worked together but had different views on how to maintain peace at the school.[93] Colonel Lingo opposed allowing the press on campus, but the rules adopted by Draughon did not mirror this concern. In the original security plans, members of the press were allowed on campus but not allowed access to university buildings as university officials realized the possible impact of the media at other institutions since over 400 members of the press attended the integration of University of Alabama, many of which were from foreign nations.[94]

Draughon recognized the necessity that the university continue to operate without interruption during its integration, but he also acknowledged the university's "responsibility to local, regional, and national news organizations."[95] As a result, Draughon wanted "to cooperate in every way possible to see that the needs of the news media" were adequately met.[96] Though Colonel Lingo hoped to eliminate the presence of the news media, Draughon accommodated the press and established an off-campus news center located in a hotel less than two blocks north of campus to "serve the news organizations which sent personnel to Auburn to cover the admission of Franklin."[97] Ground rules for coverage of the event were created in assistance with representatives of major news organizations and approved by the board of trustees, and the policies were subsequently sent to all news media before the event. Crawford, head of Press or Public

Relations, expected 25 reporters from approximately a dozen agencies outside of Lee County. All news representatives were required to register with the university, wear badges at all times, and present credentials when necessary.[98] Press members were given access to telephones, typing tables and chairs, typewriters, paper, office supplies, coffee and soft drinks, and a darkroom. The university also provided a media kit to all members of the press that contained information about

> Auburn University, the history of the litigation, information on the Negro student, copies of any major policy statements by the President or the board of trustees, the policies and procedures governing news representatives, a campus map, and other pertinent items.[99]

Although Draughon attempted to accommodate the media and provide them with information, Harold Franklin was not so willing. When pressed for a statement about his situation, Harold consistently told the press "no comment."[100]

In addition to requiring badges to be worn at all times, the university also established other important guidelines for the media. All official information about the event had to go through the news center so Auburn was the only source of information, and if news conferences were necessary, they were only to be conducted at the news center. Other than a "single mobile TV unit" that would serve all members of the press, vehicles from news organizations were not allowed on campus.[101] Live broadcasts from campus were prohibited, and "tape recorders, silent motion picture cameras, still cameras and sound-on film equipment or any other electronic transmitting equipment" were allowed on campus at the library only to cover Harold's registration.[102] Finally, only "official, full-time representatives of news organizations" were allowed to cover the event.[103] "Students, faculty and staff members who are employed by news organizations"

were not allowed to "originate or gather news, photographs, film or taped material" during integration.[104]

Pause on the Plains

As integration drew near, Draughon continued to follow his plan for what he hoped would be a peaceful event. On January 3, 1964, the night before Harold Franklin registered, Draughon issued a statement to the press again explaining the rules and regulations to the students, faculty, and community and urging them to continue to show "mature judgment" and "refrain from engaging in any activity which could possibly complicate the difficult and trying procedures in which we must become engaged."[105] Furthermore, Draughon appealed to the news media to follow the established press guidelines, and in return, the university would meet the media's needs. Only about 75 journalists, none of whom were foreign, came to Auburn, representing 12 major news media agencies.[106] Within hours, Draughon learned whether his preparation efforts were enough to keep Auburn University from following in the chaotic footsteps of the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi.

When January 4, 1964 approached, the university took every precaution necessary and provided tight security to avoid incident as Harold enrolled.[107] Approximately 100 State Highway Patrolmen arrived at Auburn's campus on Friday, January 3, and met with Auburn City Police Chief Hammock and Lee County Sheriff Ragsdale as well as several members of the press to discuss security operations. Police patrolled campus during the night and the following day, and by 6:00 am, "RESTRICTED" signs were posted around the main campus.[108]

The day of integration arrived and reporters anxiously waited to be given permission to cover the event. At the last minute Colonel Lingo decided not to allow sound or pictures on Auburn's campus.[109] Because official plans allowed press on campus to cover Harold's registration, Edwin M. Crawford, head of Press or Public Relations, made clear that the change resulted from Lingo, not university officials. Moreover, "any invasion of the board's control of the institution can result in the disaccreditation of the institution," so President Draughon issued a statement to the press indicating the university's disagreement with the sudden change of plans that was not agreed to by university officials.[110]

Joseph Sarver, who was in charge of picking which Black applicant would be admitted to the school, drove to the Auburn Methodist Church where Harold was waiting and escorted him to the library to register.[111] Highway patrol officers hid along the roadways to insure a "serene arrival."[112] Before Sarver could find Harold, though, he had a flat tire along the way. Once the tire was repaired and he arrived on campus, Sarver could not find Harold. The day began to look like a disaster. Eventually the city police found Harold, and Sarver took him to campus.[113]

The community tensely anticipated the major event that had gone so terribly wrong at so many other schools. As Harold neared the library for registration on the drizzly January day, he was met by a crowd of 200-300 students who uttered only a few harassing comments.[114] The crowd quickly dissipated after Harold entered the building. Harold met with two university officials, Graduate Dean W. V. Parker and Harold's advisor Dr. Malcolm C. McMillan, to register for his classes. Several journalists photographed this meeting until Crawford, head of Auburn's Public Relations, asked

them to leave the campus entirely, which they did.[115] After about an hour of registration, Harold emerged from the library steps. Two unidentified students suddenly emerged and threatened to end the peace and calm of the day. The students, however, simply shook Harold's hand in a friendly manner and were swiftly escorted away by State Troopers.[116]

By the end of the day, Auburn successfully integrated its campus with no incident. More excitement came from the police presence than from Harold's enrollment.[117] Most of the 75 media representatives were from Alabama and Georgia, but the event was also covered nationally by *Newsweek* and the *New York Times*.[118] Journalists applauded Draughon's efforts to balance the university's need for security and the media's need for information. Press members attending the event "were generous in their praise of Auburn University's planning and handling of the event."[119] Moreover, even though Colonel Lingo banned the press from covering Harold after registration, it did not dampen "the general enthusiasm for AU's treatment of the press."[120]

The next days, however, proved crucial to maintaining the peace on campus. On Harold Franklin's second day as an Auburn University student, Sarver and the police chief waited in a police car for Harold to emerge from his dorm room where he stayed alone for his protection.[121] The men waited in the car for quite awhile and became nervous because they could not find Harold yet again. Suddenly they saw a Black man walking down the street that they thought was Harold. However, they had the wrong man. As their concern grew, Sarver and the chief of police found that a Presbyterian minister who felt sorry for Harold decided to take him out for a car ride.[122] On Monday, January 6, Harold walked from his dorm to the bookstore and back to his dorm during which students paid no particular attention to him.[123] Several hours later he became the

first Black student to attend class at Auburn University. There was no major resistance by students or community members. On Thursday, January 9, the State Highway Patrol agents left the campus, and there was "no evidence of outsiders creating any trouble."[124]

Hence, by January 9, 1964, Auburn was officially integrated and the school escaped the violence experienced by other southern schools. Only one minor incident of students stealing security signs was reported, and the students were later reprimanded.[125] *The Auburn Plainsman* commended the students for their behavior and support and expressed pride in the outcome of the situation.[126] Additionally, Draughon issued a statement of appreciation to students, faculty and staff, the citizens of Auburn and Lee County, Governor Wallace, the State Troopers, and the news representatives. Draughon thanked the media for "their fine cooperation and understanding" and commended the media for observing "the ground rules … for press coverage" and "their fine sense of fair play."[127]

Conclusion

Desegregation at Auburn University was markedly different than desegregation attempts at other major southern universities. Although Draughon told Governor Wallace just two days after the school's integration, "I am a segregationist," he realized the importance of maintaining relationships with various entities across the state, which would lead him to integrate Auburn University.[128] Anticipating that the Supreme Court would overturn the "separate but equal" doctrine, Draughon began developing a plan for dealing with integration as early as 1953, a plan that included controlling press coverage. *The Auburn Plainsman*, however, published articles that went against Draughon's plans. As a result, Draughon forced the newspaper to avoid printing articles on controversial

issues and eventually appointed an official to examine the publication prior to printing to make sure the newspaper was not contradicting Draughon's message.

As desegregation neared, Draughon was given full control over security and safety operations during integration, and he led the school through a potentially tumultuous time without significant incident. After researching integration at other schools, Draughon developed a new plan for Auburn to implement. By restricting the access of outsiders to campus, including the media, Draughon created an atmosphere that accepted the change and was therefore successful in desegregating the school. His leadership plan was therefore crucial to maintaining peace at Auburn University during a time when many other southern schools struggled with the same issue. While this chapter detailed how Draughon responded to Auburn's court order to integrate, the next chapter explains his actions from the perspectives of the Westley-MacLean model and boundary spanning theory.

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[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid., 1.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ralph B. Draughon to Gordon Persons. 22 December 1953, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 13, Civil Rights 1951-1953, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, 1. (Hereafter cited as Draughon to Persons).

[8] Geoffrey Birt, "API President Says Negro Tact, Good Judgment to Help State Over School Segregation Hump," *Montgomery Advertiser*, 16 January 1954, p. A1, 3.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ralph B. Draughon to Carl W. Borgmann, 24 October 1953, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 13, Civil Rights 1951-1953, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, 2.

[12]Ibid., 2.

[13] Draughon to Persons, 22 December 1953, 2.

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[16] Ibid.

[17] "Professor Expounds on Integration." *The Auburn Plainsman* , 20 February 1957, p. 4. (Hereafter cited as "Professor Expounds on Integration").

[18] "Teacher at Auburn ousted in bias case," *New York Times*, 16 May 1957, p. 19.

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[20] "Academic Freedom at Auburn Restricted Formally," 25 August 1957, Board of Trustees Collection, Record Group 521, Folder #210, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al.

[21] "Professor Expounds on Integration." *The Auburn Plainsman*.

[22] Harry R. Wilkinson, interview by L. Anne Willis, 19 March, 2004, Auburn, Alabama, e-mail correspondence. (Hereafter cited as Wilkinson).

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[24] "Choice- Reality or Anarchy," *Auburn Plainsman*, 4 May 1961, p. 1.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid, p. 1.

[28] Jack H. Harris to Ralph B. Draughon, 25 May 1961, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 25, Publications (*Plainsman*) 1949-1961, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, 1.

[29] W. M. Agee to Ralph B. Draughon, 5 June 1961, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 25, Publications (*Plainsman*) 1949-1961, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al. (Hereafter cited as Agee to Draughon); W. D. Malone to Ralph B. Draughon, 6 June 1961, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 25, Publications (*Plainsman*) 1949-1961, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al. (Hereafter cited as Malone to Draughon).

[30] Malone to Draughon, 6 June 1961, 1.

[31] Janine S. White to Ralph B. Draughon, 21 November 1961, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 25, Publications (*Plainsman*) 1949-1961, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al.; F. H. Benning to Jim Bullington, 12 June 1961, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 25, Publications (*Plainsman*) 1949-1961, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al.; Agee to Draughon, 5 June 1961.

[32] Stanley and Sue H. Jones to Ralph B. Draughon, 11 June 1961, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 25, Publications (*Plainsman*) 1949-1961, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al.; Jack A Cumbee, Jr. to The Board of Trustees, 26 September 1961, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 25, Publications (*Plainsman*) 1949-1961, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al., 1.

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[36] Ibid., 251.

[37] Ibid., 251.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid., 252

[41] Ibid., 252.

[42] Wilkinson, interview by L. Anne Willis.

[43] Jim Dinsmore, "Cluttered Heart Cries for Expression on Issues. God, Country, Integration, Alabama, Auburn University," *Auburn Plainsman*, 9 May 1962, p. 4.

[44] Ibid.

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[46] James E. Foy to Ralph B. Draughon, 22 May 1962, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 25, Publications (*Plainsman*) 1962, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al. (Hereafter cited as Foy to Draughon).

[47] Harry R. Wilkinson to Robert Anderson, 1962, Ralph B. Draughon Presidential Papers, Record Group 533, Box 25, Publications (*Plainsman*) 1962, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, 1.

[48] Foy to Draughon, 22 May 1962, 2.

[49] "Discussions in Executive Session," 9 November 1962, Joseph Sarver Collection, Record Group 379, Box 1, Folder # 23, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, 1. (Hereafter cited as "Discussions in Executive Session").

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[51] Ibid., 1.

[52] Ibid., 1.

[53] Ibid., 2.

[54] "Minutes Informal Board Meeting," 17 July 1963, Joseph Sarver Collection, Record Group 379, Box 1, Folder # 23, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, p. 1. (Hereafter cited as "Minutes Informal Board Meeting").

[55] "Discussions in Executive Session," 9 November 1962, 3.

[56] Ibid., 3.

[57] "Minutes Informal Board Meeting," 17 July 1963.

[58] Ibid., 3.

[59] George C. Wallace to Ralph B. Draughon, 6 January 1961, Board of Trustees Collection, Record Group 521, Folder # 241, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al.

[60] Joseph and Molly Sarver, interview by Coleen Olszowy, 8 February 1988, transcript, American Folklore Oral History, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al. (Hereafter cited as Sarver).

[61] Franklin Application, Joseph Sarver Collection, Record Group 379, Box 1, Folder # 24, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al. (Hereafter cited as Franklin application).

[62] "State Troopers Close Campus as Part of Security Measures," *Auburn Plainsman*, 8 January 1964, p. 1. (Hereafter cited as "State Troopers Close Campus").

[63] Franklin Application.

[64] "Minutes Informal Board Meeting," 17 July 1963, 1.

[65] Ibid., 2.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid., 2.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid., 4.

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[73] Ted Pearson, "Wallace to go on TV at 5:30 Today." *Birmingham News*, 5 June 1963, p. 1; Ted Pearson, "Wallace Gets Praise From California to New York," *Birmingham News*, 3 June 1963, p. 3.

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[83] "Outline of a Plan to Meet Integration Problem Winter Quarter," 1964, Joseph Sarver Collection, Record Group 379, Box 1, Folder # 23, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, 1. (Hereafter cited as "Outline of a Plan").

[84] "Board Meeting (Recessed)," 26 November 1963.

[85] George C. Wallace to Ralph B. Draughon, 6 January 1961, Board of Trustees Collection, Record Group 521, Folder # 241, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, 2.

[86] "Outline of a Plan…," 1964, 1.

[87] "A Summary of Major Activities…," 15 January, 1964; Hunter Smith, "Just Another Day on the Plains," *Auburn Plainsman,* 8 January 1964, p. 3. (Hereafter cited as Smith).

[88] "A Summary of Major Activities…," 15 January, 1964.

[89] "New Rules and Regulations Approved by President Draughon," *This is Auburn*, December 1963, pp. 1-4, 4.

[90] "Outline of a Plan…," 1.

[91] "Plan to Meet with Integration Problem Winter Quarter, 1964," 26 November 1963, Board of Trustees Collection, Record Group 521, Folder #239, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, 2.

[92] "Security Operations Related to the Registration of a Negro Student, [15 January 1964], Board of Trustees Collection, Record Group 521, Folder #240, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al. (Hereafter cited as "Security Operations").

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[94] Al Fox and Jack Hopper, "Auburn Mixing contrasts with 'Bama Furor," *The Birmingham News,* 5 January 1964, sec. A, p. 4. (Hereafter cited as Fox and Hopper).

[95] "Facilities, Services, Staff and Policies and Procedures for News Media in the Admission of a Negro Student," [1964], Board of Trustees Collection, Record Group 521, Folder #240, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, 1. (Hereafter cited as "Facilities, Services, Staff").

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[97] "A Summary of Major Activities…," 15 January, 1964, 3.

[98] "AU Ready to Enroll First Negro Saturday," *Lee County Bulletin*, 1 January 1964, p. 1; "Ground Rules for News Representatives in Covering Admission of Harold Franklin to Auburn University," 2 January 1964, Board of Trustees Collection, Record Group 521, Folder #240, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al. (Hereafter cited as "Ground Rules").

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[100] "Terse 'No Comment' is Negro's Reply as He Joins Auburn Class," *Birmingham News*, 6 January 1964, p. 21.

[101] "Ground Rules…," [1964], 2.

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[105] "Statement by President Ralph B. Draughon," 3 January 1964, Office of Communications and Marketing Collection, Record Group 381, Box 6, Folder # 196, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, 3.

[106] Fox and Hopper, "Auburn Mixing contrasts with 'Bama Furor."

[107] "State Troopers Close Campus…," *Auburn Plainsman*.

[108] "Security Operations," [15 January 1964].

[109] "Press Changes Made by Lingo," *Auburn Plainsman*, 8 January 1964, p. 1.

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[112] Ibid., 13.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Fox and Hopper, "Auburn Mixing contrasts with 'Bama Furor."

[115] "Security Operations…," [15 January 1964].

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[118] Fox and Hopper, "Auburn Mixing contrasts with 'Bama Furor."; "Desegregation Accepted Calmly as AU Gets First Negro Student," *Lee County Bulletin*, 9 January 1964, p. 1A. (Hereafter cited as "Desegregation Accepted Calmly").

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[120] Ibid.

[121] Sarver, interview by Coleen Olszow.

[122] Ibid.

[123] "Security Operations…," [15 January 1964].

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[127] "Statement by President Ralph B. Draughon," 8 January 1964, Board of Trustees Collection, Record Group 521, Folder # 240, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, 1.

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V. DRAUGHON'S IMPACT

Since segregation had been a way of life for so long in Alabama, many people in the state vehemently opposed change. Although Auburn University was opposed to desegregation, the president and board of trustees foresaw integration in Auburn's future and prepared extensively for the day they would be required to admit the school's first Black student. President Ralph B. Draughon took notes on the other recent desegregation attempts that involved protests and riots and developed a plan that led Auburn University to the peaceful resolution that eluded other schools. Thus, because of his leadership, Draughon was able to successfully and peacefully integrate the campus when so many other schools failed at the same attempt.

Once given ultimate authority to create a plan for integration, Draughon acted as a leader, an advocate, and a boundary spanner. Understanding the potential impact of the media, Draughon's plan controlled both the information given to and communicated through the media, leading to the university's successful desegregation. As he created a plan that focused on the media, Draughon established a tool for protecting the school's image that still affects Auburn University today. Thus, when one asks why the desegregation of Auburn University was less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, the media played in this, the answer lies in Draughon's effective control of media access to the event. The media played a significant role to the extent that their messages were controlled by Draughon. This chapter explains the event in terms of the

communication theories previously presented, the Westley-MacLean model and boundary spanning theory. The Westley-MacLean model explains how, as different events and advocates competed for attention around Auburn's desegregation in January 1964, Draughon controlled the flow of information to the media and the public. Moreover, boundary spanning theory demonstrates the process through which Draughon collected and processed information, represented the organization externally, and ultimately protected the university's image, students, and community from negative publicity and possible violence.

Draughon as an Advocate

As an advocate, Draughon did not want integration at Auburn to be a media event. Desegregation at other southern universities was sensationalized in the media, thus Draughon hoped to avoid sensationalism at Auburn by keeping the school's desegregation out of the media. Consequently, once he was appointed as the only advocate for the school, Draughon controlled the media image of the university. Draughon's position as president of the school allowed him to control campus publications so they communicated either his framed message to the Auburn community or no message at all. Moreover, Draughon used his powerful position over outside media by strictly controlling the flow of information to them. With so much control over the information conveyed about the event, Draughon ensured that *his* message would be communicated. The result was both a peaceful event and a lack of nationally broadcast images that placed Auburn University within the same context as integration at the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi.

Early Advocacy Role

Draughon and many others believed that the segregated school system was adequate for Black and White students, thus his early advocacy role was more limited than it later became. In 1953 when desegregation was only a possible outcome of a Supreme Court decision, Draughon sought information about the potential decision but was not interested in controlling the flow of information to the media and the public. He tentatively gathered information about the possible ruling and openly discussed the school's policy on the issue with the media in 1954. Thus, as an early advocate, Draughon concentrated on gathering and adapting information instead of focusing on controlling the flow of information to the media because little was known about how the school would be required to act.

As president of the university, Draughon acted as an advocate simply because of his position, and he actively sought information pertinent to the university during his tenure. When desegregation threatened to become a likely event, Draughon's role as advocate shifted and became more important. Draughon collected information, a key task of an advocate, about desegregation as early as 1953 prior to the *Brown* decision. Correspondence between Draughon and Governor Persons indicated an interest in the impending court decision. Concerned about the ramifications of a Supreme Court decision, Draughon and Persons discussed possible rulings and gathered information about each. Gathering information is crucial to an advocate as s/he attempts to control information about an event. Contemplating the possible court decisions allowed Draughon time to create a message in which he communicated the university's opposition to integration but willingness to comply with a court decision if necessary.

Once an advocate gathers information about an event, s/he adapts the information to fit the needs of the organization. As Draughon gathered information about desegregation, he adapted it to fit his interests as the president of a major university as well as the interests of the university and its surrounding community. He created a message that Auburn University did not support desegregation but was prepared to successfully handle any challenges. In 1954 upon learning of the Supreme Court's *Brown* decision, Draughon transmitted messages to the *Montgomery Advertiser* about desegregation. In the interview, Draughon communicated his displeasure with a possible "adverse decision," but nevertheless made a statement about his plan for dealing with integration, therefore creating the message that he consistently communicated throughout the integration process.[1] This carefully constructed message resulted from Draughon's attempt to gather information about the event. Moreover, by framing the message that denounced integration, Draughon mirrored the public's concern and sentiment, which garnered more support for his actions because school and community members believed that he was taking action in line with their beliefs. The media thus allowed Draughon to both communicate the university's position and gather backing for his actions.

A New Plan

After the Supreme Court overturned the "separate but equal" doctrine in *Brown v. Board* in 1954, Draughon faced a new challenge: desegregate Auburn University peacefully. In order to face this difficult time, Draughon focused on the media. In 1957 he realized that the media could incite anger in the public and used his power to stop the flow of information from Auburn University faculty to the school newspaper and the public. In 1961 and 1962, Draughon believed that *Auburn Plainsman* support for

desegregation threatened to provoke rage in the community, so he again used his power to stop the flow of information. Furthermore, Draughon restricted access to other media outlets as he attempted to avoid publicity and keep Auburn out of the same spotlight in which many other southern schools were caught.

In 1957, *The Auburn Plainsman* featured an editorial by an Auburn professor who applauded integration efforts in New York schools. Bud Hutchinson functioned as a competing advocate by publicly commenting about integration in the student newspaper. His viewpoint contradicted the message Draughon hoped to communicate that expressed the university's opposition to integration and therefore threatened Draughon's advocacy role. Draughon responded to Hutchinson by issuing a statement to the media that chastised the professor's comments. Draughon acted quickly to disseminate his message to the media and discredit the opposing advocate. In addition to using the media to communicate his displeasure with the professor's comments, Draughon ensured that Hutchinson was unable to act as an advocate for the university by denying him tenure. Draughon therefore made it clear early on that other internal Auburn University advocates would not be tolerated, therefore silencing opposition. In doing so, Draughon effectively eliminated some advocates, which gave him a great deal of power over the information flowing from the event to the media.

Clearly, the editorial pages of *The Auburn Plainsman* were a place where oppositional voices could still be heard. The newspaper attempted to communicate various viewpoints both for and against integration. Consequently, the newspaper actively sought out information to provide to the public about desegregation. Draughon, however, used his power and influence as president and advocate of the school to force

The Plainsman to avoid the issue of integration altogether. By eliminating the student publication's ability to both seek information about the event and transmit messages, Draughon again silenced opposition and continued to eliminate other advocates. As a result of this strategy, Draughon effectively became the only advocate from Auburn University to transmit messages about the school's upcoming desegregation attempt, which gave him power over which messages the media received and transmitted to the public. Furthermore, Draughon established a relationship with *Auburn Plainsman* editor Harry Wilkinson that allowed him to directly provide the newspaper with information about desegregation. Draughon therefore used his control as an advocate to shape the messages sent to the newspaper. As a result, the information communicated by the media fit the university's interest. *The Auburn Plainsman* was therefore useful in communicating Draughon's message to the students and community.

As other southern schools integrated, Draughon met with Auburn's board of trustees twice to develop a plan for handling Auburn's desegregation. A critical aspect of this plan consisted of encouraging the trustees to avoid the media. During the first meeting on November 9, 1962, Draughon advised board members not to discuss the event with the press, which allowed Draughon to strengthen his role as advocate by restricting the number of people competing as advocates. Although Draughon hoped to stay away from publicity altogether, he understood the significance of being the only contact through which the media received information. Thus, while Draughon's plan emphasized that other university officials needed to not talk to the media, the plan also reinforced Draughon's position as the single advocate for the school.

Draughon further cemented his advocacy role by forming relations with specific reporters. Draughon made a deal in which the reporter received information when Draughon was ready to discuss the issue. Forming a relationship with this member of the media gave Draughon power in two ways. First, Draughon ensured that his message was communicated since the reporter waited to publish a story until Draughon gave him permission. Second, Draughon formed a potentially trusting relationship with the reporter in hopes that he would come to him again before writing an article instead of seeking information from another person. Draughon therefore secured his position as advocate by forging a relationship with the media, and in doing so, maintained power over the flow of information about desegregation to the media and the public.

Draughon continued to reveal his strategy to prevent negative press at the November 9, 1962 and July 17, 1963 board meetings that included Governor Wallace. At the first meeting, trustee Frank P. Samford congratulated Draughon for keeping Auburn's struggle with desegregation out of the press, and Draughon demonstrated his willingness to use *The Plainsman* as a tool for communicating his message. At the July 17th meeting, Draughon elaborated on his plan to avoid publicity and expressed the hope that Auburn's admission of a Black student would continue to be kept out of the press. In dealing with Black applicants before other universities began to integrate, Draughon used the same strategy of avoiding the media by keeping the university's policy of screening and investigating the applicants out of the press. By encouraging university officials to remain silent about the issue, Draughon stopped other potential advocates from expressing competing messages. These meetings allowed Draughon to reinforce his

position as advocate and discuss his plans for controlling the flow of information with other important university officials.

Draughon's new strategy for handling desegregation and controlling the media therefore differed from his original plan before the *Brown* decision. When Draughon began collecting information in 1953 about the possibility of integration, his plan did not involve as much control over the media as it did when he realized how close desegregation was to occurring. As he framed messages to the media in 1954, Draughon did not demonstrate the need to avoid publicity. Hence, he viewed the media as tools for assuring the Auburn community that he was planning for the "worst" and would continue to lead Auburn through any obstacles. As time changed and the media broadcast southern communities' struggles with civil rights (such as Rosa Parks and the Montgomery bus boycott, the Freedom Riders, the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Church, and other universities desegregating), Draughon's plan for using the media changed drastically. Instead of using the media to communicate his feelings about the issue, he ensured that the school's newspaper avoided the issue altogether. By silencing *The Plainsman,* Draughon therefore began his new approach for handling integration. As an advocate, Draughon's strategy changed and he took control over the messages transmitted to the media and the public. Consequently, the new phase of Draughon's plan limited the media's role in transmitting information about desegregation at Auburn in order to ensure a peaceful event.

The End Result

Since Draughon prepared for integration, he was able to construct a plan that led the school successfully through Harold Franklin's registration. Appointed as the only

advocate, Draughon ensured that his was the only voice of the university. Moreover, students, faculty, staff, other university officials, and Harold could have competed with Draughon as advocates, but they did not, partly because Draughon punished other advocates and partly because Draughon warned the university community against speaking out about the event. As Draughon took control of the plans for handling desegregation, he framed messages that reflected the sentiment of the community but indicated that he would follow all necessary rules to make sure the integration attempt was successful. Furthermore, Draughon made few statements to the press about Auburn's position except to emphasize the extent of his security plans and the punishment for disobeying the rules that he established. Though he limited his statements to the media, Draughon accommodated them by creating a news center for reporters, which further established his position as the only advocate for Auburn University.

Once desegregation neared, Draughon was officially appointed by Auburn University officials to be responsible for seeking information, therefore acting as the advocate for the organization. In charge of a major institution, he had a vested interest in seeking information as a means to maintain peace during the event and represent the university to outsiders. By designating Draughon as the sole advocate, the university limited the role of other advocates, making it easier to control the flow information about the university's desegregation attempt. Thus, Governor Wallace, who frequently made use of the media to sensationalize his actions during desegregation at the University of Alabama, and other university officials did not communicate conflicting messages to the media and the public. As the event drew closer, Draughon gathered information about

what occurred at other southern universities such as the University of Mississippi, Clemson College, Georgia Tech, and the University of Alabama in order to create a plan of action. Draughon therefore attempted to gain as much information as possible about desegregation, which is a central role of the advocate.

While other potential advocates existed, few people took on this role. Interestingly, Harold Franklin had the ability to act as a competing advocate but did not. Though it is not clear whether Draughon or other university officials pressured him to avoid the media, Harold said little about the event. When reporters continually sought a statement from him, he responded with "no comment." Students at Auburn also could have been advocates but did not provide information about the event, which likely was due to Draughon's efforts to reduce the number of competing advocates. By cautioning students against the "wiles of the news media," Draughon effectively silenced possible opposing viewpoints to make himself the single advocate. Moreover, Draughon previously demonstrated with professor Bud Hutchinson and *Plainsman* staff members Jim Bullington and Jim Dinsmore that competing advocates within the university would not be tolerated. Thus, as the only advocate, Draughon single-handedly and effectively controlled the flow of information about Auburn and its integration.

Since the majority of students and community members opposed integration, Draughon framed messages about the event in a manner that communicated anti-segregation yet urged acceptance. For example, Draughon issued a statement to the media that was published in *The Auburn Plainsman*, *This is Auburn*, and various other media outlets. The statement attempted to control the image of the university by assuring students and community members that the university was not in court because of any

wrongdoing. Moreover, Draughon communicated in his statement that the university opposed admitting Harold Franklin. Thus, because the community largely opposed integration, Draughon framed the message in a way to make it seem that the school fought strongly against desegregation, but it was forced upon Auburn. Furthermore, the December edition of *This is Auburn* was dedicated entirely to explaining the rules and regulations during the desegregation attempt, clarifying the entire situation with Harold Franklin, and encouraging the students to act appropriately. Draughon successfully communicated his message, which was reinforced through various media publications, because of his control and because *The Plainsman* and *This is Auburn* shared the same interest in maintaining a peaceful atmosphere at Auburn University. Thus, Draughon's role as advocate strengthened as he controlled which messages were transmitted about the event through campus publications.

While Draughon used the campus media to communicate his message, he also provided other media outlets with specific information. Draughon's statements to the press emphasized his security plan for Harold Franklin's registration. Since Draughon was the only advocate who provided the press with information, journalists were forced to broadcast Draughon's plan. Consequently, when the only official information being presented detailed Draughon's security efforts and punishment for violating the rules and regulations, Draughon communicated that his strict policy must be followed by the Auburn community or the consequences would be severe. Furthermore, by focusing on security, Draughon avoided the sensationalism that occurred at other southern universities when university officials used the media to disseminate opinions, which fueled angry community members and contributed to riots and violence. Thus, his

control over the flow of information to the media allowed Draughon to communicate a single message that was consistently reported by the media as he eliminated other advocates from transmitting competing messages.

Draughon also limited media access to information. The president held a meeting at Auburn's Cliff Hare Stadium that was attended by a large number of people. Media presence may have provoked attendees to act in ways that contradicted Draughon's plan, thus the media were not allowed to attend. Restricting the media's access to the event ensured that Draughon controlled the meeting and disseminated strategic information to the Auburn University community. Furthermore, limiting information to the media allowed Draughon control over how desegregation was interpreted by the public since he focused on communicating a particular message to the public. If he included the media at the event, Draughon would not have been able to control which information the media reported about Auburn, which might have led to sensationalism of the event. Since the media only had access to information about the meeting that Draughon provided them, they were unable to transmit conflicting or contradictory messages to the public about Draughon's plan. In addition, excluding the media from the event allowed Draughon to continue to eliminate competing advocates because he cautioned students during the meeting about talking to the media and the dangers of spreading rumors. Restricting the media's access to the event demonstrated his concern with the media's coverage of the event and therefore set an example for students, faculty, staff, and community members to follow and at the same time discouraged others from speaking with the press and therefore competing with Draughon as an advocate.

Draughon further limited media access and reinforced himself as the single advocate by creating a news center that provided journalists with press kits that yielded information adapted by Draughon. All of the material included in the kit communicated Draughon's message about desegregation, and because this was the only information given to journalists, Draughon became the only advocate and therefore the only source of information. Additionally, by providing supplies and information to reporters, Draughon encouraged press members to support his agenda. As a result, the media shaped their messages to reflect Draughon's message. Moreover, as Colonel Lingo denied reporters access to Harold Franklin's activities after registration, information provided to the media could only come from the university. Draughon therefore successfully cut off competing messages from other advocates to the media since his messages were the only ones communicated.

As the only official advocate for Auburn University, Draughon controlled the flow of information to the media and the public. His control was further strengthened as other possible advocates chose not to become competing advocates. Many of the messages received by the media were directly framed by Draughon to create a peaceful integration. He used the media to communicate his messages about desegregation to a large number of people, especially Auburn students, faculty, staff, and community members. Draughon frequently released statements to the press about Auburn's position on desegregation, security rules and regulations, and general information about the event. Moreover, Draughon established a news center that was complete with supplies and services to gratify the media. Since he regularly provided the press with information and

attempted to help make their jobs easier with equipment and assistance, Draughon became a trusted source, strengthening his role as advocate for the university.

Feedback

Feedback is an important aspect of communication, and it helped shape and alter Draughon's plan for action as well as affirm the success of his strategy. Feedback criticizing Draughon's control over *The Auburn Plainsman* forced him to take action and change the guidelines for the publication. Additionally, feedback from reporters about how they were treated during the desegregation attempt demonstrated support for Draughon's actions. The most impressive form of feedback that Draughon received was the fact that the school avoided the problems that plagued other schools in similar situations as the community followed Draughon's guidelines, leading to a peaceful integration at Auburn University.

Feedback occurred in several ways in response to desegregation at Auburn University and was both purposive and non-purposive. Many members of the Auburn community engaged in purposive feedback as they sent letters expressing their anger about integration to *The Auburn Plainsman*, which occurred as early as 1957 when people questioned Bud Hutchinson's support of integration. Moreover, some people also sent purposive letters to Draughon to voice their opinion about Draughon's perceived lack of control over students, staff, and faculty at Auburn University as Hutchinson, Bullington, and Dinsmore all spoke out in favor of integration in *The Plainsman*. As community members expressed their disapproval with Draughon's control over the school's image by sending him and the student newspaper feedback, Draughon responded as an advocate for Auburn University. The community, including state officials,

communicated that Draughon's plan was inadequate at this point, so he tightened his control over the media. As the responses poured in to his office, Draughon quickly discussed the impact of Hutchinson, Bullington, and Dinsmore on the reputation of Auburn University and silenced views about desegregation in *The Auburn Plainsman*. Feedback therefore pushed Draughon to change his strategy, creating a new plan for integration that was ultimately successful.

Even the media provided purposive feedback to Draughon as journalists with the *Lee County Bulletin* thanked Draughon in an article for his concern for the media and the way he handled desegregation. The media's feedback indicated their satisfaction with Draughon's plans and confirmed Draughon's success in integrating the school. Finally, non-purposive feedback was given to Draughon as the students and community refrained from violence and protests. Community members demonstrated their curiosity of integration by standing by as Harold registered, but they quickly dispersed without erupting in rallies and anger. Thus, the non-purposive feedback demonstrated the success of Draughon's plans.

Significance

Draughon's control of the media therefore played a powerful role in creating a peaceful integration at Auburn University, which led to Auburn's desegregation being much less well known than desegregation at other major southern institutions. Draughon occupied a powerful position as advocate at Auburn University. He used his influence to eliminate the presence of other advocates so he could effectively communicate his message to the public. When university media communicated an agenda that differed from his, Draughon pressured the publications into publishing his message. Moreover,

he controlled which information was sent to all media outlets by becoming the single advocate. The news center Draughon established was also useful in controlling the flow of information as he provided journalists with all of the information they would need to cover the story. In addition to using the media to transmit his message, Draughon successfully gathered all of the information about Auburn's desegregation to limit the flow of information to the media. Because of his position as advocate, Draughon exerted influence over the flow of information and, as a result, created a positive atmosphere during Auburn's desegregation.

Furthermore, Draughon successfully led Auburn University through desegregation because of his control over the media, and his strategy for handling integration was drastically different from the strategies used at other southern schools. Despite plans to keep the schools safe, other schools' university officials did not achieve as much control over the process as Draughon achieved. Understanding the media's ability to fuel anger, Draughon developed a plan that excluded the media when other schools embraced them. Reporters swarmed campuses of other major southern schools during their integration attempts and not only broadcast the turmoil to the nation and world, but also encouraged community members to forcefully promote their side of the issue. At Auburn University, community members did not encounter the media and were therefore less likely to speak or act out about the event. By limiting the interactions between the press and the community, Draughon therefore limited the possibility of riots and violence on campus.

Additionally, when Draughon gave the media access to information about the university, he ensured that the information lacked the same opinions and politics that

were seen in communication from other southern universities. Once he investigated how other schools dealt with integration, Draughon realized that university officials at other universities publicly spoke out in opposition to desegregation. Governor Wallace frequently used the media to sensationalize the issue and publicize his stance against desegregating the University of Alabama. Although Draughon clearly opposed integration, he kept his opinions from the press and chose instead to emphasize his plan for the event. By concentrating on keeping the school safe instead of publicly communicating his stance, Draughon effectively used the media to reinforce the school's preparation efforts so the community focused on how to successfully integrate instead of becoming enraged by the issue.

Finally, Draughon's control over the media minimized the issue of integration at Auburn University so it did not become infamous for struggling with desegregating. The same event was heavily sensationalized at the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi, so that many people associate the schools with resistance to change and the threat of violence 50 years after they integrated. Wallace's highly publicized stand in the schoolhouse door endures as the example of how southern schools dealt with integration while Draughon's unpublicized successful control is easily forgotten because Draughon purposely kept Auburn out of the spotlight. Controlling the flow of information and the media's access to information accomplished Draughon's main objective to avoid the media and therefore allowed Auburn's desegregation attempt to be less well-known than attempts at other southern schools.

Draughon as a Boundary Spanner

Auburn University functions as an organization and establishes distinctions between members and non-members. As the authority or head of the organization, Draughon allowed certain members to enter while omitting others, thus creating boundaries within the organization. Consequently, as the president, Draughon occupied a formal boundary spanning role at Auburn. As Auburn experienced a time of turmoil, his position as boundary spanner became increasingly important. Draughon not only processed incoming information related to desegregation, but also managed the university by constricting and expanding boundaries and represented the organization externally, focusing on communicating a particular image at different stages of the conflict to protect the university.

Information Processing

Boundary spanners in organizations seek information from the environment and process the information based on the organization's needs. In order to create a successful plan for integration, President Draughon engaged heavily in information processing as he actively sought information about desegregation. Although segregation seemed to many people to be a futile idea that would not work in society, the debate became more and more prevalent as the Supreme Court chipped away at its *Plessy* decision that mandated "separate but equal" schools. Recognizing the possible impact of the Supreme Court's ruling in the upcoming *Brown* case, Draughon attempted to gather as much information as possible about what the Court would decide. When integration occurred at other southern colleges and universities, Draughon realized the need to collect information and strategies from various places. Two meetings with Auburn's board of trustees provided

Draughon with information and allowed him to strategize with other officials. Upon gathering and processing information, Draughon created a plan to handle integration differently than other southern schools.

Draughon's search for information began in 1953, years before the school actually desegregated, as he and Governor Persons collected information about the upcoming *Brown* decision. Together as boundary spanners for the university, they discussed possible outcomes of the court case as they processed the incoming information. Their discussion of the possible outcomes represents a search for what Adams refers to as unpredictable information concerning unknown events, which is one type of information boundary spanners collect.[2] Because they had no way of knowing how the Court would rule, Draughon and Persons created possible scenarios so they could begin to prepare for an unpredictable future. Collecting this information gave Draughon the opportunity to begin to create a possible plan for the integration of Auburn University in case that was the outcome of the decision. Spanning the boundaries as the issue arose therefore allowed Draughon to create a well-informed plan by which he led the university successfully through integration.

Although Draughon was eventually given full control over how to integrate the school, other members of the board of trustees scanned the boundaries and gave him information that still related to an unknown event. As other schools began to integrate, the board met several times to discuss its options about the unpredictable upcoming event. Because other southern schools waited for the courts to force integration on them, the board of trustees chose to follow the same strategy on November 9, 1962, two years before Auburn admitted Harold Franklin. The board carefully examined each of the

school's options in reference to admitting Auburn's first Black student. Once a decision was made, they examined other important issues such as possibly screening speakers who might promote a pro-integration message and using *The Plainsman* to help communicate the school's message. Thus, in order to create a successful plan for handling integration at Auburn, Draughon met with other board members to collect information.

Moreover, the November 9th meeting allowed the board members and Draughon to discuss the strategies that they felt were best for the school. At this meeting, Draughon established his policy for the media that would remain throughout the process of integration. He instructed the board members to avoid the media, and one of the board members indicated support for avoiding the media as he congratulated Draughon for keeping the issue out of the press. This meeting illustrates Draughon's boundary spanning attempt to gather information from inside and outside sources so that he could create a plan that balanced the needs of people inside and outside of the organization. Sharing information allowed the university to create a unified plan for handling integration that would eventually be successful.

When desegregation became imminent, Draughon began collecting "operating information," which is needed for current policy and has both short- and long-term effects on an organization.[3] On July 17, 1963, the board met again and discussed their current practices regarding Black applicants and attempted to come to a decision on how to handle desegregating the school. By collecting information on the school's policies, Draughon made a decision on how to proceed with the situation of admitting a Black student. He opted to choose the Black applicant that Auburn would admit instead of having one that may have been selected by NAACP or CORE, organizations heavily

involved in the Civil Rights Movement. Moreover, by assessing how the University of Mississippi, Clemson College, Georgia Tech, and the University of Alabama dealt with integration, Draughon and members of the board continued to process information. Since he was in charge of leading the school through desegregation, Draughon gathered information from other board members and scanned the environment for information about other school's desegregation attempts as Auburn's time to integrate drew closer. Relying on a variety of information allowed Draughon to develop a successful plan for Auburn's integration.

Furthermore, this meeting with the board members also allowed Draughon to discuss his strategy for leading the school through integration. As he collected information from the board members, Draughon informed them of his policies and plan, further elaborating on his media strategy. Draughon again told the board that he wanted to avoid the media, and they discussed the problems they had been having with *The Plainsman* running controversial articles about desegregation. Draughon continually sought information from the environment because of his role as boundary spanner, and he realized that the media fueled angry sentiment about integration. Consequently, Draughon understood the importance of limiting the coverage of Auburn University in the press and therefore created a plan that was communicated to other board members that involved avoiding publicity as much as possible.

Constricting/Expanding Boundaries

Since member compliance is crucial during tumultuous times, Draughon relied on constricting and expanding the organization's boundaries to gain compliance. At certain times, the media were excluded from the organization, while they were included at other

times. Excluding the press not only gave Draughon control over how the university was perceived, but it also brought the students and community closer together, helping to ensure a successful plan. Including the press within the organizational boundaries made them a part of the organization so they would internalize the organization's goals and assist in carrying out Draughon's strategy.

Part of Draughon's strategy for handling integration involved leaving the media out of the organization by constricting the university's boundaries. On various occasions he excluded the press from covering events pertaining to desegregation at Auburn University. When Draughon held a meeting with the students at Cliff Hare Stadium, he purposely constricted the organization's boundaries by excluding media and other outsiders. During this conference, he stressed conformity to the rules and regulations, which strengthened the requirements of participation and allowed the students to bond together. Excluding the media at key events communicated that media were outsiders, which may have led students not to talk to the media. With Draughon being the only Auburn University member speaking with the press, he was more able to carry out his plan to avoid publicity.

Moreover, by creating a pledge to abide by the rules for students to sign, Draughon continued to bring the students together to face the conflict. In order to distinguish members from non-members and constrict the organization's boundaries, Draughon required anyone on campus to have proper identification. All students and police had identification cards and were told that if they did not carry it with them, they would not be allowed on campus. Consequently, students who did not sign the pledge or carry identification were excluded from the organization, which meant that the students

who were left as members of the organization bonded together over their conformity to the rules, making the process of integration run more smoothly. Additionally, only the members of the press who had previously registered with the university were allowed access to campus when Harold registered. Members who had not fulfilled this requirement were therefore excluded from covering the event. As a result, some press members were excluded from the organization so they could not directly cover the event. Constricting the university's boundaries therefore reduced the number of people involved in the integration, which gave Draughon more control over the situation.

Expanding a boundary, which involves absorbing challenging groups into the organization's boundaries, was also a strategy that Draughon employed. By creating a news center for the media, Draughon drew the press into the organizational boundaries. As they became part of the organization, media members received information directly from Draughon, which ensured that the image of the school would be upheld since the media became agents of the university and therefore communicated Draughon's message to the public. Moreover, he provided the media with various materials, information, and access to the event. Since they were using resources from Auburn University, the media were more likely to be favorable to Draughon and therefore more likely to follow Draughon's plan.

In addition to the media, Draughon also expanded the university's boundaries to include police officers to protect the school. Although Governor Wallace was against sending federal agents to the campus, Draughon allowed them to assist local and state police officers. By allowing the police to be present at the university, Draughon reinforced his concern for the well-being of the university and its surrounding

community. Furthermore, expanding the boundaries and drawing the various law enforcement agencies in to the university allowed Draughon to reinforce his message that violence would not be tolerated since his security plans were published in various school and statewide publications by the media. Thus, by expanding boundaries by adding more police and accommodating the media, Draughon ensured that this increase in police involvement was reported to the Auburn community, leading to a more peaceful desegregation at the university.

Image Management

Representing the organization is also one of the boundary spanner's main duties. In addition to communicating a particular image of Auburn University, Draughon also needed to protect that image. Since the media represented an efficient way to communicate his message to a large number of people, Draughon initially made use of the press by providing them with interviews and/or statements about the school's position on integration. Once desegregation threatened southern colleges, Draughon realized that in addition to communicating his message, the media could also communicate other more controversial ideas that conflicted with the school's official stance and therefore restricted the opinions allowed to be published in *The Auburn Plainsman*. Once Auburn was successfully integrated, Draughon continued to value the media's ability to communicate his message to the Auburn community as he thanked the students, community, and press for helping Auburn avoid the major problems that occurred at so many other southern universities.

In 1954 before the Supreme Court overturned the "separate but equal" doctrine, Draughon used his role as boundary spanner to represent the organization. By explaining

in the *Montgomery Advertiser* that he was in charge and seeking a solution, Draughon communicated that Auburn was preparing for the future.[4] As a result of the fierce opposition to integration, Draughon used the opportunity of speaking with the media to assure the community that Auburn did not support the decision but was willing to plan in case of an "adverse decision" by the Supreme Court.[5] Thus, Draughon created an image of the organization that shared the same values and beliefs as the community but was willing to change and create a plan if necessary. As a boundary spanner, Draughon understood the needs of both the organization and the public, and he was able to create a message that represented the university in a way that resonated within the community and led people to follow Draughon as a leader.

Moreover, Draughon wanted to create an image of Auburn University as an organization that cared about the needs of Black students. By participating in the Educational Institute on Race Relations in 1955, Draughon conveyed two key messages to the public. First, he communicated his, and consequently the school's, endorsement of segregation. Second, he communicated his concern for Black students and his commitment to their education. This image resonated with students and community members who felt the same way about Black education. Since a boundary spanner must understand the needs of the environment in addition to the needs of the organization's members, Draughon drew on his knowledge of the public to create a message that encompassed attitudes of Auburn University as well as the people in the Auburn community. As a boundary spanner, Draughon therefore managed the organization's relationship with its community to maintain a particular image and maintain support from the public.

When Auburn professor Bud Hutchinson spoke out in favor of integration in 1957, his message conflicted with Draughon's message for the university. Due to this conflict of interest, Draughon used his power as authority in the organization to deny Hutchinson tenure and make sure that he could not find a job at another university for the upcoming term. This act of rebuke demonstrated Draughon's anti-integration message to the public, communicating that Hutchinson's message was not consistent with the university's message. Moreover, Draughon sent a statement to the media to further explain his attitudes on the subject, reinforcing his actions with Hutchinson. The media statement clearly communicated the image of Auburn University as pro-segregation that Draughon hoped to maintain. Thus, Draughon again used the media as a tool to disseminate his messages about Auburn University's stance on desegregation.

Furthermore, when Jim Bullington wrote an article in favor of integration that ran on the front page of *The Plainsman*, many people in the community were outraged, causing Draughon to act. Since Draughon needed the support of the community and was pressured by many alumni who felt Draughon was not in control, he punished the editor and created new policy for the newspaper. His decision to make the newspaper editor meet with a member of the Publications Board prior to printing each edition of the paper demonstrated an attempt to manage the school's image in the Auburn community. After the controversial publication ran, Draughon appeared to have no control over the newspaper. By acting quickly, however, Draughon indicated to the community that he was in control of the university. As he demonstrated his ability to lead the university, Draughon became a more convincing leader that people should follow. Moreover, Draughon's actions indicated that he would not tolerate extreme behavior, whether it was

for or against desegregation on campus. Consequently, because he punished people who spoke out with strong opinions about the issue, Draughon maintained an image of a prepared Auburn that would not tolerate behavior that went against the rules and regulations that Draughon established. Additionally, when Jim Dinsmore broke the rules and wrote another article in favor of desegregation, Draughon's message remained clear as he punished Dinsmore, who was eventually removed from the newspaper staff. Communicating a strong, consistent message gave Draughon credibility and further demonstrated that deviance would not be tolerated at Auburn University.

On January 8th when Auburn officially integrated without an incident, Draughon continued to manage the university's image. By composing a statement of thanks and gratitude to the students, faculty, staff, community, and media, Draughon maintained the image of the university. Expressing gratitude cultivated an image of the university as an institution focused solely on education. This recurring theme ran throughout many of Draughon's statements to the media about desegregation. Emphasizing the school's devotion to education, Draughon made a statement to the media in 1954 hoping that there would be "no interruption of the normal educational process" resulting from the *Brown* decision.[6] Moreover, Draughon's dedication to advancing the knowledge of students and creating the best environment for that purpose is evident in the December edition of *This is Auburn* that is dedicated completely to Auburn's desegregation attempt. For example, Draughon indicated that if students were compliant with the rules and regulations, "Auburn University will continue, without interruption, its forward march toward excellence in every field of endeavor."[7] Thus, Draughon still remained concerned about the university's image even after the school successfully integrated. Sending a statement

of thanks to the media allowed Draughon to continue working on his relationship with the environment and assure the community that his main concern was and would continue to be the educational process at Auburn University.

Hence, as a boundary spanner, Draughon wanted to communicate to the public a particular image of Auburn University that changed over time with social movements. Initially, he created an image of the school as anti-integration, but willing to adapt to a changing environment. And although he did not want to integrate, he protected the school's image by adapting his message to communicate that the university would accept desegregation even though the school's position was still against integration. When other southern schools integrated and Draughon realized that Auburn would soon have to follow suit, Draughon created a message that emphasized that if his plans for integration were not followed, students and people within the community would be punished. During the entire process, however, Draughon consistently cultivated an image of the university that stressed the importance of a good education.

Protection

All of Draughon's boundary spanning efforts were made in order to protect the university. His actions protected the image of the university by sending appropriate messages when necessary to the media. Not only was Draughon protecting the image, but he was also physically protecting the university from violence and riots that had plagued so many other southern schools. Draughon brought in local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to protect the school from angry students and community members. Since he collected and processed large amounts of information about desegregation attempts at other southern universities, he concluded that the police

presence was necessary, even though Governor Wallace disagreed. Thus, physically protecting the campus, students, faculty, staff, community members, and media was important to Draughon and he made sure that his plan for dealing with integration reflected this concern.

In order to ensure that the campus would be protected from harm, Draughon made use of the media. People all over the country and world were interested in the civil rights struggle in the South, so Draughon knew that the media would be important figures during Auburn's desegregation attempt. By collecting information from other university's who witnessed violent opposition, he created a detailed plan for ensuring Auburn would not be like the other schools. The media assisted Draughon in explaining his plan to the public. However, because the media may have instigated the problems at other schools, he needed to protect the campus from the media as well. As a result, Draughon restricted their access to the campus, and Auburn's integration attempt was successful.

As the president of a major institution, Draughon occupied the role of boundary spanner. When Auburn University faced a major change as the Supreme Court abolished segregation, Draughon's role became even more important for the university. His planning began with seeking and collecting information that he processed to create a strategy for dealing with integration. Consequently, he both constricted and expanded boundaries to exclude and include members of the community to help guide the school through a troubling time. In addition to processing information, Draughon carried out another important role for boundaries spanners- representing the organization. Ultimately, all of his efforts were made to protect the university's image and protect the

institution from the same harm that affected other southern institutions that integrated in the same time period.

Significance

Draughon's plan for integration significantly affected the school in many ways. He kept the school out of the spotlight, which may carry consequences even today. The University of Alabama, University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi are all enduring reminders of the discrimination and hatred that was so ingrained in our society. Auburn University, however, did not make the list of schools with violent opposition to the change. Why is the desegregation of Auburn University less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this? Certainly many factors worked together to produce a successful integration. Auburn desegregated after many other southern schools had, so maybe the attitudes of southerners towards integration was evolving. However, there was also one important distinction between Auburn University and the other schools. The event was purposely kept out of the media spotlight by President Draughon, and he significantly limited the media's access to information to achieve this goal. Although the media themselves did not cause the mobs and hostility, their presence may have affected the way people acted during desegregation attempts at other schools. Moreover, the intense coverage and sensationalism may have fueled people's anger, leading them to protest and riot. Draughon's message communicated through the media was simple and consistent- violence would not be tolerated.

Realizing the possible impact the media may have, Draughon strategically excluded or included them at appropriate times to ensure a peaceful integration. The media played an important role in broadcasting the plight of Black southerners to the

nation and the rest of the world. By restricting the media's access to the university, Draughon kept Auburn's struggle from leaving the community and consequently left the university's image in tact. As he shielded the world from any possible resistance, Draughon made it appear that the struggle to desegregate was significantly lessening. As a result, because there was little to report about Auburn University, he maintained its image as an institution whose main concern was the quality of education of its students while emphasizing that major southern schools wanted to maintain good ties with the Black community.

Thus, Draughon's leadership and foresight led to a successful integration that was so different than other major southern schools. The reason it was different was in part because of Draughon's control over information about the event. The media played an important role by refraining from or limiting coverage on Auburn University. By following Draughon's guidelines and regulations, the press communicated Draughon's message to the public, which led to a peaceful integration. Media, therefore, contributed significantly to the peaceful integration that was thoroughly planned over a decade by President Draughon, which led to Auburn University being left off the list of violent desegregation attempts.

Conclusion

Draughon's role as president of Auburn University forced him to become both an advocate and a boundary spanner. As an advocate, Draughon controlled the flow of information about Auburn's impending desegregation from the event to the media and the public. He intimidated other potential advocates so they would not compete with him in providing messages to the press, and he ofttten avoided the media so the event would not

compete with other events. Draughon did, however, provide the media with information that had been strategically organized to represent Auburn University in a particular way. His role as an advocate therefore consisted of cutting off other information sources so the media only had access to his information when he wanted them to have access.

As a boundary spanner, Draughon worked hard to collect as much information as he could so his plan for dealing with integration would be successful. Once he gathered and processed incoming information from other schools, Auburn University, and other people, he created a strategy that involved expanding and constricting the school's boundaries. By including insiders, specifically the press, in the organization, Draughon encouraged them to share his ideas and communicate his message to the public. In addition, excluding members, which also included the press, allowed students and community members to bond over conformity to better deal with the situation. Finally, Draughon's ultimate goal as boundary spanner was to protect both the good name and reputation of the university and the people and campus from physical harm that occurred at other southern schools.

As Draughon performed an advocacy and boundary spanning role for Auburn University, he carefully constructed a plan that focused on the media to avoid turmoil during Harold Franklin's registration. Why is the desegregation of Auburn University less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this? Auburn's integration is less well known than the attempts at the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi because Auburn University's president heavily controlled the media's access to information. As he feared

that publicity would complicate the process of desegregation, Draughon continually controlled the flow of information to the media.

The only information given to the media came directly from Draughon and therefore communicated his position. Other positions were quickly and quietly discouraged from competing with Draughon as he gained full control over how the university was presented in the media. He avoided sensationalizing the issue and, as a result, kept Auburn's struggle quiet, which gave Draughon more power since he seemed in complete control over the situation. Thus, because Draughon exerted considerably more control over the media than other southern schools facing the same challenge, he was able to minimize the event in the news. Moreover, he consistently used the media to send a carefully developed message that noncompliance with the rules would result in severe penalties. Desegregation was different at Auburn University and the media played a significant role as Draughon's warning of disobedience was consistent and reinforced time after time in Draughon's statements to the media and as Draughon restricted the media's access to the event.

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[1] Geoffrey Birt, "API President Says Negro Tact, Good Judgment to Help State Over School Segregation Hump," *Montgomery Advertiser*, 16 January 1954, p. A1, 3. (Hereafter cited as Birt).

[2] J. Stacy Adams, "Interorganizational Processes and Organization Boundary Activities," *Research in Organizational Behavior* 2 (1980).

[3] Ibid..

[4] Birt, "API President Says,.."

[5] Ibid.

[6] "Statement by President Ralph B. Draughon," 3 January 1964, Office of Communications and Marketing Collection, Record Group 381, Box 6, Folder # 196, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al, 1.

[7] "President Draughon Outlines University's Position and Policies on Court Order," *This is Auburn*, December 1963, pp. 1-4, 4.

VI. CONCLUSION

The integration of Auburn University was markedly different than integration attempts at other similar southern universities. Harold Franklin enrolled at Auburn and avoided the violence that plagued the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi. Why is the desegregation of Auburn University less well known than other southern schools and what role, if any, did the media play in this? The previous chapters provided the answers to my research question by establishing the historical and theoretical contexts, detailing the event at Auburn, and explaining what happened through a theoretical framework. Auburn's integration is less well known than the attempts at the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi because Auburn University's president heavily controlled the media's access to information. The media played a significant role to the extent that their messages were controlled by Draughon.

As segregation affected all aspects of life for Black southerners, the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum in efforts to reverse the institutionalized discrimination. Once segregation was finally declared illegal by the Supreme Court's landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, southern universities continued to refuse admission to Black students, and challenging the discrimination through the court system became a useful strategy that forced schools to integrate. In the midst of other schools' struggles to integrate, Auburn University was forced by the court system to desegregate by admitting

Harold Franklin. Auburn's President Ralph B. Draughon developed a plan to successfully desegregate the school while other schools were met with angry, violent protestors whose actions were broadcast across the country and world as the media reported on the struggles.

Draughon's plan focused on controlling the flow of information to the media and the public. By limiting the role of other advocates and limiting the information communicated to the media, Draughon effectively controlled how the media reported about the event and how the event was perceived by the public. As he collected all of the information about desegregation at Auburn, Draughon avoided sensationalism that accompanied desegregation at other southern schools and therefore minimized the importance of the event. Moreover, his single, consistent message that stressed strict adherence to the rules and guidelines that were established for integration was broadcast by the media. Thus, Auburn University successfully integrated in 1964 and maintained the image of a school focused on education.

Significance

This project is a case study in how an organization dealt with a crisis. Controlling the media's access to information lessened the severity of the situation and contributed to a peaceful desegregation attempt for Auburn University. In the process, Draughon, as the head of an organization, managed the school's image as an institution focused on education. Moreover, as a crisis, integration threatened to ruin the school's reputation and result in violence. The project therefore contributes to understanding the important role of the media that may impact the reputation, success, and physical safety of an organization.

Furthermore, Auburn University continues to struggle with "race relations" forty years after desegregating. In 2001, several fraternity members dressed as Ku Klux Klan members and in blackface, offending both Black and White people.[1] Photographs of the costumes circulated on the internet and drew national attention to the campus. This project is therefore important in chronicling the history of the attitudes at Auburn University to better understand why actions are being taken today.

In addition to Auburn, the state of Alabama is strongly associated with racism, and Governor George Wallace's schoolhouse stand at the University of Alabama represents an enduring reminder of the South's struggle to accept the drastic change. However, Auburn did not struggle, demonstrating that although the South was reluctant to desegregate, all southerners did not violently and forcefully react when southern schools integrated. Thus, this research may be helpful in contradicting stereotypes about southerners and change the way many view the South.

The Westley-MacLean model and boundary spanning theory are important in understanding what occurred because both focus on the role of an individual or individuals as they influence the communication processes of an organization. Draughon was the individual in charge of Auburn University and had the most impact on what happened during Auburn's desegregation. Draughon's plan was to be in control of all information that the media received, which is a key component of the Westley-MacLean model as well as boundary spanning. Although it is clear that he was successful from an outsider's perspective, the theories describe how, as an advocate and boundary spanner, Draughon was able to control the access to and the flow of information. The theories are therefore crucial in interpreting how Auburn University successfully integrated.

By avoiding the protests and violence that marred other similar southern schools, Draughon effectively led the university through a turbulent time. His plan was so effective that not only was there no violence on campus but the school also remains free of the stigma associated with the schools that struggled to integrate. In a relatively large organization, Draughon developed and carried out a plan that relied on the members of the university community to follow his suggestions. Draughon's success results from several key moves, and his plan would be successful today or in the future if carried out similarly. Although journalists have more access to information and resources, when carried out correctly Draughon's plan would still enable an advocate and/or boundary spanner to control how her or his organization is perceived by the public.

First, Draughon, the students, and the Auburn University community shared a common goal and formed a cohesive group. Since most members of the organization felt the need to maintain peace and shared the common goal of keeping Auburn's image and reputation intact, Draughon was able to convince the community to follow his plan. Thus, it would be much harder to control the flow of information in an organization that lacks common goals or cohesion. For example, it would be difficult to convince members of organizations such as Enron, Worldcom, or HealthSouth, all companies that have recently been involved in highly publicized corporate scandals, to remain silent because the employees have dissimilar interests in the situation. Garnering member compliance during a crisis and emphasizing points of similarity are therefore key aspects to successfully deal with the situation, thus current organizations must establish internal support to assure compliance.

Second, all members of the organization need to be fully aware of the plan. Draughon began discussing his strategy to avoid publicity and sensationalism with other university officials to ensure their silence on the issue. In contrast, when the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Mississippi tried to integrate, university officials often spoke out in opposition, fueling the media frenzy that ensued. Moreover, Draughon discussed his plan to avoid publicity by warning students and faculty members that speaking with the press may cause rumors and may disrupt campus. Thus, part of Draughon's success resulted from his assurance that members of the organization would remain silent throughout the process. Furthermore, Draughon made his reasoning for avoiding the media clear to members of the Auburn University community, which helped people understand why he was using the particular strategy and therefore made them more likely to follow. An organization today could be equally successful by informing all employees of the plan while also explaining for what purpose the plan is being used.

Finally, Draughon was successful because he chose particular times to communicate and planned each piece of communication. Once it became imminent, Draughon did not speak publicly about desegregation. Rather, he offered statements to the media instead of being interviewed himself, reducing the likelihood of making a statement that would upset the community. Governor Wallace, however, frequently used the media to communicate his opposition on integrating the University of Alabama, which sensationalized the event. Draughon's careful consideration of what to say and when to say it allowed him to downplay the event, causing less public interest. Present-day organizations that avoid making unscripted comments that may harm the

organization's image or reputation and disseminate strategic information and key times will be able to maintain more control during a crisis situation.

Draughon's highly effective plan could therefore be useful for organizations undergoing a crisis today or in the future. Controlling the flow of information has important implications for how an organization is viewed, and the more control the head of an organization has, the better s/he will be able to deal with the situation. However, Draughon's strategy is only useful during times when the employees and leaders have similar goals and want the same outcome. Explaining the need to avoid publicity and informing the organization members of the plan so everyone will follow the same instructions will give an advocate or boundary spanner the needed control to handle a crisis. Moreover, controlling which information is disseminated at certain times and avoiding making unscripted comments allows the organization's advocate or boundary spanner more control over the information given to the media. This project therefore illustrates how to successfully use the media to handle a crisis situation.

Limitations and Future Research

This research has potential limitations that suggest areas where future research could be useful. As a history, this project is limited only to the documents that were found and the memories of living people. The project focused on President Draughon's control over the flow of information, but an equally interesting aspect of the project would be an analysis of the degree to which the media allowed Draughon to control information. More newspapers, such as the *Tuskegee Times*, a newspaper from the community of the historically Black Tuskegee University, could be analyzed to see how they reported on the event. A broader content analysis from media across the state and

region would also provide more detail in the extent of Draughon's control. Additionally, Auburn refused to provide a dormitory room for Harold, and he again used the legal system to force Auburn to desegregate the dorms.[2] Harold Franklin's struggle to integrate the dorms would provide deeper insight into how Auburn University integrated, and the press coverage may further demonstrate Draughon's control of the media.

Furthermore, this project focused more on the historical documents than on developing a collaboration of people's memories that were key during desegregation. For example, Harold Franklin and James E. Foy could provide more detail about Draughon's plan. Moreover, this project only examined newspaper coverage, excluding television coverage from the analysis. Images available through television stations may provide new information that was not covered by the newspapers. Future research should therefore explore interviewing key people as well as students attending Auburn University during its desegregation while examining television coverage in addition to newspapers.

This project also focused on peaceful integration at one southern school. Several other universities, however, integrated peacefully in addition to Auburn. A comparison of peaceful integrations at the University of North Carolina, the University of Tennessee, Clemson University, and the University of South Carolina would provide new insight into desegregation. Thus, future research should focus on comparing what occurred at each university that allowed it to peacefully integrate during a time when many other schools struggled with the same event.

This project stops upon Harold's registration and first days of class. While he was the first Black student at Auburn, integration was not widespread at the university.

Four years later, only 41 of Auburn's students were Black, and they struggled to find their place at the university.[3] Future research could also examine the ways that segregation still exists at Auburn University. Though the school technically desegregated in 1964, roughly 7.6% of the student population is Black as of the 2004-2005 school year.[4] In a state where 26% of the total population is Black, Auburn admits a low percentage of Black students, thus continuing to communicate an aversion to admitting Black students.[5]

This project examined the functions of boundary spanners, focusing more on the boundary spanning role than traits of an effective boundary spanner. Examining the specific characteristics that enable a boundary spanner to be effective would provide more insight into why Draughon succeeded with his plan to desegregate the university. Although Draughon was successful, other boundary spanners following the same plan may not carry out the plan successfully. Future research should therefore focus on the personality characteristics of boundary spanners and how they may play a role in press coverage.

While this project focused on Draughon, it does not consider forces that may have affected Draughon's decisions on how to handle the media. Many media outlets did not want to turn on local customs and therefore reported on the event with the same attitude as the community members. Neil and Henrietta Davis, editors of the *AU Bulletin*, however, were outspoken supporters of integration. Because of their position and ability to garner publicity, the Davis's may have influenced Draughon's plan to use the media. Future research should examine the specific context of Draughon's attempt to integrate within the same community as outspoken publishers.

Finally, this project's analysis is limited to one specific aspect of the Westley-MacLean model of communication and boundary spanning theory. Other theories may further explain what occurred at Auburn University and why desegregation was different than other southern schools. The event could be examined from a multitude of communication standpoints, such as persuasion, public relations, or cultural studies. Due to the importance of understanding why violence did not occur, future research providing new ways to examine the topic are necessary and essential to fully explain how some schools avoided the turmoil while others did not.

Conclusion

Draughon's actions continue to carry numerous consequences for Auburn University and represent an important case study on crisis management for current and future organizations. The campus' failure to elicit violence indicates Draughon's success as a leader. Organizations in the midst of a crisis should consider how Draughon both avoided and used the media to his advantage. Sensationalism may damage an organization's image and reputation and threaten the physical safety of its members, thus indicating that the adage, "any publicity is good publicity," does not apply in all situations. Draughon took a school going through what could easily be considered its toughest challenge and balanced the school's focus on education with the unavoidable, yet unwanted, social changes. Understanding the media's potential impact was therefore key in saving Auburn University from the long-term consequences of negative media coverage.

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[1] "Breaking News: Greek Life Fraternity Members Involved in Parties Suspended From Auburn," *The Auburn Plainsman*, 15 November 15, 2001 [newspaper on-line]; available from

http://www.theplainsman.com/vnews/display.v/ART/2001/11/15/3bf42d4db41f4?in_archive=1; Internet; accessed 24 June 2004.

[2] A Summary of Major Activities and Developments Related to the Court-Ordered Admission of Harold A. Franklin," 15 January, 1964, Board of Trustees Collection, Record Group 521, Folder # 240, RBD Library Archives, Auburn, Al.

[3] Roy Riley, "41 Negroes Enrolled Here; Greater Number Expected," *Auburn Plainsman*, 16 November 1967, p. 1B.

[4] Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, "Distribution of Enrollment by Class Level Sex and Ethnicity Fall 2004," 9 September 2004, available from http://www.panda.auburn.edu/reports/enrollment/Fall2004_enr_by_class_ethnic_college.pdf; accessed May 25, 2005; Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, "Distribution of Enrollment by Class Level Sex and Ethnicity Spring 2005," 2 February 2005, available from http://www.panda.auburn.edu/reports/enrollment/Spring2005_enr_by_class_ethnic_college.pdf; accessed May 25, 2005.

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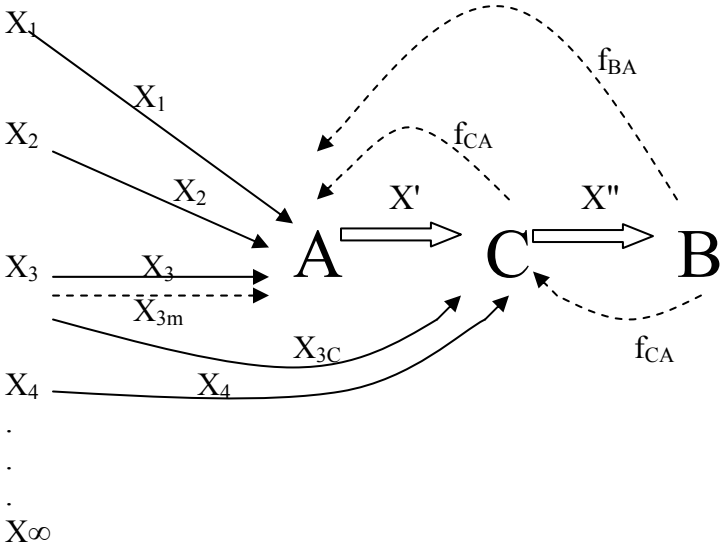
APPENDIX



Events occur in a public's (B) sensory field, and messages (X1, X2, X3…X4) from an event (X) are transmitted to an advocate (A) or to a medium or channel (C). When an advocate frames the message to fit her/his interests, the new message (X') is sent to a medium (C). When no advocate exists, messages (X3C) flow directly from an event (X) to the medium (C). The medium (C) acts as a gatekeeper by deciding which messages will continue to be transmitted. The new message that has also been framed by the medium (X") is transmitted to a public.