THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN TO EDUCATION IN OKLAHOMA

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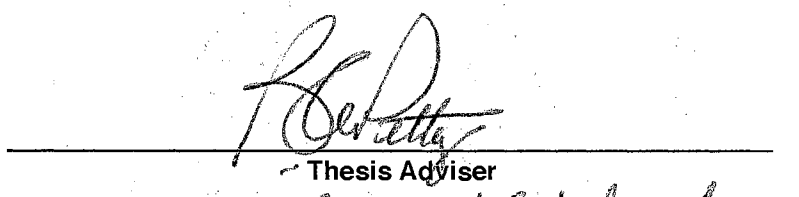

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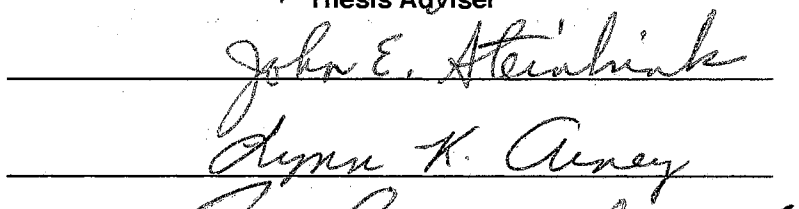

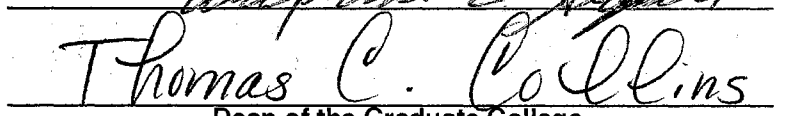

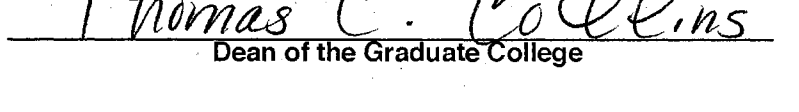

Dean of the Graduate College

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the African-American women in my family, past and present, who have instilled in me a love of self, a love of learning, and a desire to succeed despite the odds. I am dedicating this work to my mother, Dolores Marie Purnell Scott; my grandmothers, Myrtle Bertrand Purnell and Carrie Walker Scott; my great-grandmothers, Julia Farzan Bertrand, and Lucy Walker; my great-great grand mother Katie Mary Crawford, a former slave; my aunts Juanita Purnell Melton, Carnell Purnell, and Mary Scott; my great- aunt Inez Bertrand Gayles and my great-great-great-grandmother Lizzie Bertrand who came to the United States from Santo Domingo and started the proud heritage I come from.

SPECIAL DEDICATION

A special dedication goes to the African-American women featured in this study and to all African-American women educators. Their impact on the education of Blacks has been important and crucial. Without their struggles, their dedication, and their perserverance, we could not have achieved, beyond our wildest dreams, an equal chance for knowledge and the ability to participate in American society.

I would also like to dedicate this research to my father, Robert J. Scott, who died in 1991, and was very instrumental in encouraging me to pursue my goals and knew I would some day make it to the "mountain top."

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

African American history and culture in Oklahoma are both rich and exciting. Throughout America, African Americans have traditionally put a major emphasis on education as a way to enjoy economic independence and full citizenship. This was also true in Oklahoma. African Americans overcame many obstacles to gain equal opportunities for education. African-American women were in the forefront of this battle and made indelible marks on the educational progress of Oklahoma. Certainly, there is much in the history and present position of African-American women in education that is worthy of research and study. The findings of this study can have major importance to the education of African Americans, other minorities, and the general population of Oklahoma.

PROBLEM

The contributions African American men and women have made to the growth and development of Oklahoma have been both significant and beneficial. However, the documentation of these contributions has been quite few in comparison to the documentation concerning Whites and Native Americans. In particular, the contributions of African-American women have received little more than footnotes and postscripts. Unfortunately, from a

preliminary search for information, it appears that no formal study on the contributions that African-American women have made to education in Oklahoma has been done.

It is important to make visible those women who have traditionally and historically been invisible. Their awesome and compelling stories must be told because they emphasize the great potential we all have to change conditions that severely restrict the progress of a major segment of American society.

It is important to collect data regarding the struggles and brilliant strategies African-American women have put forth to gain equal access to educational opportunities in this state. It is important to show how education for African Americans in Oklahoma is imperative to economic growth and security; to show the impact African-American women have had on the educational structure of Oklahoma for its citizens; and to show how their trailblazing spirit influenced current educational opportunities in Oklahoma.

PURPOSES

The purpose of this study is to document, the contributions that African-American women have made to education in Oklahoma and to tell the stories of how these women took risks to create an extraordinary movement that allowed equal access to educational opportunities for all Oklahoma citizens. It is important to examine how these women used the American system of law to effect changeusing the Nation's highest law, the Constitution of the United States. That document became a tool that an African-American woman used to break down the barriers of segregation at a state facility of higher education.

Another purpose of this study is to produce a video documentary featuring eight African-American women whose stories capture the essence of

the struggle for educational equality in Oklahoma. By capturing their stories visually, one can gain a better understanding of the facts while experiencing the spirit that drove them to better their lives while bettering the lives of others.

The overall purpose of this study is to illustrate how these African-American women have shown dedication, tenacity, and courage in fighting for the basic right to receive an equal education and how the State of Oklahoma is better because of their struggle and accomplishments.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following are terms used in this research.

African American (Black, Negro, Colored.) Members of a minority group in America with African ancestry (Merriam Webster, 1994).

Native American (American Indian.) A member of the aboriginal people of America or of any of the aboriginal North, South, and Central America stocks. Usually excluding the Eskimos (Merriam Webster, 1994).

Anglo American/White American. Refers to the majority of Americans whose ancestry is English specifically and European generally (Merriam Webster, 1994).

Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma. Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole Indian tribes who occupied Indian Territory around 1817. They were removed to the area that became Oklahoma from the southeastern United States. Each of these tribes included some African Americans, some slaves and some free men and women (Aldrich, 1973).

Separate-but-Equal. Separate schools for White and Black children with like accommodations (Aldrich, 1973).

Jim Crow Laws. The practice and policy of segregation and discrimination against African Americans (Aldrich, 1973).

Segregation. Separation of the races (Aldrich, 1973).

Freedman. Blacks who were freed from slavery (Aldrich, 1973).

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

This is a qualitative study with historical significance that helps us to understand the status of equal educational opportunities in Oklahoma. The methodology used in this study is the long interview. According to Grant McCracken the long interview "is one of the most powerful methods in the qualitative armory. For certain descriptive and analytic purposes, no instrument of inquiry is more revealing (1988: 9)".

The long interview method was chosen because it allows for the opportunity to delve into the minds, lives and experiences of the African-American women who effected the changes in Oklahoma education and to capture the reasons that inspired them to make such bold achievements (McCracken, 1988: 10).

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as an instrument in the collection and analysis of data. This is important because it points to the reality that the researcher can not meet the objectives of the study without incorporating their own "experience, imagination, and intellect" crucial to the understanding of the data of the study (McCracken, 1988: 18).

As an African-American woman educator, my role as an "instrument" allowed me to draw from my own experience and knowledge to pull out worthy

responses from the women interviewed. This technique is important to the comprehension of their situations and how each of them overcame major obstacles.

The first step in data collection began with a review of the literature which was primarily historical in nature. Crucial to the understanding of the battles these women waged is the knowledge of all the previous conditions and issues that existed regarding racial segregation and the separate-but-equal doctrine that existed in Oklahoma Territory and later the State of Oklahoma. This detailed review of the literature was critical in defining the problem and purpose of this study. Also, the review of the literature assisted in formulating the questions for the interviews (McCracken, 1988: 30-31).

The second step in data collection involved constructing the interview questions and conducting the interviews. Biographical questions were constructed first to gather the details of these women's lives. It allowed these women to tell their stories, their way (McCracken,1988: 34). These initial questions, dealing with biographical information, are called "grand tour questions" , and allows the interviewer to break the ice and allows the respondent to open up and relax and talk freely about their lives as it relates to the research topic (Spradley1979: 86-87). Questions that were asked of all interview respondents included: 1. Give the basic biographical information about yourself 2. Tell the reasons why receiving an education was important to your family 4.Describe your philosophy of education 5. Describe your greatest contribution to education?

The next part of the questionnaire included question areas (McCracken, 1988:) specific to each woman's experience. These questions are called "mini

tour questions" and are like "grand tour questions" except they ask for information on a much smaller unit of experience (Spradley, 1979: 88). See appendix B for the mini tour questions asked of each respondent.

Interviews with these women took place in their homes or places of employment in surroundings that would be familiar and comfortable for them. These interviews were video taped by professional television photographers and a hour-long documentary was produced (see appendix B).

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was done by employing the domain analysis approach found in ethnographic research. A domain is a symbolic category that includes other categories that share at least one characteristic of meaning (Spradley, 1979: 100).

The basis for the structure of a domain is a *cover term.* Cover terms are names for a category of *cultural knowledge.* All domains have a minimum of two included terms. These are folk terms that are connected to the category of knowledge named by the cover term. A *single semantic relationship* is the next attribute of a domain. When two folk categories are joined together, we call this link a semantic relationship. In a domain the semantic relationship links the cover term to all the included terms in a set. Finally, every domain has boundaries (Spradley, 1979: 100-101).

In order to facilitate the discovery process of identifying domains, two universal semantic relationships were chosen, strict inclusion (X is a kind of Y) and means-to-an-end (X is a way to Y). Strict inclusion allows you to focus on

nouns and means-to-an-end allows you to focus on verbs (Spradley, 1979: 112). Then domains were identified from the interviews of the African-American women educators.

The next step was to prepare a domain analysis worksheet to record a domain, a cover term, a semantic relationship, included terms, and boundary from the interviews with the eight African-American women educators. James Spradley (1979: 113) believes that by making systematic use of the domain analysis worksheets, it will assist researchers in uncovering domains embedded in the sentences spoken by the interviewees.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

Pre Statehood

From 1820 to 1840 the Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw, and Seminole Indians (the Five Civilized Tribes) were removed from the southeastern section of the United States to Indian Territory. The Indians brought along the influences of the White culture. This included buying and owning African slaves. As the Five Civilized Tribes settled in Indian Territory, their slaves helped them to build new homes and to clear the land for growing crops. They also performed as servants for the Indians. With the government in the Territory unorganized at this time, Oklahoma was a safe haven for Negro slaves among the Indians. In fact, Negroes became integral members of many of the Indian tribes, particularly the Creeks and the Seminoles (Aldrich, 1973; and Dale and Aldrich, 1978).

During the post Civil War period in the United States, known as the Reconstruction era, there were major legislative changes that impacted African Americans. The Thirteenth Amendment to the U. S. Constitution, declared in effect on December 18, 1865, made slavery illegal; the Fourteenth Amendment, declared in effect on July 28, 1868, made Blacks citizens of the country; and the Fifteenth Amendment, declared in effect on March 30, 1870, gave Blacks the right to vote. The U. S. Constitution legally established political equality among

Blacks and Whites. However, the confusion that existed during the Reconstruction era made it very hard for the legislation to take effect (Kopecky, 1990: 208).

A major factor contributing to the turmoil that existed in the Reconstruction era was the fact that the government did not provide adequate economic support for Blacks. Unfortunately, Blacks still had to rely on White dominance for survival and sharecropping became the prevailing economic system (Franklin, 1980).

Reconstruction in Indian Territory was quite different from the rest of the country. The federal government negotiated treaties with each of the Five Civilized Tribes which forced them to accept the Freedmen as members of their tribe and to provide them with land (Kopecky, 1990: 208).

The Seminoles had no problem with accepting Blacks as members of their tribe. Intermarriage between the Seminoles and Blacks occurred even before the Civil War. However, the Cherokees and Creeks were not as accepting as the Seminoles. Their philosophy was rooted deep in the old pre-Civil War mentality that Blacks were inferior. The Cherokees and Creeks wanted the federal government to remove Blacks at the government's expense but eventually, they did adopt Freedmen into their tribes (Kopecky, 1990: 208).

The Choctaws and Chickasaws were vehemently against tribal adoption of free Blacks and actually gave each free Black person, through the federal government, a total of $100 for removal. However, the federal government never did remove any free Blacks and, although the Choctaws eventually accepted Blacks into their tribe, the Chickasaws refused to follow suit. Both tribes did list Freedmen on the rolls for land distribution (Kopecky, 1990: 208).

Indian tribes were expected to provide for Blacks, because of the treaty clauses, and so many Blacks had the opportunity to receive an education.

The schools were often in bad condition and the teachers did not have the best teaching credentials, but the opportunity to receive some form of education was progress for Blacks (Kopecky, 1990: 208).

In Indian Territory, missionaries worked very hard to establish schools among the Five Civilized Tribes. Tribal leaders slowly began to see the necessity for providing education for their people, and each tribe established at least one school. Because the slaves were considered property of the Indians, and their main roles were as servants and farmers, it was not necessary to provide formal education for them. Although a few Blacks attended school, there is no real attendance documented (Aldrich, 1973: 20).

As Indians began to free their slaves and allow them to become members of their tribes, Freedmen among the Indians began to see the importance of education. Blacks nationally also began to see the importance of education. In Tullahassee, Oklahoma, one of the better known schools for Blacks existed. The school was originally a school for the Creek Indians, but as they slowly moved away from the area, more and more Blacks attended the school. A fire in the 1870s burned the main school building, and several of the Black students went to another school. However by 1881, most of the Creeks had left the area and the Creek Council turned the school over to the Freedmen (Teall, 1971: 16).

The Tullahassee Manual Labor School became known as one of the top educational institutions in Indian Territory. Both male and female Negro students attended. Under the leadership of Professor E. H. Roashel, students were treated with esteem; they received three meals a day and were lodged in gender-based dorms at night.

Negro women were allowed to obtain an education in schools established by White missionaries. What follows is an account of an African-American woman, Elzora Lewis (Indian Pioneer Papers, Oklahoma Historical Society, 1860) who received her training in one such school.

I received my academic training in a Baptist Missionary school located on Agency Hill where the Veterans Hospital now stands on Honor Heights. The old stone building is now an Indian museum. Originally built to house the Indian agency of the Five Civilized Tribes, it was abandoned then used as a dormitory and administration building by the Creek Mission School.

This school, established by Rev. Robert A. Lesley, a Creek Indian, trained the children of the Negro Freedmen.

Anna Lesley, the wife of Rev. Lesley, was a Negro educated in the East. Her services were invaluable in the training of students in the Creek Mission School.

On April 14, 1862, the Colored citizens and residents of Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory, sent a letter to the Hon. Caleb B. Smith, Secretary of Interior and Commissioner of The Indian Affairs in Washington D. C. They stated in the letter that there were almost 2,000 colored children between the ages of eight (8) and twenty-one (21). These children were "entirely deprived of the advantages of school and educational facilities." In 1862, Congress voted $10,000 to support schools for Black children in the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations (National Archives, Washington, D. C., 1862).

The opening of the "Unassigned Lands in Indian Territory" brought about new changes. The Organic Act, the governing order in Indian Territory, provided for education in section 16 and 36. In a short time, most towns had some kind of school. The first Territorial Legislature allowed counties to determine whether to have their children receive an education in mixed or separate buildings for Black or White students. Most counties in Oklahoma decided to have separate facilities, which determined the policy of segregation in Oklahoma (Aldrich, 1973: 32).

A public school system for Blacks was organized in Oklahoma Territory (Franklin, 1980: 143). Oklahoma City began an elementary school for Black male and female children on the corners of California and Harvey streets in a two-room house. J. D. Randolph was the first teacher and principal (Teall, 1971: 18).

The territorial Governor, George W. Steele, in 1891, noted this racial breakdown of Black and White children attending the school. He reported an enrollment of 20,085 White children and 1,252 Black children. It was during the territorial era that the famous Plessy versus Ferguson case concluded that the policy of separate-but-equal facilities for the races was constitutional. The Supreme Court rendered that decision in 1896. It was not until 1954 that this decision was reversed (Aldrich, 1973).

The Establishment of Langston University

The land-grant college system in the United States began with the Justin Morrill Act of 1862. This act allowed the United States Government to grant land to individual states to establish common schools and institutions of higher education. This act had no bearing on the education of Blacks then because slavery was still in effect. However, the possibility of having access to higher education improved with the "second Morrill Act" in 1890, which gave annual appropriations to states that built schools of higher education for Negroes (Patterson, 1979: 294-296).

With the "second Morrill Act," the citizens of the town of Langston were eager to have an institution of higher education located in their city. From as early as 1893, there were efforts to have a Negro college established.

However, it was not until 1894, during the Oklahoma Territorial Convention, that Charles William Murce Sulcer introduced a plank to the Resolutions Committee asking that a college for Blacks be established (Patterson, 1979: 294-296).

The Association for Negro Teachers in Oklahoma Territory in 1896 tried a strategic move to give the legislature a little nudge in the right direction. Quoting Charles Sulcer:

> We took Cynthia Ware (a Black female student) to Edmond to enroll her in the teachers' course in the normal school...We took her to the registrar; he sent us to the president; the president sent us to the Board of Education. She was not enrolled (Teall, 1971: 23).

After years of political dickering, on February 4, 1897, House Bill 151 was finally introduced to the Territorial Council. On March 12, 1897, the bill was adopted and it was signed into law by territorial Governor William C. Renfrow (Patterson, 1979: 15). The stated purpose of the university in House Bill 151 was for:

> ...the instruction of both male and female colored persons in the art of teaching various branches which pertain to a common school education and in such higher education as may be deemed advisable, and the fundamental law of the United States in the rights and duties of citizens in the agricultural, mechanical and industrial arts (Oklahoma House Bill 151, 1897).

It appears that Black women had no involvement in the political fight to establish an institution of higher education for the Negro citizens of Langston. However, their participation in many of the activities, including fund raising to buy land for the institution, was important. The institution became the Colored, Agricultural and Normal University of Oklahoma (Oklahoma House Bill 151, 1897). It was always affectionately called Langston University but the name was not officially changed until 1941 (Patterson, 1979: 16-17).

Black women were instrumental in fund raising activities. They organized picnics and bake sales--selling sandwiches, cakes, pies, and dinners

to assist with buying land in the town of Langston (Langston City Herald, May 1897).

Although the Colored, Agricultural and Normal University at Langston was the first opportunity in Oklahoma for Blacks to receive higher education, this was not the first attempt Blacks had made to gain equal access to higher education. Emma Dent, a White female who was enrolled in the preparatory department at Oklahoma A. & M. (later, Oklahoma State University) in 1893 recalled that a Black female, whose last name was Jackson, tried to gain admittance to the institution at the same time. Jackson had attended a non-segregated school in Stillwater and had acquired the necessary requirements for admittance to Oklahoma A. & M. Of course she was denied admission because of her race (Kopecky, 1990: 217). The issue of higher education of Blacks was "remedied" with the founding of the C. A. & N. U (Langston University) in 1897. Langston University would prove to be an interesting instrument in the education of Black Oklahomans, both male and female, and as a political pawn in the struggle for equal access to higher education. These points became critically evident throughout this research.

Statehood to World War II

During the twentieth century, the African-American population in Oklahoma became more urban. In the 1920s, only about a third of African Americans lived in urban areas. However the Depression of the 1930s sent many Blacks to the cities in search of employment opportunities. By 1940,

about 47% of the Black population in Oklahoma had settled in urban areas, particularly Oklahoma City and Tulsa (Aldrich, 1973 and Franklin, 1980).

With the shift to the urban areas of Oklahoma, Blacks thought that the walls of segregation would begin to crumble. However, the walls stood firm and Black Oklahomans continued to face segregation and discrimination in all segments of society, including education. According to Jimmie Franklin (1982), the schools then became a powerful instrument in the caste system, actively serving as an effective counterweight to any idea of assimilation.

The Jim Crow philosophy was a major way of life in Oklahoma from the beginning of Statehood to the early 1950s. Fear of the Klu Klux Klan and lynchings were a part of life for Blacks. Incidents of racial brutality--whippings, beatings, and lynchings--were attributed mostly to the Klu Klux Klan and set a backdrop of hatred and suffering (Aldrich, 1973 and Franklin, 1980).

The Tulsa Race Riot

In 1921, the racial climate in Tulsa erupted into violence and a devastating riot took place. The riot was precipitated by an incident that involved a young Black man who entered a Tulsa office building and upon entering the elevator, allegedly brushed the arm of the White female elevator operator. She yelled rape, and fearing the consequences, he ran. He claimed that the White woman panicked when he brushed her arm but, considering the racial climate in Tulsa at the time, his fear was justified. The local press sensationalized the incident in its reporting and ignited the emotions of White Tulsans. On May 31, 1921, a group of White men collected outside the jail where the Black man had been taken after the arrest. The man was moved to a more secure facility because of the threat of lynching. When the Black male

residents of Tulsa became aware of the possible lynching they organized, armed themselves, and went to the jail to forestall the lynching. A confrontation between the Black and White factions ensued, shots were fired, and the riot began (Kopecky, 1990: 261-262).

More than thirty-five blocks of the area known as "Little Africa" in Tulsa were destroyed including Greenwood Ave., the heart of a thriving business district for African Americans in Tulsa. Also known as the "Black Wall Street," Greenwood Ave. was known for its thriving Black businesses and flashy night life. The White mob was responsible for looting and killing thirty-six Blacks. Armed Black men tried to save their neighborhood and all that they had built, but to no avail. Governor J. B. A. Robertson had to call out the National Guard. There were many Blacks who were homeless, and many Black institutions, businesses, churches, and schools, were in ruins (Kopecky, 1990:261-262). The Riot in Tulsa proved the horrific obstacles that Blacks had to endure in their fight to be productive citizens in all areas of American Society.

Laws Regulating the Education of Blacks

The Oklahoma Territorial Legislature in 1901 changed the laws governing education to prohibit White teachers from teaching African-American students and the laws provided penalties for violations. Oklahoma, determined to keep the separate-but-equal- doctrine intact, in 1908 passed House Bill 365 that focused on the issue of segregation in education. Teachers were to be of the same race as the children they taught in the classroom (Aldrich, 1973: 36).

The financing of separate schools in Oklahoma was mandated in 1913 with a law passed by the legislature. The excise boards of counties, where separate schools existed, could levy a tax for one mill on all taxable property for

"separate schools." The total levy for county purposes must be within the limits of the state's constitution (Aldrich, 1973: 37).

By law, school districts had to provide *separate-but-equal facilities* for educating both Black and White students. However, it is clear, that condition did not exist. Many of the schools for African-American students were located in the very run-down sections of a town or a city. Schools were housed in dilapidated buildings, and were equipped with extremely sub-standard books and supplies. In some instances, the teachers had little training (Aldrich, 1973: 37).

Beginning in 1920, counties and school districts began receiving funds from philanthropic foundations that aided Negro schools in Oklahoma, as well as other states in the South. Blacks found some rewards from these philanthropic foundations and Black female educators were no exception. Money from these funding groups was used to build buildings, buy equipment, conduct research, establish grants and training for teachers, fund teachers' colleges and other important functions (Franklin, 1982: 79).

The Julius Rosenwald Fund provided financial assistance to help provide better school buildings, teacher's homes, school shops, school buses, industrial equipment, and libraries (Biennial Report of the State Department of Education, 1920-1921).

The Anna T. Jeanes Fund provided money for the salaries of supervising or helping teachers, who worked with the Negro schools under the leadership of the county superintendent. The participating county provided part of their salary. In the 1937-1938 school year, seventeen Black female school teachers and two Black male teachers participated as Jeanes Teachers (Biennial Report of the State Department of Education, 1937-1938).

The John F. Slater Fund gave money to Negro schools through the **Southern Education Foundation** and assisted with the finances of four county training schools. The The Slater Fund also assisted with the salaries of the Jeanes Teachers (Biennial Report of the State Department of Education, 1920-1921).

The General Education Board, founded by John D. Rockefeller in 1902, has given financial help to the Oklahoma State Department of Education since 1916, to improve rural schools in the state. The rural school supervisor, who also served as the State Agent for Negro Schools, received salary and travel expenses (The Biennial Report of the State Department of Education, 1937-1938).

The twentieth century also experienced some changes in upgrading the education of African Americans. However, Black educators did not have as much freedom as White educators to do much with curriculum and extracurricular activities. Some Negro schools developed excellent vocational programs, but Whites did not support these programs because they saw no advantage in Blacks being able to compete in the workforce with them (Franklin, 1982: 123).

Dedicated Negro teachers tried very hard to enhance the curriculum. A school in Oklahoma City during the 1920s tried to incorporate Black history into the history presented in text books. There were also night classes to teach algebra, music, shorthand, and mechanical drawing (Oklahoma Historical Sociey, 1930).

In December 1938, Eva May Simmons, a Black taxpayer in Muskogee, obtained victory from a law suit she filed in federal court. Under the legal counsel of Charles Chandler of the National Association for the Advancement of

Colored People (NAACP) she requested an interlocutory injunction prohibiting the City of Muskogee from selling school bonds. The law suit allged that it was unconstitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment for Negroes to pay taxes for the issuance of school bonds to build White schools that Negroes could not attend (Black Dispath, December 17, 1938).

Langston University

By the early 1900s, Negro women were an integral part of the university faculty. in 1909 through 1911 the female faculty members of the university included eight women. They were Zelia N. Breaux, instrumental music; Mary Lee McCray, domestic science; Paralee V. Lucas, English; Cora B. Burks, domestic science; Daisey Toombs, reading, drawing, penmanship, and geography; Mary J McCain, domestic economy; Zelia R. Page, Matron; and Lorenda Evans, Superintendent of Nurses (Annual Catalogue of C. A. & N. U., 1910-1911).

The Normal Department

A major purpose in the establishment of Langston University was to provide teacher education for aspiring Black men and women educators. The university established the Normal Department in 1898 to give students "instruction in both the theory and the practice of teaching and in the laws governing the schools of the Territory (Patterson, 1979: 75).

Students who graduated from the Normal Department of the Colored Agricultural and Normal University (Langston), went through a rigorous academic program. For the first two years, students took courses in English, algebra, Latin, philosophy, and botany. In the last two years, students took such esoteric courses as comparative osteology and moral philosophy as well as

astronomy, geology, psychology, pedagogy, nature study, and the history of education. There were two individuals in the first graduating class from the Normal Department in 1906, and one was a female. Her name was Ellen Cockrell Strong, a Guthrie school teacher. She received a diploma and the degree "bachelor of scientific didactics (Patterson, 1979: 75)."

The High School Department

When the C. A. & N. U. began operations in 1898, most of the students who were interested in becoming teachers had little or no common school education. The university established a High School or Preparatory Department so students could meet the requirements of four years of high school. This High School Department was in existence from 1898 until 1946 (Patterson, 1979:77).

The High School Department offered two courses of study, the classical and the scientific. Students taking either course of study were prepared to enter undergraduate studies in teacher education or in the College Department for advanced courses in the Mechanical or Agricultural Departments (Patterson, 1979: 77).

To enter the university's High School Preparatory Department a student must have completed the regular grammar school course provided by the public school system, or its equivalent. Also, the student should have good knowledge of geography, arithmetic, and the basics of good grammar (Annual Catalogue of the C. A. & N. U., 1910-1911).

The role of African-American women at Langston seemed to blossom in the early 1920s. In the High School Department, Frances M. Hayes was head of "physical culture." She was followed by Sybil E. Byrd in 1924 and Cornelia

Jones in 1927. In "physical culture" the female students took courses in calisthenics, exercises on ladders and rings, outdoor games, and folk dancing. The female students had to wear uniforms. Middy blouses, black bloomers, black ties, black stockings, and white tennis shoes were standard attire (Patterson, 1979: 77).

Teaching English in the High School Department was Leonelle Young, daughter of President I. W. Young. The philosophy of the English Department was the law of language usage, and grammar, composition, and the classics (Patterson, 1979: 77).

Sewing was a popular high school course of study for many female students. The curriculum emphasized sewing dresses, embroidery, and sewing a pocket on a middy blouse. Laundering techniques, darning, and patching were also a part of the course. By the end of the senior year in high school program, female students were skilled in making baby clothes, storage of woolens and furs, millinery, sewing boy's suits, and remaking garments.

Another option for female students in the university's High School Department was cooking. Students were taught how to set a table, sanitation and care of the kitchen, as well as gaining expertise in preparing and serving meals to students and special university guest (Patterson, 1979: 79).

Department of Domestic Economy

The purpose of Langston's Domestic Economy Department was "...to give young women the kind of education they needed to enable them to, discharge properly, the duties and the responsibilities of home life." The curriculum was designed to give female students practical knowledge and dexterity in presiding over their homes, and the intellectual and moral aptitudes

that easily follow manual and industrial training. It was the intent of the Domestic Economy Department to train women in skills that would make them independent enough to earn a livelihood in the trades of their choice (Annual Catalogue of the C. A. & N. U., 1910-1911).

Female Uniforms

Throughout the 1920s, students at the university had to wear uniforms and they received demerits if they were not in proper uniform, always. No student could be seen in the classroom, church, Sunday school, dining hall, theatre, or anywhere outside of the dormitory room in anything but the mandated uniform. Female students had to wear navy-blue pleated skirts, white middy blouses with sailor collars, and silk ties of navy, blue, or red. A girl who could not afford a fancier uniform, wore blue serge with braid trimming on the middy collar and embroidered stars in the corners (C. A. & N. U, Bulletins, 1920s).

Campus Organizations

In 1919, the first campus organization founded at C. A. & N. U was the Literatae Club, which was a literary club for women. Bessie Floyd Dungee was the group's first sponsor with 12 members, six from the junior class and six from the senior class. The motto of this organization was "Deeds Not Words." The goal was, "the development of better womanhood," and the colors were blue and white. Members enjoyed both the social and literary activities (Langston Yearbooks, 1930s).

The Literatae Club was noted for furnishing journals for Friday chapel, for giving thirty-five dollars to the gymnasium fund, and for giving the commencement play. They performed two plays. **The Dust on the Earth** and **Engaged by Wednesday** (Langston Yearbooks, 1930s).

The logo for the girl's club pin consisted of a circle connecting three triangles. A song for the group composed by Wylma Frances Reed, to build club spirit, had the words: *Hark! The girls of dear old Langston have organized a club. Lofty ideals, higher standards will our motto ever be.*

Because the Literatae was such a success, other organizations for the female student population emerged at the university. The organizations certainly added to the educational and social development of women and provided leadership and organizational skills. In the Prep Department, female students organized the Philomathean Club. In the Teacher Education Department, girls organized the Phyllis Wheatley Club. This club later became the Esoteric Club in 1922. These clubs had similar interests in literary and social activities and were organized around class and dormitory living arrangements because female students were not allowed to leave their dorms after seven in the evening (Langston Yearbook, 1922).

In 1922, the university established a YWCA with 16 girls. The membership eventually reached 125 and discussions at the meetings centered on important female topics such as motherhood, every day religion, courtesy, and the young women of Langston University (Langston Yearbook, 1922).

Greek-letter sororities became very popular in the 1930s. Chapters of Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, Sigma Gamma Rho, and Zeta Phi Beta were organized. These Chapters still exist today (Langston Yearbooks, 1930).

Langston Women Educators

Because of the place that Langston University made for itself in history, the university can be proud of the African-American women the institution has produced in the way of female educators. It is because Langston University

existed that it was possible for African-American women to gain a college degree or to have an educational institution to work at either as a teacher or administrator. The following is just a sample of the caliber of women who was touched by Langston University.

Ida Rowland Bellegarde

Ida Rowland Bellegarde is Oklahoma's first Black woman Ph. D. She was born in Smithville, Texas in 1904. Her family relocated to Oklahoma when she was in her early teens. With a talent and a passion for writing, Bellegarde sold her first poems before she reached her teen years for fewer than $2.00 each (Wesley, 1993).

Bellegarde completed high school in Tulsa when she was twenty-five years old. She was a classmate of the famous African-American historian, John Hope Franklin. Her tenure in education included teaching in elementary school throughout Oklahoma, at Langston University, and Florida A. & M. (Wesley, 1993).

Bellegarde earned her bachelor and master's degrees from the University of Omaha, and in 1948 received her Ph. D. in social sciences at French speaking Laval University, Quebec, Canada. Of course, at that time, the battle was waging in Oklahoma for Blacks to attend graduate and law schools in Oklahoma at White institutions of higher education. The Sipuel and McLaurin cases, that eventually changed the separate-but-equal doctrine, were in the courts. African Americans who wanted to receive a graduate education had to attend schools out-of-state to do so (Wesley, 1993).

Bellegarde's husband was Auguste D. Bellegarde, the son of the famous diplomat Dante Bellegarde. After they married, they moved to Arkansas, where she taught at Arkansas A. M. & N. until she retired (Wesley, 1993).

After Retirement, Dr. Bellegarde continued writing and publishing books about famous African-Americans to serve as an inspiration for young people. Dr. Bellegarde has her biography printed in several *Who's Who* publications and is included in the anthology **Harlem Renaissance and Beyond: Black Women Writers from 1900-1945**, by Loraine E. Roses and Ruth E. Randolph, Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1990 (Wesley, 1993).

Zella J. Patterson Black

Zella J. Patterson Black's greatest contribution to education in Oklahoma is her landmark historical book, **Langston University, A History**. Until she undertook the awesome challenge of documenting the rich heritage of the only historically African-American institution of higher education in Oklahoma, the full appreciation for what the university has meant for thousands of Blacks seeking an education was not fully realized.

Black was born eight miles from the Town of Langston and had spent most of her life in that location. Black had attended high school at Langston University and continued her education there until she received her B. S. degree in Home Economics. Because graduate education was unavailable to her in the state of Oklahoma after she graduated from Langston, she attended Colorado State College in Fort Collins, earning a Master's degree. She also did some post graduate work at the University of California, Berkley, and at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater (Patterson, 1979).

Zella Black Patterson spent most of her professional teaching career at Langston University, serving as Chairperson of the Home Economics Department from 1965 until 1971. She was also the Family Living Specialist in the university's Cooperative Extension. This was a program for low-income and

disadvantaged people funded by Oklahoma State University and the U. S. Department of Agriculture (Patterson, 1979).

Her husband, George W. Patterson, was an educator who taught vocational agriculture and raised livestock (Patterson, 1979).

On retirement in 1974, Patterson decided to take on the big task of preserving the wonderful history of Langston University. Her achievement in this endeavor has been a major point of light in securing the important elements of history that could have easily been lost. Patterson's contribution has certainly helped this researcher in continuing the legacy. Her publication has been a major source of information for this study of the contributions African-American women have made to education in Oklahoma and how Langston has played a pivotal role in the history of Oklahoma's education. Her dedication to this undertaking has gone a long way to assist me with mine. For out of the history of Langston University comes many African-American women who have etched a place in this history of Oklahoma education (Patterson, 1979).

Idabell Juanita Cotton

Idabell Juanita Cotton did not allow polio and bone disease to keep her from earning degrees from Langston University and the University of Oklahoma in art. Although she was confined to a wheelchair, she was a nationally renowned sculptor, working in stone, clay, and bronze. Besides her career as an art instructor at West Virginia State University and Langston University, she exhibited her fine works in three one- woman shows and exhibited extensively in West Virginia and Oklahoma. Cotton has contributed her sculptures to the National permanent collection in Atlanta, Georgia (Patterson, 1979: 169-170).

Elmyra Richardson Todd Davis

Elmyra Richardson Todd Davis made a major impact at Langston University with the G. Lamar Harrison Library. In the 1952-1953 academic year, Davis taught the first courses in library science. This began the library science curriculum that provided much needed instruction to prepare African-American teachers who often had to combine duties as teachers and librarians. This curriculum remained unchanged for about 20 years. Davis is also responsible for the largest increase in services and acquisitions at the library. Under Davis' leadership, the holdings for the library increased from about 8,000 books in 1944 to approximately 90,000 books in 1961. Periodicals increased from 14 newspapers in 1944 to 459 periodical subscriptions in 1950 (Patterson, 1979: 144-145).

Larzette Golden Hale

Larzette Golden Hale was the spouse of the tenth president of Langston University, William Henry Hale. Dr. Hale became the first Langston alumnus to return to Langston as president of the institution (Patterson, 1979: 33).

Larzette Hale was not your usual president's spouse for she was an educated woman who made her contributions to Langston University in a professional way. Hale was born in Idabel, Oklahoma and lived in Taft Orphanage during part of her childhood. She met her husband, William Hale while attending Langston University. They married a week after graduation from Langston in 1940 (Patterson, 1979: 53-54).

Hale received her master's degree in sociology from the University of Wisconsin and her doctorate in finance and accounting from the University of Chicago. Dr. Hale was the first woman graduate of Langston University to earn

a doctorate (Patterson, 1979: 53-54). Like other African-American women of her time she had to go out of state to receive her graduate education.

Many graduates of Langston University who attended while William Hale was president agree that having the Hales at Langston University was like having two presidents of the university at the same time; which says a lot about the contributions Dr. Larzette Hale made to Langston University (Patterson, 1979: 58).

During her tenure at Langston University, Dr. Hale served as the director of Development and Professor of Education and Business. In her duties as head of Development she was responsible for the fund raising activities and for promoting the program of the Langston University Development Foundation. Her responsibilities also included charting future institutional programs and physical plant plans. Her achievements in raising thousands of dollars for the university helped the university to grow and prosper as it never had before (The Lion Yearbook, 1965).

Dr. Wennette West Pegues

In an article titled. *Let Us Not Forget*, published in the Oklahoma Eagle Newspaper (1991) Angela Suzette Pegues documented Wennette West Pegues', her mother's, accomplishments to education in Oklahoma. The title was so very appropriate and the content a testimony to documenting important events that helped to shape our lives.

In a class Foundation of American Education, that Angela Pegues was taking at the University Center at Tulsa, under Dr. Ruth Tibbs, the question was asked, "Do you know who started this university? (Pegues, 1993)"

No one knew the answer, but Angela Pegues and Dr. Tibbs shared a secret bond. They were the only ones who knew the answer. When Dr. Tibbs told the class that it was a Black woman, Dr. Wennette Pegues, Angela's mother, everyone's mouth dropped wide open (Pegues, 1993).

Dr. Wennette Pegues has a distinguish career in education that began when she earned her bachelor's of science degree in nursing from Carlow College in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. From 1958 until 1973 she worked as a registered nurse and worked in various nursing and administrative areas.

Dr. Pegues taught pediatrics at Hillcrest Medical Center School of Nursing from 1963 to 1965. She was the assistant dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of Tulsa, from 1978 to 1979. Dr. Pegues then took the position of associate dean for the Langston Urban Program, Tulsa from 1979 until 1980 (Pegues, 1993).

From 1982 to 1985, Dr. Pegues was the first director of the University Center At Tulsa. This position holds a special place on Dr. Pegues career ladder (Pegues, 1993).

"What's important is what happened, not necessarily who made it happen. Many people have the opportunity to further their education that may not have had it before the University Center. No matter how big UCAT gets, I will always know that the most important part of its history was the time between 1982 and 1985. I worked very hard to prove that it could be done, and it was," said Dr. Pegues, "I will always have a special sense of pride when I hear UCAT mentioned (Oklahoma Eagle, 1991)."

In 1985, Dr. Pegues worked for the City of Tulsa in the Human Development Division. In 1989 she became associate director of the Oklahoma Area Health Education Center Program. In that position she was responsible

for developing a proposal using OKAHEC for minority and under served health professions in Oklahoma. She was also a liaison between higher education and OKAHEC (Oklahoma Eagle, 1991).

Currently Dr. Pegues is the assistant dean of students at the College of Osteopathic Medicine of Oklahoma State University. In this position she is responsible for admissions, academic and financial aid, and student activities. She also heads minority student affairs (Pegues, 1993).

Mentha Mitchell Varner

Mentha Mitchell Varner has several firsts in the area of education in Oklahoma. In 1954 she was the first Black student to live in an integrated dormitory at Oklahoma State University. When schools became desegregated in 1966, she became the first Black teacher in the Ardmore School System. Later she became the first Black woman principal in the same school system (The Lion Yearbook, 1992).

Varner was born in Tatums, Oklahoma, in Carter County. She graduated from Douglass High School in Ardmore and attended Langston University receiving a bachelor's degree in elementary education and physical education in 1936. She spent 40 years in the Ardmore School System as an educator, ending as the principal of the Kindergarten Center (The Lion Yearbook, 1992).

An educational activist, Varner held several positions with the Negro Teachers Association. She gave her expertise to the development of curriculum guidelines for drug education and elementary and secondary education (The Lion Yearbook, 1992).

Mentha Varner was also a leader in establishing the Headstart Program in Ardmore and spearheaded the fund drive that renovated the building that housed the program (The Lion Yearbook, 1992).

In 1991, Varner was one of seven Americans chosen to receive the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged's Living Legacy Award. More than three-hundred nominees vied for that award, but only seven were chosen. Thurgood Marshall was also one of the seven participants.

Affectionately known as "Momma Ment" she often had to feed and clothe her students and worked diligently to obtain scholarships so that many of her students could attend college (The Lion Yearbook, 1992).

CHAPTER III

1940 - 1994

Background

During the twentieth century, the fight for civil rights in education came with landmark law suits, and other acts of demonstrations. African-American women were certainly in the forefront of these struggles. One of the first major struggles for equality in education regarded equal pay for Negro teachers. The Black Dispatch Newspaper in 1943, reported that the NAACP held a public forum to discuss the issue of whether "Negro teachers in Oklahoma City Schools received compensation for service equal to Whites." In a report made by the Oklahoma City Public Schools' Superintendent, H. E. Wrinkle, the average teacher's salary in the White schools was $1,640.92 a year, while the average salary of Negro teachers was $1,347.66 a year (Black Dispatch, 1943).

The NAACP, in April of 1947, filed a declaration judgment in the United States District Court, Western Oklahoma for Emma Lee Freeman against the Oklahoma City Public School system. The judgment was in regard to the unequal pay of Negro teachers. Freeman was a twelve year veteran of the school system having taught at Douglass High School (Black Dispatch, 1947). Freeman's contention was that a policy of unequal payment of salary deprived her under the Constitution. Amos T. Hall, Freeman's attorney debated

that his client had professional qualifications equal to White teachers who had the same teaching duties (Franklin, 1982).

Quoted in an article in the Black Dispatch Newspaper (1947), Ira Williams, vice president of the Board of Education, said that the filing of the complaint was a complete surprise. "I can not understand the reasoning of her action."

Williams explained that Negro separate schools operated under a different system of tax levy than White majority schools. "We have tried to make salaries equal, but sometimes there is nothing we can do about it," he said (Black Dispatch, 1947).

Freeman earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Kansas Teachers College and possessed a lifetime teaching certificate in Oklahoma. She petitioned the court to make the Oklahoma City Public Schools equal in its pay scale. Before the federal district court could make a decision, the school system reorganized its pay policy. However, attorney Amos T. Hall asked the court to rule anyway so that the ruling would set a precedent for Oklahoma. The judge, Edgar S. Vaught declared that:

> It is unlawful under the 14th Amendment...to discriminate as to salaries between teachers in the majority schools and teachers in the separate schools on account of race. The Oklahoma City School Board and those similarly situated had the duty to act under the law...to avoid discrimination.

This ruling did not impact on the constitutionality of separate-but-equal schools (Franklin, 1982).

Octavia Harrison Douglas filed a similar suit in 1954 in her district court of Okfuskee County and carried the case to the Supreme Court of Oklahoma. The basis of her case was that Negro teachers with graduate degrees received less

than White teachers with similar or fewer qualifications. This historic decision was rendered and paved the way for equalizing the pay of all teachers in the state of Oklahoma (Oklahoma Historical Society, 1960).

Other achievements of Douglas include becoming the first African American to teach special education in Oklahoma during the 1940s and serving as Oklahoma's Goodwill Ambassador for the Aging under Governor George Nigh.

The quest for equal pay for Black teachers was not the only legal battle waged. Equal access to higher education was a battle that took strength, determination, and several years to win.

Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher

The landmark case of Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher against the University of Oklahoma and the case of George McLaurin, also against the same university, changed the direction of equal access to higher education in Oklahoma forever.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), in 1946, selected the University of Oklahoma as one of its test cases. This selection was to refute the segregation laws in education at the graduate level, and to determine these laws as unconstitutional (Cross, 1975: 35). OU was selected because, on January 14, 1946, Ada Lois Sipuel, an honor student at Langston University, was denied admission to the University of Oklahoma Law School by George L. Cross, president of the institution. This decision was made after an hour long meeting with President Cross; Roscoe Dunjee, editor of the Black Dispatch and president of the Oklahoma NAACP; Dr. W. A. J. Bullock, Chickasha, regional director of the NAACP; and Miss Sipuel. It was agreed by President Cross and Roy Gittinger, dean of admissions, that Sipuel

had the requirements for admission to the Law School but denied her anyway (The Black Dispatch, 1946).

President Cross remembers Sipuel as "chic, charming and well poised...and that the association (NAACP) made an excellent choice for the test case."

Sipuel thought at first that President Cross would "be flabbergasted at her arrival" but Dunjee had alerted Cross, prior to the meeting, that they would be coming to his office to meet with him concerning her admittance to the law school. Sipuel remembers Cross as "a very kind man, a very gentle man . . . courteous (Sipuel, 1994)."

Cross remembers Mr. Dunjee as "very pleasant and articulate in stating the reason for their visit. There was no hint of belligerence in his manner, only an apparent desire to accomplish a mission (Cross, 1975: 36)."

During this meeting, President Cross discussed with Sipuel, Dunjee, and Bullock, the constitution and statutes of the State of Oklahoma. They specifically prohibited the University of Oklahoma from admitting Sipuel to the law school. Cross informed the attentive audience that if he went against the state laws that he could be brought up on misdemeanor charges punishable by a fine of about one-hundred dollars a day. Cross believed that the law was not right, but he was not financially able to challenge its enforcement (Cross, 1975: 36-37).

Roscoe Dunjee stated that he, Sipuel, and Bullock understood the law better than Cross because they were Black (Sipuel, 1994) and that they understood his position in the matter. However, they needed a letter refusing Sipuel admission, solely on her race, to be use as the groundwork for the test case. A formal report from Dean Gittinger stating that Sipuel was academically qualified for admission to the law school was brought to President Cross. A

letter denying her admission on the basis of race was dictated to a secretary and heard by all present. The letter read:

Dear Miss Sipuel:

This will acknowledge receipt of your application for admission to the Law School of the University of Oklahoma. However, I must deny you admission to the University for the following reasons:

1. Title 70, Section 452-464, inclusive, of the Oklahoma Statutes, 1941, prohibits colored students from attending the schools of Oklahoma, and makes it a misdemeanor for school officials to admit colored students to white schools, to instruct classes composed of mixed races, or to attend classes composed of mixed races.

2. The Board of Regents has specifically instructed the president of the University of Oklahoma to refuse admission of Negroes, giving as a basis of their decision the statutes of Oklahoma.

Cordially yours,

G. L. Cross, President

The letter was typed and presented to Sipuel, Dunjee, and Bullock. Mr. Dunjee thanked President Cross and they left satisfied with having received what they came there for (Cross, 1975: 38).

A few days following this historic meeting in the President's office, Roscoe Dunjee made this statement in Oklahoma City:

We plan immediately to file an action in the federal court demanding Miss Sipuel's admission to the University of Oklahoma. I want to pass this compliment on to President Cross; he did not dodge the real issue involved in this case. He could have poly-foxed around with a lot of dilatory tactics, but when he writes a letter stating that Sipuel's qualifications meet every rule set up by the school and unreservedly states that she is denied solely because of her race extraction, he gives us an open and shut case for federal action. (Teall, 1971: 89).

Amos Hall, Miss Sipuel's attorney, went to court to gain admission to the University of Oklahoma Law School for his client. Hall's reasoning was that the

Fourteenth Amendment guaranteed equal educational opportunity. However, the Cleveland County Court made the decision for the University and against Sipuel. The decision was appealed to the Oklahoma State Supreme Court with Thurgood Marshall, the legal counsel for the NAACP, joining Hall as the legal representatives for Sipuel. The Oklahoma State Supreme Court affirmed the lower court's decision (Franklin, 1980: 78).

An appeal was then made to the United States Supreme Court based on other court cases, particularly Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada in 1938, which declared that states must provide equal educational facilities for Negroes (Franklin, 1982: 39). The United States Supreme Court in January 1948, ordered the State of Oklahoma to "provide instruction to Negroes equal to that given white students (Aldrich, 1973)."

The decision by the United States Supreme Court did not readily mean a victory for Sipuel and her attorneys Marshall and Hall. It meant a continuous battle. State officials decided to set up a facility at the State Capitol named the Langston University Law School (Aldrich, 1973). The Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education met on January 19, 1948 and, in just a few days, created a separate law school. Faculty members included three attorneys Jerome E. Hemry, who was appointed dean; Randel S. Cobb, former attorney General of Oklahoma, who was appointed Professor of Law; and Arthur Ellsworth, an Oklahoma City attorney, who was appointed professor (Cross, 1975: 53). The State Capitol's legal library was the law library. Roscoe Dunjee sarcastically commented that the Regents had tried to build a first class institution overnight that took O. U. forty years to build (Sipuel, 1994 and Franklin, 1982).

It was clear to Sipuel's attorneys that the state was trying to shirk its duty in providing equal opportunity in education in Oklahoma. Since Langston

University did not have accreditation at the time, its issuing a law degree would certainly have no professional merit. Sipuel and her attorneys agreed that it would not serve any purpose to their two year battle to attend Langston School of Law. She did not attend (Sipuel, 1994; Franklin, 1980; and Aldrich, 1973).

Throughout the 1940s, President Henry G. Bennett of Oklahoma A. & M. and President G. L. Harrison of Langston University had been cooperating in an effort to bring Langston under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma A. & M. Colleges and to gain accreditation for Langston with the North Central Association (Kopecky, 1990:263).

However, the battle was won to gain accreditation status for Langston when the Oklahoma Bar of Examiners gave their stamp of approval on the Langston University Law School and when Langston University became a part of the A. & M. College system (Kopecky, 1990: 263). Langston then received the necessary funds and personnel so North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools could finally give Langston University accreditation status after several months before denying accreditation based on a deficient curriculum, faculty, physical plant, and equipment (Kopecky, 1990 and Franklin, 1982).

The accreditation of Langston did not remedy the separate-but-equal situation in Oklahoma. Whites were making every effort to uphold segregation in Oklahoma's institutions of higher education and Blacks were also planning their own strategy for the implementation of integration in the same institutions. Sipuel applied, again, to the University of Oklahoma Law School and was denied admission by President Cross (Cross, 1975 and Aldrich, 1973).

The NAACP knew well that Oklahoma could not possibly organize enough professional schools to accommodate the significant number of African Americans willing to earn degrees in a number of academic fields. Oklahoma

was obligated under the mandate of the Supreme Court to have equal educational facilities. So, in the Spring of 1948, the NAACP was able to get six Black students to apply to the University of Oklahoma in academic areas not offered at Langston University. They included Mozelle A. Dillon, a Langston graduate who wanted to major in architectural engineering; Helen M. Holmes, a graduate of Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri, who wanted to major in commercial education; Ivor Tatum a graduate student in social work from Kansas University; Mauderie Hancock Wilson, a Langston University graduate who wanted to study social work; George W. McLaurin, who had a master's degree from Kansas University and was a professor at Langston, and wanted to pursue a doctorate in education; and James Bond, also a Langston University professor who wanted to pursue a doctorate in zoology (Cross, 1975: 65).

The main defendant in this case was fifty-four years old, George W. McLaurin. It is interesting that this case was filed 25 years after McLaurin's wife, Peniah, had applied to the University of Oklahoma and was denied admission.

The McLaurin case was heard before the federal district court, and the decision by the justices came down in September, 1948. The decision stated that the University of Oklahoma had to provide McLaurin with the education he asked for. The decision did not mean, however, that the separate-but-equal doctrine would have to be violated (Kopecky, 1990: 270). A strategy was organized by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education that allowed McLaurin to attend classes at the University of Oklahoma in a separate-but-equal fashion. The strategy included preparing an area away from the other students in his classes and a separate table in the cafeteria and library (Kopecky, 1990: 270).

In 1949, the University of Oklahoma asked the state legislature to consider changing the law to allow Black students the opportunity to attend the

institution. This was because the request for courses and programs became too many to handle. The Oklahoma Attorney General, Mac Q. Williamson, influenced the legislature to amend its segregation laws and by the summer of 1949 twenty-three Black students were admitted to the university. One of them was Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher, who finally enrolled in the law school after a three year battle (Sipuel, 1994; Kopecky, 1990 and Franklin, 1980).

Sipuel began her law school career two weeks into the summer session of 1949. The White students knew that the decision had been handed down but were shocked and curious at her arrival because they thought that the funds allocated to the "separate law school" had to be spent and that it would be the fall session before Sipuel could attend. So when Sipuel arrived, their eyes gazed upon her as she spotted the "Colored" sign at the top of the classroom and so she sat there for the entire class period (Sipuel, 1994).

When the class was over, ten White male students came up to Sipuel and shook her hand and hugged her and stated, "Ada we're so glad you finally made it!" They offered to tutor her, to loan her their books and notes, and to help her to catch up with the work she had missed the first two weeks of classes. Without their help she could not have survived the first summer session. "A lot of the learning that goes on in law school goes on as a result of the interaction with other students," said Sipuel (1994).

Once Sipuel and others were finally admitted to the University of Oklahoma the real "humiliation" began (Sipuel, 1994). The African-American students were not allowed to sit with their classes. In Sipuel's situation, the white students sat in the first three rows of her classroom. There were several empty rows in between and there was a large wooden chair behind the last row for Sipuel to sit in. On the pole behind the last row was a sign that said

"Colored." She had to climb up several steps to reach the chair behind the last row where she sat to attend her class (Sipuel, 1994).

African-American students could not have any close contact with White students. They could not eat with White students. They could not get in line with the White students. They had to enter the cafeteria through a different door. They had to eat at separate tables that had heavy chains around them and there was "a big burley armed guard" that Sipuel determined was there to keep the White students away because every time the guard was away the white students would crawl under the chains to come and eat lunch with the Black students (Sipuel, 1994).

Because of the humiliating situation that Sipuel, McLaurin and the other Black students had to endure, Thurgood Marshall returned to Oklahoma and filed a another law suit on behalf of McLaurin which stated that having admitted Blacks to the University of Oklahoma you can not segregate them. Marshall regarded this situation as "stupid" and this case was taken all the way to the Supreme Court. So when the students went home on a Friday, which was decision day at the Supreme Court, the Court ruled unanimously that the separate-but-equal situation that McLaurin had to endure inhibited his ability "to study, to exchange views with other students, and to master his discipline (Kopecky, 1990)." When Sipuel and the other Black students returned to school that Monday, all of the "For Colored Only" signs had been removed. Sipuel states that "I moved right on down to the front row, right directly in front of the instructor and I have never sat in the back row since (Sipuel, 1994)."
This decision made it crystal clear that Blacks who possessed the academic qualifications to attend professional and graduate schools could do so when equal educational opportunities did not exist.

In retrospect, Sipuel is extremely proud of the contribution she made to ending segregation in higher education in Oklahoma. She understood from the beginning that she would constantly be denied admission to the University of Oklahoma, that her battle would end up in court, and that her battle would probably take several years. She was willing to wage this battle. In winning, Sipuel views her contribution in gaining equal access to education as "a success in the litigation of the Constitution of the United States of America. The Sipuel decision was not a decision for Ada Lois. It was a decision for America; a victory for the Constitution of the United States (Sipuel, 1994)."

Nancy Randolph Davis

The outcome of the law suits regarding Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher and George McLaurin, of course, had impact on Oklahoma A. & M. in Stillwater, The road was now unblocked to allow Blacks the opportunity to attend the A. & M. School. It was the students, not the administration, that lead the fight (Kopecky, 1990: 273).

An organization called the American Committee for Equality was formed by students from Oklahoma A. & M. and had as its goal the transfer of two undergraduate students from Langston to the Stillwater campus. Jane Ellison from Oklahoma City wanted to study textiles and Henry W. Floyd from Eufala wanted to study political science. Each submitted applications in February 1949 (Rulon, 1975). This was the first attempt at African-American undergraduate enrollment at the Oklahoma A. & M. College. The students' contention was that Langston did not provide the content area pertinent to their course of study (Black Dispatch, 1949).

Jane Ellison and Henry W. Floyd were denied admittance by the Oklahoma A. & M. Board of Regents because the Regents believed that the

education they sought could be obtained at Langston, thereby supporting the separate-but-equal doctrine.

In the summer of 1949, Nancy Randolph sought graduate admission to the A. & M. College (later Oklahoma State University). After graduating from Langston University in 1948 and teaching for one year, she was determined to earn a graduate degree at Oklahoma A. & M. because she wanted to study under Nora Talbert, then Dean of Home Economics Education. Randolph had studied from her textbook at Langston. Trying to gain admittance to the A. & M. College "was not an easy task," stated Davis (1994).

When Randolph arrived at the enrollment office, she was told that she would have to go the the President, but he was unavailable. So she went to the Home Economics Building to talk with Nora Talbert. Talbert told her, "Oh we don't want Negroes here. Maybe you should go to school in Kansas, Illinois, or Iowa, or some school where you won't feel segregated. The law here in Oklahoma is that we do not have Blacks in the classroom (Davis, 1994)." Randolph stated that she understood what the law was but "that the law must change." Talbert emphasized that, "Blacks were just not ready, and should try not to get into schools and that Blacks were not even trustworthy." She also said that Randolph would not be accepted by the other students. Randolph's reply was, "I'm not here to be accepted by the others, I'm just here to get an education (Davis, 1994)." Davis was told by Talbert to come back the next day, but she was still denied admission.

News of Randolph's rejection by the A. & M. college reached Roscoe Dunjee, editor and owner of the Black Dispatch Newspaper and Amos T. Hall, attorney for the NAACP. The two men, experienced with the Sipuel case, went to Stillwater the following day and met with the top officials of the college and by

the time that Randolph returned that afternoon, she was allowed to enroll in three classes for the summer (Kopecky, 1990).

"It was not easy trying to open the doors of educational opportunity, so that others of my race could attend OSU," Davis said in an article published in the Black Chronicle Newspaper (1991), but I knew that with God's strength, my perseverance would ultimately lead to success." When Randolph arrived to attend classes at Oklahoma A. & M. she had to sit in a doorway or in an office nook located in the back of the class. Around the third week of the summer session, Randolph had to take her first examination and she made the second highest score. From that point, the other White students in the class accepted Randolph and they told the professor that they, "...didn't care what the law stated they wanted Nancy to sit with them," and Randolph never sat in the back of the classroom again. The White students included Randolph in class projects and studied with her at the library (Davis, 1994).

When Randolph earned her master's degree in Home Economics from Oklahoma A. & M. she began her teaching career at Dunjee High School in Oklahoma City where she met her husband, Fred C. Davis, who was vice principal at the school, and where she spent twenty years teaching. Wanting to pursue new challenges, Davis accepted a position at predominantly White Star Spencer High School.

"The move from Dunjee High School was quite a transition," she remarked in the Black Chronicle Newspaper (1991). "I was one of the few Black teachers at Star Spencer in 1968. Star Spencer offered different challenges. Racial intolerance was the order of the day," she continued in the article. "I was not only to teach Home Economics, but also fundamental human relations skills."

Davis' dedication extended beyond the classroom and into the civil rights movement. She was involved with the NAACP Youth Council during the sit-in era with another long-time Black woman educator, Clara Luper. Davis was also a long-time benefactor of the Oklahoma City Urban League (Davis, 1994).

A very special place in Davis' life is her alma mater, Langston University. Every member of her immediate family is a Langston graduate. She has served as president, for more than 10 years, of the Langston University Home Economics Alumni Association. This organization has given many scholarships for students to attend (Black Chronicle, 1991).

Nancy Davis continues to be involved in a myriad of activities even in her retirement. They include True Vine Baptist Church, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, the Amigos Club, The Plant and Garden Club of Spencer, a couple of alumni association at OSU, the YWCA, the NAACP Youth Council, the Urban League and a host of other professional organizations (Davis, 1994).

Clara Luper

Clara Luper was born in Okfuskee County on May 3, 1923. She has three children, Calvin B. Luper, Marilyn A. Wesley, and Chelle Luper. Luper received her B. A. degree from Langston University in 1944. She earned her M. A. in 1951 from the University of Oklahoma and did additional graduate work at OU and Oklahoma City University (Aldrich, 1973).

Clara Luper's greatest contribution to education in Oklahoma came with her ingenious work with the civil rights movement through the NAACP Youth Council. Called a "dynamic engineer" in the book **Journey Toward Hope**, by Jimmie L. Franklin (1982), Luper's interest in social studies and civil rights made her a most viable educator to her students. She was viable in the strategies used to gain rights and liberties for Blacks in Oklahoma.

As a teacher in the Oklahoma City Public Schools, Luper always presented plays during Negro History Week, as it was called back in the 1950s. In 1957, Luper directed her students in the play **Brother President**, the story of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This play told of the non-violent techniques that were used to eliminate segregation in Montgomery, Alabama. The cast of the play consisted of 26 talented, ambitious, and dedicated students. The play's performance filled the auditorium of Dunjee High School and received wonderful accolades throughout the state (Luper, 1979: 1).

Luper is a woman of intense energy and self confidence who viewed racism in public accomodations in Oklahoma City "as a cause to be dealt with," not just from a legal angle, but from a well-planned strategy of demonstrations. As an advisor to the NAACP Youth Council, Luper along with members of the council--Barbara Posey, Gwendolyn Fuller, her daughter Marilyn Luper, Andrea Toliver, and her son Calvin Luper, used the tactic of a sit-in to get business establishments to allow Black patronage on an equal basis with Whites (Teall, 1979).

While on a trip to New York City to present the play **Brother President** at a *Salute to Young Freedom Fighters Rally*, Clara Luper and her students were moved to a cause that would have a major impact on fighting segregation in Oklahoma. In returning to Oklahoma from this trip, the cast traveled the southern route and stopped in Washington, D. C. to visit several historical attractions including Arlington National Cemetery, and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Barbara Posey, who was the secretary for the Youth Council, stated that since these individuals had died for freedom, that they should make it their goal to do something significant for their country. When they returned to Oklahoma City, the Youth Council decided that it was important for them to end segregation in public accomodations and to do everything possible to eradicate

it. "That will be our project--to eliminate segregation in public accomodations," the Youth Council vowed (Luper, 1979: 3).

For several months Luper trained members of the NAACP Youth Council on the doctrine of non-violence as a way of overcoming injustices. The basic premise was that Whites are human. Being human, they will probably react with fear if they are threatened, but in the final analysis, they are likely to respond with good will (Luper, 1979: 3).

There were four basic rules that Luper trained her youth in, and that they followed during their peaceful demonstrations:

1. To define their objective--to eliminate segregation in public accomodations.

2. To be honest--non-violence is not an approach to be used by hypocrites--honesty pays.

3. To love your enemy--a doctrine as old as time, but as newsworthy as this hour's news story.

4. To give the White man a way out--non violence demonstrates a kind of strength that shows up the weakness of injustices; recognizes that he has weakness and can be embarrassed for mistreating his brother; find a way to let him participate in victory when it comes (Luper, 1979: 3).

The first sit-ins in Oklahoma City began at the Katz Drugstore on August 19, 1958. White citizens of Oklahoma City were definitely surprised when fourteen Black children, between the ages of five and seventeen, trained in the strategies of non-violent demonstrations and armed with a sense of purpose, filed into the drugstore in a quiet and orderly fashion (Franklin, 1982). The students were Richard Brown, Linda Pogue, Lana Pogue, Areda Toliver, Calvin Luper, Marilyn Luper, Portwood Williams Jr., Lynzetta Jones, Gwendolyn Fuller, Alma Faye Posey, Barbara Posey, Goldie Battle, and Betty Germany (Luper, 1979: 5).

Under the leadership of Luper, the youth had occupied almost all the seats of the soda counter for nearly two hours, protesting the store's policy of serving Negroes food "to go" (The Daily Oklahoman, 1958).

As a general practice, eating establishments in Oklahoma City sold food to Blacks on a take-out basis. However, during these peaceful demonstrations the youth participating in the sit-ins asked for the same type of service that White customers received. White people in Oklahoma City, of course, did not take well to their requests, but after several days of quiet protest, Katz drug store gave in to their requests. Several other stores eventually gave in, also, but the S. H. Kress Company removed the stools from their counter and offered Blacks food on a "stand up" policy. This alternative did not wash well with the NAACP Youth Council and so Luper and her group continued their orderly demonstrations. Kress had to concede.

The luncheonette at the John A. Brown Department store also became a target of protest with Clara Luper and her Youth Council participants. The protesters carried magazines to read during the sit-in while the very young brought crayons and coloring books to color in. They stayed in the luncheonette until about ten minutes before closing. A Brown employee flickered the lights and Clara Luper said, "It's time for us to leave."

The youths left the store in an orderly fashion while store employees looked on. Barbara Posey, a fifteen year-old Youth Council secretary stated that, "We are doing this to remind people of the discrimination that exists at this store and every where else they refuse to serve us (The Daily Oklahoman, 1958)."

Though many eating establishments were changing their segregation policies there were others that were very stubborn in relenting to change. Luper

and the NAACP Youth Council had to endure verbal abuse and threats but their spirit would not be broken. An example of this was retold in the book **Journey Toward Hope** by Jimmie L. Franklin (1982). Luper and members of the Youth Council stopped at the Civic Center Grill one day where the irate owner then locked them inside the very hot grill and threatened to leave them indefinitely. The young people began to sing freedom songs to pass the time. The extremely perturbed businessman, they remembered:

> ...told us to shut up. He then started to play the juke box and when the music would stop we would start singing "Go Down Moses." He threw some money to us and asked us to play a record. We humbly accepted it and played a spiritual, "Precious Lord," over and over. This seemed to irritate him. With the extreme heat, we wanted water. This was refused and we said the 23rd Psalm and prayer. This continued for two hours and five minutes. At this time, we were tired and had headaches (The Black Dispatch, November 1960).

After two hours of this unexpected capture, the youth and Luper were rescued by attorney E. Melvin Porter and other members of the NAACP (Franklin, 1982).

Besides the eating and hotel establishments, Clara Luper with her "living classroom" of students also tackled the two major amusement parks in Oklahoma City, Springlake and Wedgewood. In June of 1963, Luper met with the Springlake management regarding desegregation of the facility. Maurice Woods, owner of the Wedgewood Village Amusement Park, emphatically stated that he would not allow Negroes to come in to his facility.

In June of 1963, fifty Negro and White protesters were arrested after a one hour and eighteen minute orderly demonstration took place at the Wedgewood Village Amusement Park. Maurice Woods, owner, personally halted the protester's at the turnstiles of the park, stating, "I told you this morning

that you would not be admitted. We can't force the people of Oklahoma City into something they can't accept. This is not a moral question, strictly financial (The Sunday Oklahoman, June 1963)."

By August 4, 1963, the segregation policy at Wedgewood Amusement Park was changed to letting Negroes attend on all days (The Black Dispatch, August 1963).

Clara Luper's involvement in the civil rights movement and her numerous arrests in the fight for equal opportunity in all areas of everyday life was not without repercussions to her career as a history and social studies teacher. Her critics, who felt her continued activities for civil liberties, particularly in the sanitation worker's strike in 1970, pressured the Oklahoma City School Board to relieve Luper of her teaching duties at Northwest High School because of a conflict of interest.

Luper claimed that Oklahoma City school officials were trying an "educational assassination" by offering her a research position instead of her usual duties of teaching.

Luper received a contract in the mail with a letter stating that she was being given the position of "research associate for media design and development (The Daily Oklahoma, August 1970)."

Luper stated in an article published in the Daily Oklahoma on August 19, 1970 that, "I am a Black woman in White America fighting against a system, speaking out and trying to bring about change." She also believed that the school board, "...yielded to the pressures of those who have criticized me because of my 18 arrests in civil rights activities." Clara Luper honestly believes that those arrests have, "enriched my knowledge of government, its operation and its problems."

Clara Luper was opposed accepting a research position because it was not clear what her job was to entail; she had no expertise in research and she wanted to remain in the classroom teaching students.

"It will take my heart out of me. You have to understand that my heart is with my children, and in an office without children, I"d dry up just like 'a raisin in the sun.' That job has no appeal to me. It's a dead end street (Luper, 1979)."

Dr. Bill Lillard, superintendent of the Oklahoma City Public Schools at the time, denied that pressure from critics of Luper and her 18 arrests from civil rights activities had anything to do with her moving into the research position. He stated that the reassignment was done solely on the basis of her ability. He also stated that because of Luper's qualifications she would be instrumental in several projects that the school system was involved in, especially in the area of Black history (Luper, 1994).

"We are currently involved in the work on a resource book on the history of the Negro in Oklahoma, funded by a federal grant. Also, we are developing a TV series in Black studies," said Lillard.

Lillard also believed that putting Luper in the research department would cause further integration of another department of the city's school system. "We are trying to make progress toward integration of all departments," said Lillard. "Who's more qualified to work in the area of the Negro's place in history than Mrs. Luper (Luper, 1994)?"

When the word got out about the impending transfer of Luper from teaching to research, Rev. W. K. Jackson, a prominent minister in Oklahoma City, called a meeting of the Coalition of Christian Leadership (CLC). Other prominent Black citizens such as Mrs. Jesse Moore, Dr. F. D. Moon, Jimmie Stewart, and the Rev. J. W. West, also became involved. Every Black teacher, as

well as some White teachers rallied in support of Luper and were willing to make personal sacrifices on behalf of the civil rights leader (Luper, 1979).

Luper received a final demand to report to the Oklahoma City Public School's Media Center but instead, attended a Miss Black America Pageant in New York City. On her return she was told by school district officials that her assignment would be at Northeast High School under the principalship of Melvin Todd. She taught there until she was transferred to John Marshall High School, a post she kept until her retirement in 1988 (Luper, 1994).

Clara Luper's hardest challenge as a teacher was working with White educators who did not understand the special needs and learning styles of African-American students. Luper referred to her students as "diamonds" because, "I realized that in order to get diamonds, someone has to be willing to dig, and my challenge has been with working with those teachers who were not willing to dig." An example of Luper's commitment to developing diamonds was with a student at John Marshall high school who always entered Luper's Human Rights class with his head held down because someone told him that he was dumb and would not amount to anything. So to help build his self esteem and to counteract the negative comments he always heard Luper would always say to him when he entered her class, "Here comes my diamond (Luper, 1994).

Sylvia A. Lewis

A native of Oklahoma, Sylvia A. Lewis was born in the town of Meridian. She attended elementary and secondary schools in Ponca City. She received a B. A. degree from Langston University in sociology, and an M. Ed. and a Certificate in Administration and Guidance and Counseling from the University

of Oklahoma. Lewis has done additional study at the University of Nebraska, University of Denver, Cornell University, and the University of Chicago. Lewis also received a Certificate in Special Education from Central State University, Edmond, Oklahoma (Lewis, 1994).

Lewis has invaluable educational expertise as well as a strong background in civic and community services. She was twice chosen as Teacher of the Year by her colleagues; received the meritorious award for Outstanding Community Service from the YWCA; a Citation of Congratulations from the Oklahoma State Senate; the Martin Luther King Humanitarian Award; the 1985 Finer Womanhood Award from Zeta Phi Beta Sorority; and her biography is listed in Who's Who Among American Women (Lewis, 1994).

She has served as the director of the Langston Urban Center, Oklahoma City campus; as coordinator of student teachers and dean of students at Langston University; as education/research specialist for Opportunity Industrialization Center (OIC), and as training advisor for OIC in Lagos, Nigeria-West Africa. She designed a curriculum for OIC to meet the needs for training unskilled adults for job opportunities in the local community (Lewis, 1994)

Sylvia Lewis' major accomplishment to education came on April 18, 1986, when Governor George Nigh named Lewis as the first Black member to the University of Oklahoma Board of Regents. This appointment was a step in Lewis' career that she had never dreamed of or considered. "It was far beyond my level of aspirations because I just merely wanted to be a good teacher." That was the height of her goals. However, there were other accomplishments in her future (Lewis, 1994).

One of the hardest obstacles that Lewis had to face, when she was named an OU Regent, was being accepted by the general community. When

she went shopping at stores that she frequented on a regular basis, she would receive nasty comments from Whites regarding her appointment. In contrast to that experience, Lewis received favorable treatment from the university community. "The faculty, staff, administration and students were just great and I was determined to meet the challenge," said Lewis (Lewis, 1994).

The first challenge came at her first meeting with the OU Board of Regents. The first item on the agenda dealt with the removal of the name of the chemistry building. The building had been named for a man who had been the Grand Dragon in the local Klu Klux Klan. The Oklahoma Legislative Black Caucus, the NAACP, the Urban League, the Black students and other concerned individuals had been calling for the removal of the name and a new name chosen in its place. To Lewis' surprise, when the vote was taken for the removal of the name, the other six Regents voted in favor of removal without hesitation. She soon realized the importance of being a Regent and what it could mean to people of color (Lewis, 1994).

Another rewarding experience for Sylvia Lewis as a Regent was at the May, 1986 graduation ceremony. All of the Regents were asked to help with congratulating the students as they walked across the stage. Lewis was asked to serve at the ceremony for the College of Arts and Sciences because it graduated the most African-American students. As she was congratulating the students, the African-American students were tearfully congratulating her because they were so proud to have someone serving on the Board of Regents who represented their concerns. Her philosophy while serving on the OU Board of Regents was"to put students first, faculty second, and the administration somewhere out there (Lewis, 1994)."

Dr. Betty G. Mason

Before becoming the first Black superintendent of the Oklahoma City Public Schools, Dr. Betty Mason had amassed an impressive list of professional and educational accomplishments. A native of Oklahoma, Mason graduated from Booker T. Washington High School in Tulsa. She received her B. A. degree in English literature from Bishop College in Marshall, Texas. She furthered her education by attending Kansas University in Lawrence, Kansas and Central Missouri State College in Warrenburg, Missouri during the summers and earning her Elementary School Credentials. She received her M. A. and Ed. D. in Supervision and Administration from the University of Oklahoma in 1986 (Mason, 1994).

Her professional career in education began as a fourth grade teacher in the Kansas City Public Schools in Kansas City, Kansas in 1949. Mason's teaching career progressed as she worked with students in the Dallas, Texas Public Schools and Berkley, California Unified Public School District (Mason, 1994).

It was while Mason was with the Berkley California School system that she began to develop her skills as an administrator. In 1970, she became a project assistant for Title I schools. In 1971 she was promoted to assistant principal; in 1972 she was promoted to elementary principal; in 1974 she was promoted to assistant director of certified personnel; and then six months later, she received another promotion to director, prekindergarten and elementary instructional programs (Mason, 1994).

Dr. Mason returned to Oklahoma in 1979 as the director of High Schools and Adult Education for the Oklahoma City Public Schools. In 1983, she became an assistant superintendent for Instruction and Related Services, a

position she held for five years. Wanting to gain experience as a school superintendent, Dr. Mason again left Oklahoma in 1988 to accept a position as superintendent of schools for the Gary Community School Corporation in Gary, Indiana. She returned to Oklahoma City in 1990 as a special consultant to the superintendent of schools. She was promoted in 1991 to assistant superintendent for Educational Services. When Dr. Arthur Stellar left his position as superintendent of the Oklahoma City Public Schools in November 1992, Mason served as interim superintendent. In April, 1993, Dr. Betty Mason became the first Black and the first female to hold the position of superintendent of the Oklahoma City Public Schools, the second largest school district in Oklahoma (Mason, 1994).

Dr. Mason feels very fortunate that she has held positions that have brought her straight up the ladder to the position she now holds as superintendent. All of these experiences gave Dr. Mason "a pretty good grip on everything that causes a system to operate (Mason, 1994)."

Dr. Mason received the bulk of her administrative training in the Berkley School District, a small but viable school district in California, where she worked for ten years. Because it was a small district Mason was able " to learn all of the intricacies of a school district and it has caused me to be far more comfortable, in the position of superintendent than probably I ordinarily would be. I know how all of the programs and departments are supposed to work (Mason, 1994)."

Dr. Mason's other accomplishments include serving on the Oklahoma State Superintendent's Advisory Team; participating on the Steering Committee of the Oklahoma City Education Round Table; and serving on the boards of Five Who Care, Starting Right-Community Council of Oklahoma County, and the Mental Health Association of Oklahoma County. Dr. Mason is a member of the

NAACP, the Urban League of Greater Oklahoma City, Inc., and Oklahoma Women In Education Association (Mason, 1994).

Dr. Mason has been a delegate to the 16th International Seminar on Schooling, held in Berlin, Germany in 1993. She has been recognized with the Distinguished Leadership Award from the National Forum for Black Public Administrators; the Outstanding Leadership Award from the Oklahoma City Public Schools; and with a Citation for Excellence by the State of Indiana, Governor's Award. Dr. Mason's biography is listed in Who's Who in Women Executives (Mason, 1994)

There were three areas that Mason identified as her goals for the Oklahoma City Public Schools when she accepted the position as superintendent: 1. to create a warm, caring environment for students; 2. to improve the facilities of the schools; while 3. continuing to improve the educational process (Mason,1994).

The educational philosophy of Dr. Mason is that educators must "provide an educational environment where children can learn. I don't think there is any other way to determine your effectiveness except that children are progressing year after year---that is an ongoing, continuing challenge (Mason, 1994)."

Dr. Jean Bell Manning

As Vice President for Academic Affairs at Langston University Dr. Jean Bell Manning holds the austere position of being the highest ranking Black female at any institution of higher education in Oklahoma. Her career, leading up to her present position, is both varied and interesting. Dr. Manning began as a high school teacher of English at Ardmore High School in Ardmore, Oklahoma. She has been a visiting professor of reading at Texas Southern

University in Houston, a professor of freshman composition and reading at Jarvis Christian College in Hawkins, Texas, and an English Instructor at Douglas High School in Oklahoma City (Manning).

Dr. Manning's continued career growth is both impressive and extensive. She has held positions as an associate professor of English at Langston University, as a professor of English as a Second Language, Freshman Composition, Modern Drama, and Advanced Grammar at the University of Liberia, Monrovia, Liberia; as a professor of education and of English at Paul Quinn College in Waco, Texas, and as an associate professor of Communication at Langston University (Manning, 1994).

Dr. Manning's administrative positions began in 1961 as director of the Reading Laboratory at Jarvis College in Hawkins, Texas. In 1969, she became director of the Learning Resource Center at Langston University. In 1973, she served as the coordinator of Freshman Studies, director of Testing, and education consultant to the Minister of Education at the University of Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa. Other administrative positions include being chairman of the Department of Education at Paul Quinn College, and being a federal relations and Title III coordinator and executive director of Institutional Support at Langston University. In 1986, Dr. Manning was named Vice-President of Academic Affairs at Langston University, making her the highest ranking Black female at any state institution of higher education in Oklahoma (Manning).

Manning believes that she has been very fortunate as an educator. "I believe that ones experiential background is the thing that makes the person; so all of the experiences that I have had, have been important to where I am now (Manning, 1994)."

Dr. Manning, a native of LaMarque, Texas, graduated from Lincoln High School in that town. She earned her B. A. degree in English from Bishop

College, her M. Ed. degree in Elementary Education (reading specialty), and her Ed. D. degree in Reading and Elementary Education from North Texas State University, Denton, Texas. Her doctoral dissertation was on *The Influence of a Short-Term Preparatory Program to improve the Self-Concepts of Negro Children Before Entering Integrated Schools* (Manning, 1994).

Other training that Dr. Manning obtained included faculty development with the Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges; Creating the Future in the Small Private College at Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, Illinois; and the Moton Foundation Seminar-Technical Assistance for Proposal Writing, Washington, D. C. (Manning, 1994).

In her position as Vice President for Academic Affairs at Langston University, she has had to face numerous challenges. One of the major challenges has been to "...maintain a culturally diverse and sensitive faculty...One that is sensitive to the mission of the institution. One that understands that it is important to be futuristic and goal oriented as we move into the 21st century (Manning, 1994)."

Dr. Manning has published several works. She authored, A Handbook for Preparing Research Papers; an **Audio Tape Manual for Freshman Composition**; **Learning English as a Second Language**; and **Teaching Reading Without Tears or Fears**: **A Modular Approach** (Manning, 1994).

Memberships include the Reading Association, National Council of Teachers of English, National Education Association and the Oklahoma Education Association.

Dr. Manning is featured in Personalities of the Southwest and Who's Who in Black America. She is the recipient of the Ford Foundation Grant of $13,500 to complete her dissertation (Manning, 1994).

Dr. Manning feels that her strongest characteristics are, "...the innate capacity to work with people and extract from them talents and abilities that they have not previously utilized, while consistently demonstrating initiative and sound decision making and problem solving abilities (Manning, 1994)."

In all of the experiences that Dr. Manning has had in education, her educational philosophy is very simple, "I feel that education should teach one how to live and how to make a living. If we can do that, we can become responsible citizens that have values and integrity...and make a contribution to this country (Manning, 1994)."

Dr. Mannng believes that her greatest contribution to Langston University has been in motivating and exciting faculty and students to be all that they can be in this world and also bringing, through the faculty and administration, curricular changes that are viable and effective as we move into the 21st century (Manning, 1994).

Under Dr. Manning's leadership, Langston is now involved in satellite teaching. The institution is involved in the Star Schools Program through the Black College Satellite Network. Langston University professors are teaching French, Spanish, Calculus, and Biology on this satellite network. By being in tune with all of the latest technology, she has been able to bring the campus to the world, and the world to the campus.

Thelma Parks

Thelma Parks was born in Muskogee, Oklahoma, the sixth of nine children. Her parents were very concerned about all of their children obtaining a quality education. During the days of segregation in Oklahoma, the only professional occupations that Blacks could aspire to was either to teach or to

preach, and her parents made sure that she and her siblings received a good education so that "they could become professionals and give back to the community what the community gave to us (Parks, 1994)."

Thelma Parks received her elementary and high school education in Muskogee and then matriculated through Langston University where she graduated with a bachelor's degree in elementary education. Degree in hand, Parks returned to Muskogee to apply for a teaching position. However, when she applied for a specific teaching position in the Muskogee school system she was told that they did not want to hire her because it was not the practice to hire teachers who had graduated from Muskogee Public Schools. Parks argued that, "there is a position that's open that I am qualified for and I want a job Parks, 1994)."

Thelma Parks was very persistent in her quest to obtain a teaching job in Muskogee, and she eventually convinced them to hire her. She became the first teacher in Muskogee to graduate from Muskogee Public Schools and to be hired as a teacher in that school system. Parks taught at the elementary school level for several years and then moved to Oklahoma City (Parks, 1994).

Her first job assignment in Oklahoma City was at Dunbar Elementary School as a 6th grade teacher. When Truman Elementary was selected to be the first school in the district to integrate White and Black Students, Parks was selected to be the 6th grade teacher. Parks then continued by becoming a reading and English teacher at the high school level, and then took on the duties of being a high school counselor, first at Douglas High School and then at U. S. Grant High School. Grant High School was the last school in the district to integrate and Parks was the first Black to be a high school counselor there.

Thelma Parks feels that her tenure at U. S. Grant was the best move she ever made because "there were so many misconceptions and distortions about the competencies of Blacks as educators," stated Parks. Parks was certain that she could be an excellent counselor at Grant because she had been that at Douglass and, said Parks, "In order to dispel those distortions and to dispel those misconceptions about what Blacks could do, I went and did it. I was accepted by the people in that community and it just gave me the feeling that I made a difference (Parks, 1994)."

After retiring from the Oklahoma City Public Schools as counselor at Grant High School, she went to visit her daughter in California. There she received word that Cecil Williams had suddenly died. Williams was an Oklahoma City School Board representative from district five. She began to receive phone calls from several individuals from district five asking her to please come back to Oklahoma City to make a bid for William's school board seat (Parks, 1994).

When she returned to Oklahoma City, she thought long and hard about this opportunity and realized, "If not me, who?" She believed that since she had given thirty-six years of her life to teaching and counseling, "what better way to give back to the community, that had given so much to me, than to make a run for the school board position." Parks ran against four other opponents and won (Parks, 1994).

Thelma Parks believes that her greatest contributions to education in Oklahoma came from her service on the Oklahoma City School Board, particularly during her three year tenure as president of the board. She states, "We returned credibility and stability to the Oklahoma City Public Schools. We allowed parents to have some genuine input. We restructured the direction in

which the school system was going because there was some unrest and teacher morale was low and thanks to good leadership and the support of the board members we were able to raise teacher morale." Probably one of the biggest contributions that occurred during her tenure as board president was in 1993 when the largest school bond issue of any school system in Oklahoma was passed (Parks, 1994).

Thelma Parks' educational philosophy is this: "We must make sure that we provide the opportunity for all children to get an education. I strongly believe that we can not afford the luxury of hate and misplaced values because if we do, we get lost in that big picture. So my philosophy is that every child should be given the opportunity to have an education so that they can move forward and become a productive citizen, being able to compete in the global society of the 21st century (Parks, 1994)."

Parks is being rewarded for her years of service in education. An elementary school, that will be built in the Northeast quadrant of Oklahoma City, which is predominantly an African-American community will bear her name. It was voted on at the June, 1994 Oklahoma City Public School board meeting.

Ruby Hibler Hall

Ruby Hibler Hall was the first Black to serve on the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. She served with distinction from 1974 until 1980. According to Hall, "It was really a rewarding experience. It was a challenging experience and I would say my most rewarding experience was saving Langston University and creating new missions for it." That was in 1979 while Hall was chairman of the Board of Regents (Hall, 1994).

Another accomplishment that Hall is quite proud of is bringing Black professionals to the staff of the Board of Regents. Shortly after she was

confirmed as a Regent, she noticed that the staff was all Caucasian and as she met with the Regent's staff she realized that other than Eric Thrower, who worked in the Finance Department, there were no other Black professionals (Hall, 1994).

The first thing that Ruby Hall did was to meet with the Chancellor of the Regents for Higher Education, E. T. Dunlap, about hiring a Black professional that would answer to no one but him. Dunlap stated that he knew of no person who was qualified. Hall said that she did know of a person who had the qualifications and so she recommended Dr. Melvin Todd, and he became the first Black to hold the position of Vice Chancellor for the Oklahoma Board of Regents. Dr. Todd then became instrumental in helping to save Langston University (Hall, 1994).

In 1979, the State of Oklahoma was considering closing Langston University because the sentiment was that since the Sipuel and McLaurin decisions in 1949, had opened the doors for Blacks to attend any institution of higher education in Oklahoma, there was no longer a need for a predominantly Black institution (Hall, 1994).

Hall felt that saving Langston University was a tough decision, "But you know, I think that God works in mysterious ways, and I think that if you seek wisdom from him, he sort of shows you the paths and puts words into your mouth, and we were able to change the Regents position." But Hall also recognized that, "the feelings and views of the policy makers had to be changed and because Chancellor Dunlap had such a tremendous hold on the political situation at the time, that having him earnestly help was essentially the key (Hall, 1994)."

After the Spring, 1979 semester, the Oklahoma State Board of Regents for A. & M. Colleges voted to close Langston University. Ruby Hall was called by

Herman Duncan, the only Black member of the A. M. Board, to tell her of the decision to close Langston University for the summer. Hall recalls, "I was dumb-founded, I couldn't believe it. I said, you're kidding." She told Duncan that he had to go back and change his vote and that if he changed his vote, that would stop the closing. Hall does not know what Duncan did after that phone conversation, but the next morning she called Dunlap and he told her that the A. & M. Board could not do that because the State Regents had already appropriated the funds for Langston for the summer session (Hall, 1994).

The argument by the A. & M. Board for the closing of Langston was that the financial records were in such poor condition that they needed to close the institution in order for the finance professionals to be able to review the books. However, Dunlap still maintained that Langston could not be closed. In a small meeting with the executive secretary of the A. & M. Board, a threat was made in Hall's presence by the secretary that "you can make us keep the institution open but that every student that was enrolled during the previous session and had pre-enrolled for the summer session owed the institution money and would not be allowed to attend (Hall, 1994)."

Those Langston students were all home for the interim break between the Spring and Summer sessions. There were only a few days left before the beginning of summer school and there was not enough time to notify them before returning to Langston. "Well," Ruby Hall stated, "We'll handle that," even though she didn't know how. She called her husband, Ira D. Hall, a Langston graduate, like herself, and an educator. He said that "we'll find out how much money is owed the institution and we will raise the money." On calling Langston University, they found out that approximately $10,000 needed to be raised. In a week, a little over $10,000 was raised by a coalition of individuals lead by Ira Hall (Hall, 1994).

During summer enrollment at Langston, Mizura Allen, who was head of the Business Department, came over to the Admissions Office and as those students enrolled she was there to make them a loan from the $10,000 that had been raised. This development, however, did not end the problem. The Executive Secretary of the A. & M. Board called and said that he didn't have the staff to come to Langston to assist with the summer enrollment process because that would require some additional manipulation and transferring. So, E. T. Dunlap sent out members of his staff to assist with the summer enrollment process (Hall, 1994).

A year later, all of the students, except one, who received a loan from that $10,000, repaid the the loan and that one student eventually repaid his amount. This, for Hall, had been great challenge; but she felt that if the A. & M. Board had succeeded in closing Langston for the summer, it would never be opened again (Hall, 1994).

Hall's passion for keeping Langston open stems for the fact she graduated from that institution in 1932, along with her husband, Ira Hall, and she was glad that her position on the Oklahoma State Board of Regents allowed her the opportunity to assist her alma mater in that important way. Her philosophy is that "The epitome of life is to help others and to give service--and whatever race you are in, those that have the better advantages should share, and in the African-American race, as long as one of us is denied--the race is denied. (Hall, 1994)."

Overview

It is interesting to see how Langston University continues to be in a prominent position when we talk about the education of Blacks in Oklahoma. First of all, Langston University provided a high schol education for many Black Oklahomans and was the only source of a college education for African Americans in the state. This put Langston University in a unique political position that shifted focus throughout the twentieth century.

Second, most of the women educators featured in this study are graduates of Langston University, being the only source of higher education for Black Oklahomans.

Third, as the battle for equal access to graduate school education, Langston University became a political pawn in keeping Blacks out of the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University. Sipuel, McLaurin, and Davis, all graduates of Langston pursued their quest with intellect, patience, and tenacity. In the case of Sipuel, Langston University, which was not an accredited institution at the time, received acreditation so that a Langston Law School could be opened to give Sipuel a law school education.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH DESIGN

Data were analyzed by employing the Developmental Research Sequence (DRS) design. This procedure is used in ethnographic analysis (Spradley, 1979:34). This method included domain, taxonomic, componential analysis and theme discovery. For this study I used only domain analysis and theme discovery, as both of these analyses allowed me to accomplish my research purpose.

SAMPLE

The subjects used in this research were African-American women educators who have made significant contributions to the history and structure of education in Oklahoma. While many African-American women educators have made significant contributions, eight particular women were specifically chosen because their contributions changed the course of education in Oklahoma, and their achievements were firsts Oklahoma education. Also, these women were accessible to me locally.

PROCEDURE

Analyzing the data collected from the eight African American Women in this study involved searching for patterns. This was achieved by identifying cultural domains from the transcripts of their video taped interviews. Domains are categories of meaning that included smaller categories (Spradley, 1980: 88).

The **cover term** is the name for a cultural domain and the **included terms** are the names for all of the smaller categories inside the domain. The next part of the cultural domain is a **single semantic relationship** that connects the cover and included terms (Spradley, 1980: 89). The cultural domains, with cover terms, and the semantic relationships, were recorded on Domain Analysis Worksheets (see Appendix C). After the cultural domains were identified, theme analysis was employed to search for the relationships among domains and the ways they are linked to the cultural scene as a whole (Spradley, 1979: 87-88).

CHAPTER V

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Again, the purpose of this study was to document and compile, in one body of research, the contributions African-American women have made to education in Oklahoma and to tell the stories of how they took risks to effect change so that all Oklahoma citizens could enjoy the benefits of a quality education. Futhermore, the purpose of this story was to produce a video documentary featuring the eight African-American women whose personal accounts illustrate their struggle for educational opportunity in Oklahoma. By capturing their stories visually, one can gain a better understanding of how they simply wanted to better their lives through education and how they were willing to travel down the road of adversity until their goals were met.

RESULTS

Analysis of the data gathered from the interviews of the eight African-American women educators revealed twenty-nine cultural domains. These domains will be presented in the following order: Life for Blacks in Early Statehood; Blacks in Oklahoma Trying to Gain a Viable Place in Society; Establishing a University for Black Students in Oklahoma; Using Langston University as a Pawn to Keep Separate-But-Equal Doctrine in Tact; Operationalize Segregation in Education; Separate but Unequal Applications by Those in Power; Accomplishments the First Black Admitted to OU Law School; and Minimizing the Effects of Integration.

Also analyzed are: Accomplishment of the First Black Admitted to OSU; Denying Admittance to White Institutions; Breakthrough for Blacks Who Sought an Education in White Institutions; Character Traits for Success; Favorable Treatment; Fighting for Civil Rights; Equal Educational Opportunities; and Educational Philosophy held by Black Female Educators.

Other domains include: Contributions Made to Education by Black Female Educators in Oklahoma; Milestones in the History of Integration in Oklahoma; Understanding of the Fight to Gain Admission to OU Law School; Career Accomplishments Once Graduated from OSU; Strategies made for the Civil Rights Movement; Training Students in the Art of Peaceful Demonstrations; Accomplishments of the First Black OU Regent; Career Accomplishment of the First Black Superintendent of the OKC Public Schools; Career Accomplishment for the Highest Ranking Black Female in Oklahoma Higher Education; and Career Advancement at Langston University for the Highest Ranking Black Female in Oklahoma Higher Education.

Final domains to be analyzed are: Accomplishments at Langston University; Career Accomplishments of a Black Female Educator in the OKC Public Schools Board; Accomplishments on the Oklahoma City Public Schools Board; and Keeping Langston University from Closing.

Life for Blacks in Early Statehood

What was life like for Blacks in early statehood in Oklahoma? Research indicates that Blacks lived their daily life with a backdrop of hatred and suffering. The Black population began moving from the small towns and rural areas to the urban areas seeking a better chance. By moving to the urban areas, Blacks in Oklahoma were hoping that the walls of segregation would come down and that through education the outlook for a better life would be possible. However,

the Jim Crow philosophy still prevailed. Black Oklahomans still feared the wrath of the Klu Klux Klan's lynchings and other incidents of racial brutality.

At the pinnacle of this fear was a terrible incident that occurred in Tulsa in 1921. The Tulsa Race Riot ignited when a Black male brushed the arm of a White female elevator operator in a Tulsa office building and she yelled rape. This riot vehemently illustrates the severe hatred that existed and how justified African Americans were for living in fear during this era. Their hopes for a better life literally went up in smoke when more than thirty-five blocks, including homes and thriving business, went up in flames.

Blacks In Oklahoma Trying to Gain a Viable Place in Society

How could Blacks gain an equal place in American Society? With the backdrop of racial hatred that permeated the everyday life of Blacks in Oklahoma, gaining a viable place in society was extremely difficult. By 1940, about 47% of the Black population had moved from the rural areas of Oklahoma to the urban areas. Their hope was to find employment and for their children to gain an education. Education for Blacks was the only way to break down the walls of segregation and becoming a contributing citizen to the American way of life. However, schools became a powerful instrument in the caste system and access to equal educational opportunities was denied to Blacks.

Establishing a University for Blacks in Oklahoma

What ways were used to to establish a university for Blacks in Oklahoma? Because the State of Oklahoma was bound and determined to keep the separate-but-equal doctrine in tact and not to allow Blacks to gain an equal education on par with Whites, Blacks saw some remedy of hope with the "second Morrill Act" of 1890. This Act gave annual appropriations to states that

built schools of higher education for Negroes. Charles William Murce Sulcer in 1894 introduced a plank to the Resolution Committee of the Oklahoma Territorial Convention asking that a college for Blacks be established.

A couple of years after Mr. Sulcer introduced his plank, The Association for Negro Teachers in Oklahoma felt that a strategic nudge had to be given to the Oklahoma Legislature. Mr. Sulcer took a Black female to Edmond to enroll in the normal college there. Of course she was denied but after several years of political hashing, the Territorial Council on March 12, 1897 established, with House Bill 151, the Colored, Agricultural and Normal University (Langston University).

Using Langston University as a Pawn to Keep Separate-but-Equal Doctrine

How was Langston University used as a pawn to keep the separate-but-equal doctrine in tact? From the very beginning, Langston University was used to keep Blacks from getting equal educational opportunities along with Whites. When Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher tried gaining admission to the University of Oklahoma Law School, Langston University was granted accreditation after years of being denied based on inferior faculty and facilities. This accreditation was to allow the establishment of the Langston University Law School at the Oklahoma State Capital so Fisher could attend there and not at OU. She refused to attend.

Operationalize Segregation in Education

How was segregation in education achieved in Oklahoma? It was first achieved by the Separate-but-Equal Doctrine that stated that there would be separate schools for White and Black children with like accommodations. In

1901 the Oklahoma Territorial Legislature enacted a law that prohibited White teachers from teaching Black students with penalties for violations. In 1908 the legislature passed House Bill 365 that focused on continuing the segregation policies by saying that teachers should be of the same race as the students they taught in the classroom.

On the higher education level, Blacks seeking advanced degrees upon graduating from Langston University had to leave the state and attend schools in other states that admitted Blacks to their institutions. Often the State of Oklahoma would pay for their tuition rather than have them attend a state school.

Separate but Unequal Applications by Those in Power

What ways were used to create unequal conditions in education? By law, Oklahoma school districts were supposed to provide separate-but equal facilities for educating Black and White students. However, though the facilities were definitely separate they were certainly not equal. Many of the schools for Black students were located in rundown sections of a town or city. Schools were housed in dilapidated buildings. Students had to use extremely sub-standard books and supplies if they had them at all. In most cases the teachers were poorly trained.

Accomplishment of the First Black Admitted to OU Law School

What accomplishments were made to gain acceptance into the University of Oklahoma Law School? The first accomplishment that Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher made in her quest for admittance into the OU Law School was to get a meeting with George L. Cross, President of the University of Oklahoma. This meeting was held with the assistance of Roscoe Dunjee, editor and publisher of

the Black Dispatch Newspaper in Oklahoma City and W.A.J. Bullock, regional director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The main purpose of this meeting was to get a letter written by Cross denying Fisher admittance to the Law School because of her race. This was accomplished and this letter served as legal ground work for this test case.

Amos Hall, Sipuel's attorney, used this letter to go to court to win admittance to the Law School for Sipuel. His reasoning was that the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution guaranteed equal educational opportunity. The Cleveland County Court ruled in favor of the University. Then, Thurgood Marshall, legal counsel for the NAACP, stepped in and joined Hall to appeal to the Oklahoma State Supreme Court. The lower courts decision was upheld.

An appeal was again made to the United States Supreme Court using similar court cases as the bases for this appeal. In January of 1948, the Supreme Court ruled that the State of Oklahoma must "provide instruction to Negroes equal to that given white students." This ruling, however, did not mean a remedy to Sipuel's dilemma. It actually began a continuous battle for her and her attorneys, Marshall and Hall. The State of Oklahoma decided to organize a Langston University Law School at the State Capitol to provide education for Sipuel, equal to Whites. They were determined to keep education separate and so the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education met on January 19, 1948 and in a few days created the separate law school.

It was obvious to Sipuel and her attorneys that the State of Oklahoma had no intentions of integrating the educational system. Since Langston University did not have accreditation at that time, a degree from their law school would have no merit so Sipuel refused to attend.

In 1948, Sipuel applied again to the OU Law School and once again was denied admission by President Cross. By this time the NAACP knew that they would have work on a broader strategy. They determined that Oklahoma simply could not organize enough professional schools to handle the significant number of Blacks willing to pursue degrees in any number of academic disciplines. In the spring of 1948, the NAACP was able to get six African Americans to apply to the University of Oklahoma in academic areas not offered at Langston. One of the six was a fifty-four year old professor at Langston University, George W. McLaurin, who became the main defendant in a new court case. In September, 1948, the federal district court decided that the University of Oklahoma had to provide McLaurin with the education he asked for. But, as one might expect, this decision did not mean the end of "separate-but- equal." Another strategy was employed to keep McLaurin away from White students. This strategy included placing McLaurin in an alcove outside of the classroom and providing him a separate table in the cafeteria and in the library.

In 1949 the University of Oklahoma asked the state legislature to consider changing the segregation laws to allow Black students the opportunity to attend the university because the requests for admission to various courses and programs were becoming too numerous. The legislature finally broke down and in the summer of 1949 Ada Lois Sipuel was allowed to attend the University of Oklahoma Law School.

Minimizing the Effects of Integration

What ways other than legal segregation were used to segregate Blacks from Whites? Of course, the segregation laws were changing but the attitudes of Whites still held firm and this made it hard for Sipuel as she began her law school career two weeks into the summer session. The real humiliation began.

White students were shocked and curious at Sipuel's arrival on her first day of class. Their eyes peered at her when she spotted the "Colored" sign at the top of the classroom where she sat for the entire class period. The African-American students were not allowed to sit with their classes. In Sipuel's class White students sat in the first three rows of the classroom and she sat in a wooden chair behind the last row. On a pole behind the last row was a sign taped to it that read "Colored."

African-American students who were eventually allowed to attend the University of Oklahoma had to endure adverse conditions. The were not allowed to mingle with White students under any circumstances. They were separated from White students in alcoves and hallways. They could not eat with White students. They could not get in line with White students. Blacks had to enter a separate door into the cafeteria. Blacks had to eat at separate tables with heavy chains around them and a guard with a pistol watching them.

Accomplishment of the First Black Admitted to OSU

What accomplishments were made to gain admittance to OSU? The outcome of the law suits regarding the University of Oklahoma did impact what was to happen at Oklahoma A & M (later Oklahoma State University) in Stillwater. Nancy Randolph Davis was determined to take advantage of the current situation and apply for admittance to Oklahoma A & M. After graduating from Langston University and teaching for one year Davis was ready to pursue a Master's degree in home economics and to study under Nora Talbert whose text book she had studied at Langston. Gaining admittance was not an easy task, however.

When Davis had the opportunity to speak with Nora Talbert herself, Talbert told her that Negroes were not wanted there and that she should consider going to a university out-of-state. When news that Davis had been denied admittance to OSU reached Roscoe Dunjee he immediately contacted Amos Hall and together they made a visit to the Stillwater campus and met with the top officials of the college. Dunjee and Hall were able to convince the university administration to allow Davis to attend classes the summer of 1949.

Denying Admittance to OSU

How was admittance to OSU denied? Nancy Randolph Davis thought that she might make some inroads if she could speak with Nora Talbert, head of the Economics Department at OSU and a person whose textbook she had studied as a student at Langston University. However, this was not the case. When Davis met with Talbert, Talbert emphasized that , "We don't want Negroes here," that Oklahoma was under the Separate-but-Equal Doctrine, and that it was against the law to allow Blacks into the classroom. Davis stated that she knew what the law was but that the law must change. However, Talbert continued to reiterate how Blacks were not ready for graduate work, how Blacks were not trustworthy people and how White students would never accept her in their classes. Talbert told Davis to return the next day but when Davis returned she was denied admission because of her race.

Breakthrough for Blacks Who Gained Admission to White Universities

What kinds of favorable treatment did Sipuel and Davis receive after being admitted to OU and OSU respectively? Both Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher and Nancy Randolph Davis were told very negative things about how they would be

treated by White students if they were going to be allowed to attend school with Whites. However, this was not the case in their situations.

For Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher on her first day of class, had to sit in a chair behind the last row with a sign on a pole that read "Colored." But when class was over ten White male students came up to Sipuel, shook her hand and hugged her and stated how glad they were that she had finally made it. Because she began school two weeks into the summer session the White male students offered to tutor her, loan her their books and notes, and to help her catch up with the work she had missed. Without their help she could not have survived the first summer session. In the cafeteria, when the guard was not around, the White students would crawl under the chains to have lunch with the Black students.

For Nancy Randolph Davis during her first week of classes, had to sit in the doorway or in an office nook located in the back of class in order to attend her classes. During the third week of classes she took her first examination and received the second highest score; from then on the White students accepted her and told their professors that they wanted Davis to sit with them no matter what the laws were. Davis never sat in the back of the classroom again. The White students included Davis in class projects and studied with her at the library.

Character Trait for Success

What character traits did these African American Women have to succeed? Each of the African-American women educators featured in this study possessed the same basic character traits necessary to succeed despite the odds against them. The first character trait they possessed was **persistence**. Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher's fight to be admitted into the University of Oklahoma

Law School was a three year battle that involved several strategic moves on the part of Sipuel and her attorneys, several court cases and denials of admittance, and several manipulations to keep her out by OU, the State Regents for Higher Education and the Oklahoma State Legislature. Nancy Randolph Davis benefited from Sipuel's three year battle but she exhibited persistence by not giving up on her quest to to enter OSU even though she was told that Negroes were not wanted and that Negroes were not ready to receive graduate education and were not trustworthy. Davis continued to pursue her goal of gaining admittance to OSU and ultimately won. Clara Luper showed persistence in working with her students as they carried through numerous civil rights demonstrations and sit-ins to gain access to public facilities for Blacks in Oklahoma City. These demonstrations were very successful. Sylvia Lewis showed persistence when she was appointed the first Black member to the University of Oklahoma Board of Regents. Even though many White individuals from the community did not accept her appointment she was persistent in performing her duties on the board.

Dr. Betty Mason and Dr. Jean Bell Manning have shown persistence in their rise to becoming superintendent of the Oklahoma City Public Schools and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Langston University respectively. Their careful choice of career moves and diversity of positions provided them with the knowledge and skills necessary to become the first Black superintendent of an urban school system and the highest ranking female in the higher education system in Oklahoma. Thelma Parks began showing her persistent character trait after graduating from Langston University and seeking her first job in her home town of Muskogee, Oklahoma. At the time, there were no Black teachers teaching in the Muskogee school system but the reason they used to

not hire her was that it was their policy not to hire teachers who graduated from Muskogee Public Schools. However, Parks remained persistent and she became the first Black and first Muskogee graduate to teach in the hometown school system. Ruby Hall had her battle of persistence when she was on the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and moves were being made to close Langston University, Oklahoma's only historically Black university. Because financial records at Langston were in a shambles and so many students owed large sums of money the school was slated to be closed. But due to the fund raising efforts of Mrs. Hall and her husband and Mrs. Hall's influence with the political powers in state government Langston University was saved.

The next character trait that all women possessed was **leadership**. Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher, Nancy Davis, and Clara Luper, showed leadership in their fights to gain equal opportunity for African Americans in education and public accommodations. Sylvia Lewis, Dr. Betty Mason, Dr. Jean Manning, Thelma Parks and Ruby Hall each received leadership positions in education, Lewis as a University of Oklahoma Regent, Dr. Mason as Superintendent of the Oklahoma City Public Schools, Dr. Manning as Vice President for Academic Affairs at Langston University, Thelma Parks as a member of the Oklahoma City Public Schools and Ruby Hall as an Oklahoma State Regent for Higher Education.

Self confidence is certainly an important character trait to have when going against insurmountable odds to achieve major achievements in your life. Each of these women had to believe in themselves and their ability to continue their quest until their goals were reached. Once they reached their goals they

had to believe that they possessed the skills to continue to prove their worth whether in fighting for civil rights or advancing their careers in areas in which Blacks had never excelled.

The traits of **dedication**, **determination** and **patience** are intertwined when speaking of the character traits these women possessed in order to make the contributions they made to education in Oklahoma. Each of these women was **dedicated** to their belief that changes must be made to the educational system in Oklahoma so that everyone could receive a quality education. With this dedication they were **determined** to toughen out the struggles, the rejections, the bad words, and the negative feedbacks. Enduring all this took **patience**. Giving up was not an option for these women and they certainly did not loose faith. For most, the battles took several years to win and each exhibited the patience to carry things through until the end.

Favorable Treatment

What kind of favorable treatment was received? It is always easy to point out the negatives of any situation but with most bad situations some good can can be found. Sylvia Lewis, when she was selected by then Governor George Nigh to be the first Black to be a University of Oklahoma Regent, received negative feedback from the general community in Norman, Oklahoma. However, she was accepted by the University community and particularly the Black students who were happy to have someone on the board to represent their concerns.

Both Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher and Nancy Davis received favorable treatment from their fellow White students when they were finally admitted to the professional schools of the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University. Sipuel and Davis both had White students who helped them with studying and providing them with missed notes because they began the term a couple of weeks late. This kind of favorable treatment was crucial to their success during their first term in professional schools.

Fight for Civil Rights

What ways were used to fight for civil rights? The fight for equal educational opportunities in Oklahoma was a part of a bigger fight, the civil rights movement. Landmark law suits filed by Amos Hall and Thurgood Marshall on behalf of Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher and George McLaurin for equal access to higher education was a part of a larger movement going on in America to open the doors for equal educational opportunities for all American citizens.

Clara Luper's quest to open the doors for access to public accommodations by using her classroom as a living classroom was also a part of the larger civil rights movement pushing across America. Her students not only read and discussed social studies and history, they became a living, breathing part of history and social interaction. This was accomplished by making their beliefs a public forum through participation in acts of demonstrations. Luper taught her students how to develop a well planned strategy for overcoming injustices with the doctrine of non-violence. She was very successful.

Equal Educational Opportunity

What ways were used to achieve equal educational opportunities? It was best said by Nancy Davis when she was being told that she could not attend OSU because the segregation laws in Oklahoma stipulated that Blacks could not receive an education with Whites. She said, "The laws must change." This meant that the segregation laws would have to be amended. This was best accomplished through the legal system and the success of the litigation of the United States Constitution. For Oklahoma, this was the only way to break down the barriers to equal educational opportunities and to remove the "colored" signs in educational institutions.

Educational Philosophies of Black Female Educators

What are the educational philosophies of female educators? The educational philosophies of African-American women educators focused on providing a quality education for all children in Oklahoma so that they can become productive citizens. Clara Luper's philosophy was that all students are diamonds and that in order to get diamonds someone has to dig. Her challenge in education has been to those educators who have not been willing to dig to produce students who would shine like diamonds.

Sylvia Lewis' educational philosophy was that students should always be placed at the center of whatever educational plans one makes. She always looked at any educational issue from the standpoint of, "How will this affect the students." She believed that you place students first, faculty next, and administrators somewhere out there.

The educational philosophy of Dr. Betty Mason is that , "... schools are for children and that we need to do everything we can to cause the school experience to be a good one for all children, and if what we choose to do for children is not good for children, we should not be doing it."

"Education should teach one how to live and make a living," is the educational philosophy of Dr. Jean Manning. She feels that if educators can accomplish that, students can become responsible citizens that have values and integrity and they can make a contribution to society.

In the same vein, Thelma Parks' philosophy is that, "...we provide educational opportunities for all children to get an education." She feels strongly that hate and misplaced values have no place in an educational setting. Simply, Parks' philosophy is that, "Every child should be given the opportunity to have an education so that they can move forward and become a productive citizen and able to compete in the global society in the 21st Century."

Contributions made to education by Black female educators in Oklahoma

What contribution was made to education in Oklahoma? Because of many African-American women in Oklahoma who fought to make conditions equal in the educational system many contributions were made to bring about some positive changes. Emma Lee Freeman in 1947, with the assistance of the NAACP filed a declaration judgment in the United States District Court, Western Oklahoma, against the Oklahoma City Public Schools in regard to unequal pay for Negro teachers. Freeman's contention was that a policy of

unequal payment of salary deprived her under the United State Constitution. Before the federal district court could make a decision, the Oklahoma School Public Schools reorganized its pay policy. However, Amos Hall, NAACP attorney asked the judge, Edgar S. Vaught, to make a ruling anyway so that a precedent for Oklahoma would be set. He ruled that it was unlawful to discriminate with salaries between teachers in the majority schools and teachers in the separate schools on account of race.

Octavia Harrison Douglas filed a similar suit in 1954 in the district court of Okfuskee County and later to the Supreme Court of Oklahoma. Her case stated that Negro teachers with graduate degrees received less pay than White teachers with similar of fewer qualifications. Finally winning her case paved the way for equalizing the pay of all teachers in the state of Oklahoma.

Of course, the major contribution to education in Oklahoma is allowing equal access to education for all citizens Black or White. This was accomplished by Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher and Nancy Davis who broke the barriers of the separate-but-equal doctrine which allowed Blacks and Whites to be educated together in the same facilities.

The struggles that Black women have endured to improve the educational process in Oklahoma have allowed for more Blacks and other minorities to participate fully in the educational system and to represent the concerns of educating all students. This makes a better educational structure, responsive to the needs of Oklahomans.

Milestones in the History of Equal Education in Oklahoma

What are the milestones for achieving equal education in Oklahoma? This study has been about the significant developments made to the educational structure of Oklahoma that led to equal educational opportunities.

In 1949 two African-American women became the first to enter Oklahoma institutions of higher education. Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher became the first Black to admitted to the University of Oklahoma Law School and Nancy Davis became the first Black to attend Oklahoma State University. Clara Luper exhibited innovation in education by turning her classroom into a living classroom by employing her students to participate in the civil rights movement in Oklahoma City. By her teaching her students the strategy of non-violent protests many businesses and public accommodations were opened to Black patronage that had always been closed to their participation. In 1986 Sylvia Lewis became the first Black to become a member of the University of Oklahoma Board of Regents and in 1993 Dr. Betty Mason became the first Black and the first female to hold the position of superintendent of the Oklahoma City Public Schools. In 1986, Dr. Jean Manning became the first Black female to hold the position of Vice President for Academic Affairs at Langston University. Garnering this position made her the highest ranking woman of higher education in Oklahoma. Thelma Parks became the first teacher in the Muskogee Public Schools to graduate from Muskogee High School and the first Black teacher in that school system and Ruby Hall was the first Black named to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

Understanding of the fight to gain admittance to the University of Oklahoma Law School

What was the understanding of what it would take to gain admittance to the OU Law School? In consultation with her attorneys, Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher was advised by Thurgood Marshall of the NAACP and Amos Hall that she would constantly be denied admission to the University of Oklahoma, that her battle would end up in court, and that the battle would take several years.

Despite these odds, Sipuel was willing to wage the battle that she ultimately won.

Strategies Made to the Civil Rights Movement

What strategies were used to participate in the civil rights movement? Clara Luper used well planned strategies of peaceful demonstrations to effect change in Black's patronage of businesses and public accommodations in Oklahoma City. Her primary tactic was the "sit-in" where she and her students would sit on the floor, in or outside of an establishment, to influence the policies of serving Blacks on an equal basis with Whites. In this way, Clara Luper used these peaceful acts of demonstrations as a "living Classroom" where students became a part of history.

Train Students in Peaceful Demonstration

What ways were used to train students in peaceful demonstrations? Clara Luper trained her students in three basic ways of peaceful demonstration. First ,Luper had them to define their objective, to eliminate segregation in public accommodations. Second, Luper emphasized that they must always be honest. Non-violence is not an approach to be used by hypocrites. Third, Luper taught her students to love their enemy, a doctrine as old as time. By training her students in these three basic ways, the sit-in movement was very successful in opening doors to public accommodations for Blacks in Oklahoma City.

Accomplishments of the First Black Named to the OU Board of Regents

What accomplishments were made while serving on the OU Board of Regents? Sylvia Lewis was appointed by Governor George Nigh to the University of Oklahoma Board of Regents on April 18, 1986. She was immediately accepted by the university community particularly the Black students who were proud to have someone on the Board that represented their concerns. The first hurdle that Lewis had to face as an OU Regent was the issue of the chemistry building which had been named for a person who had been a Grand Dragon in the Klu Klux Klan. Black students attending OU, the NAACP, the Urban League and other groups wanted to have the named removed. When the issue came before the Board for a vote, Lewis was nervous about how the vote would turn out. To her surprise and happiness the vote to remove the name was a unanimous decision.

Career Accomplishments of the First Black Superintendent of OKC Public Schools

Dr. Betty Mason gathered a myriad of career accomplishments on her way to becoming the first Black Superintendent of Oklahoma City Public Schools. She began her career in education as a fourth grade teacher in the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools. Her career continued with teaching positions in the Dallas, Texas Public Schools and Berkley, California system. While in the Berkley system she began to develop her skills as an administrator. She was project assistant for Title I schools and then she was promoted to assistant principal. She then served as an elementary school principal for two years. Her next assignment was as the assistant director for certified personnel.

Mason moved back to Oklahoma where she became director of High Schools and Adult Education for the Oklahoma City Public Schools. Four years

later Mason was promoted to assistant superintendent for Instruction and Related Services a position she held for five years. Wanting to receive experience as a school superintendent, Mason accepted a position as superintendent of the Gary, Indiana Community School Corporation. Two years later she returned to the Oklahoma City Public School as a consultant until the position of superintendent became available. In April of 1993, Dr. Betty Mason became the first Black and female to become superintendent of Oklahoma's second largest school district.

Mason believes that having all of the previous work experience has given her all of the skills necessary to be a superintendent. She knew all of the intricacies of leading an urban school district. She knew how all of the programs and department were supposed to work.

Career Accomplishments of the Highest Ranking Black Female in Oklahoma's Higher Education

Dr. Jean Bell Manning believes that she has been very fortunate as an educator. She believes that, "...one's experiential background is the thing that makes the person. So all of the experiences that I have had, have been important to where I am now." Her experiences have included being a high school teacher in the Ardmore Public School. She became a visiting professor of Reading at Texas Southern University in Houston. She later became a professor of Freshman Composition and Reading at Jarvis College in Hawkins, Texas and an English instructor at Douglass High School in Oklahoma City. Her other experiences also included being a professor of Modern Drama and Advanced Grammar at the University of Liberia in Monrovia, Liberia and a professor of English at Paul Quinn College in Waco, Texas.

Career Accomplishments at Langston University

In her role as Vice President for Academic Affairs at Langston University, Dr. Jean Manning has certainly made significant changes to the overall progress of the institution. She developed the Satellite Teaching Program, she was involved in Star School Program and has been in the forefront of making curricular changes that are viable and effective for the 21st Century. One area that Manning is most proud of is her ability to excite and motivate faculty and students to be all that they can be.

Career Accomplishments for a Black Female Educator on the OKC School Board

Thelma Parks has made several "firsts" in her career advancements in education. She became the first Black and the first Muskogee High School Graduate to teach in the Muskogee Public Schools. Later she was hired to teach 6th grade at Truman Elementary School in Oklahoma City. This school was the first school in Oklahoma City to integrate. Finally she became the first Black counselor at U.S. Grant High School, the last school to integrate in the Oklahoma City Public Schools.

Accomplishments Serving on the OKC Public Schools Board

Thelma Parks feels that her greatest accomplishments on the OKC Public Schools Board came during her three year term as board president. She said, "We returned credibility and stability to the Oklahoma City Public Schools. We allowed parents to have some genuine input. We restructured the direction which the school system was going because there was some unrest and teacher morale was low..." She further stated that with strong leadership and support of the other board members teacher morale was raised. Parks believes

however, that her major accomplishment, as board president, came in 1993 when the largest school bond issue passed by a vote of the people.

Keep Langston University From Closing

What ways were used to keep the State Of Oklahoma from closing Langston University? Throughout the history of education, Langston University continued to play a pivotal role in the education of Blacks in Oklahoma and in the issue of separate-but-equal education. Once Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher broke the separate-but-equal barrier to integrated education in colleges and universities the original reasons for the existence of Langston University began to diminish. By the 1970s, Blacks could attend any state institution for higher education and they did. Langston University then began to have serious financial problems and the keeping of books and records was poorly done.

Ruby Hall, had just been appointed the first Black to serve on the Oklahoma Board of Regents for Higher Education. Her appointment could not have been more timely. Hall's first major duty as a Regent was to keep Langston University open. Her main ammunition to accomplish this was that she had good understanding of the political situation in Oklahoma at the time and she had the support of the Chancellor for Higher Education, E. T. Dunlap.

Hall's strategy was to change the views of the policy makers regarding Langston by creating a new mission for the institution and to raise more than $10,000 to clear the debt. She was successful in both with the help of her husband, Ira D. Hall, and the Oklahoma City churches and the community at large.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study show how African-America women have had a major impact in the educational structure of Oklahoma specifically in eradicating the sepaprate-but- equal system, in opening the doors for all Oklahoma citizens to receive an equal and quality education, and in taking leadership positions where they could effect major changes. This was achieved by working through the legal system, careful strategic planning, persistence of effort and dedication to a cause in which they firmly believed.

There is no doubt that Oklahoma was determined to keep the separate but equal doctrine intact. In fact, Oklahoma went to extreme measures to counter attack every attempt that Blacks made in trying to receive an equal education with all Oklahomans. Even after the segregation laws were beginning to change, atttitudes still remained the same. It was very difficult for White Oklahomans to accept attending schools Blacks. However, persitence paid off and as Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher stated, "It was victory for the Constitution of the United State of America."

Another important conclusion of this study is that once Black females were able to receive a quality education they continued the quest to make education in Oklahoma better by making career moves and choices that helped them to gain powerful positions as educational administrators and leaders. These positions allowed Black women educators to bring about changes that continue to have far-reaching implications for education in Oklahoma.

The educational philosophies of the eight African-American women in this study indicates that their contributions to education in Oklahoma were unselfish. Their philosophies focused on providing an educational environment

where all children could learn and become successful and productive citizens to society.

These women did not set out to make a name for themselves in history. They simply wanted to receive the same advantages in life as all American citizens. But in doing what they felt was only the right thing to do, the Oklahoma educational system is a better system.

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APPENDIX A

The Filming of

Trail Blazing Spirit

The Contributions of African American Women In Education in Oklahoma

APPENDIX A

THE FILMING OF

TRAIL BLAZING SPIRIT
THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN TO EDUCATION IN OKLAHOMA

The highlight of doing the research for this study was producing the video documentary *Trail Blazing Spirit --The Contributions of African-Women to Education in Oklahoma*. The subject matter for this study is such that just writing about it does not provide the ultimate impact that visually seeing these women talk about their experiences can provide. What better way to achieve the finality of this work than to have a video produced which allowed eight African-American women educators to share their struggles, their triumphs, and their achievements on camera in an intimate one-on-one setting.

It was moving to hear how Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher maintained patience while encountering discrimination in a most inhumane manner and displaying enormous dignity in her quest to gain admittance into the University of Oklahoma Law School. A dilemma that took three years to resolve.

Fisher's strength and determination would pave the way for Nancy Davis and would be the key in Davis' admission to Oklahoma State University. How moving it was that to hear that Davis never wavered from her path to success

despite being discouraged and ridiculed. Even so, to learn Davis was befriended by White classmates was a major issue. While this treatment was more than the exception as opposed to the norm, Davis came to know that not all Whites judge individuals by the color of their skin.

If there was ever a woman with broad shoulders and about the business of securing equal rights for everyone, Clara Luper had the distinction of turning her classroom into living history as she involved her students in the struggle for civil rights. Hearing her talk about her parents and how they instilled in her, at a very early age, to meet racism head on is a testament to her effectiveness in the classroom and in the protest movement. Still photographs from this era, which were included in the video, provides an up-close view of a tragic past.

My interview with Sylvia Lewis provides a remarkable truth that education taught by Blacks in a Black environment can produce African-American men and women capable of excelling in education and making a positive difference in our society. The story Lewis tells, with such care and pride, about eight boys who were far below their grade in reading but ultimately, through her tenacity and dedication, improved to the point of becoming productive citizens, is a triumph in education.

Dr. Jean Bell Manning is a landmark administrative success story. In the documentary, she articulates her views on how to survive at the top level of academia. With style and humor, Manning talks about her educational experiences that have brought her to the position she has now and of her passion to motivate students and faculty to do their best. She brings unique substance to the video presentation as the state's highest ranking female administrator in higher education.

Many African Americans hold the distinction of being first, particularly since the civil rights era, and Thelma Parks in no exception. In the documentary we hear of Parks determination to teach in her hometown after receiving her teaching certification from Langston University and being told that no job existed despite her qualifications. Not only did she become a distinct educator in the classroom and as a counselor, today she is a viable board member of the Oklahoma City Public Schools.

Likewise Dr. Betty Mason holds the distinct honor of a landmark achievement in her own right. In Dr. Mason's own words, "Do a good job...and do it well and let the next job present itself as a result of what's done in your present position." Mason's view of being a superintendent, as she so distinctively puts it, is to provide an educational environment where children will learn.

The last distinct guest on video is Ruby Hibler Hall. This remarkable woman remains energetic as is obvious on tape. Step by step she recounts the sacrifices that were made to keep the doors of Langston University open after the Oklahoma A & M Regents voted to close the institution. Miraculously, Hall and her late husband, spearheaded a $10,000 drive that successfully kept the school from closing. As Hall narrates the details of this achievement, the story comes to life on video.

The video documentary is 53 minutes in length. It was produced by RCN Communications under the direction of Ronald Clark. Three local network video photographers were hired to shoot each educator on location. A set of general questions were written by the researcher and asked of all eight educators. Interview questions focused on their specific situation as well as impromptu inquiries based on information each provided during the video shoot.

Each guest was interviewed for approximately one hour at their home (If retired) or at their place of employment. Remote shoots offer two perspectives. One, a desirable atmosphere is achieved which creates a comfort level for each guest and two, a mixture of backdrops has more visual appeal.

The video documentary was shot on broadcast quality beta cams. Beta cams offer top of the line color quality. Picture quality exceeds 700 lines of resolution which creates sharper images and superior color quality. Photographers were required to shoot at a 3:1 ratio for each remote shoot.

The video photographers were Richard Jackson, a seventeen year veteran from KOCO-TV; Charles Shepherd, a twelve year veteran also from KOCO-TV; and Johnny Sartin, an eleven year veteran from KFOR-TV, all in Oklahoma City.

In addition to shooting added cutaways, the video presentation included photographs, newspaper clippings, and other visual documentation that was shot and edited into the video presentation. It should be noted that file footage from marches headed by the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., aerial shots provided by Langston University, and video from the Oklahoma City Public Schools were used in this documentary.

APPENDIX B

The Script

Trail Blazing Spirit

The Contributions of African American Women In Education in Oklahoma

TRAIL BLAZING SPIRIT

The History of African American Women In Education in Oklahoma

Prologue

MUSIC: FULL AND UNDER SPEAKERS

FISHER: As I often say when I am talking to a group, the Sipuel decision was not a decision for Ada Lois it was a decision for America, it was a victory for the Constitution of the United States.

DAVIS: Upon teaching for one year after graduating from Langston University I decided that I would go to Oklahoma State University and major in Home Economics Education. It was not an easy task.

LUPER: I call my students diamonds because I realized that in order to get diamonds somebody is going to have to dig. My challenge in education has been those teachers who have not been willing to dig.

LEWIS: In fact most of the things you are asking me were far beyond my level of aspirations because I merely always wanted to be a good teacher. That was the height of my goal.

MASON: Certainly the greatest challenge for me is to provide an educational environment where children will learn. I don't think there is any other way to determine your effectiveness accept that children are progressing year after year and that is an on-going, continuing challenge.

MANNING: I believe that one's experiential background is the thing that makes the person. So all of those experiences that I have had have been important to where I am now.

(More)

PARKS: They allowed me to sit on the Board of Education and allowed me to bring to that board some of the experiences I had as a classroom teacher and as a counselor.

HALL: It was really a rewarding experience. It was a challenging experience, I should say that, and I think my most rewarding experience is when we were able to save Langston University and create new missions for it and I was the Chairman of the Regents at that time.

Interviews

MUSIC: UP FULL THEN FADE OUT
INTERVIEWER INTRODUCES THE CONTENT OF THE VIDEO

K. CLARK: Hello everyone! My name is Karen Clark and we're going to take a look at eight African-American women educators whose trail blazing spirit made an indelible mark on the education of Blacks in Oklahoma. Historically, the fight for equal acess to an education in Oklahoma has been an uphill battle. From pre-statehood until the late 1940s, Oklahoma operated the education of its citizens under the separate but equal doctrine. That meant that there would be no mixing of the races in the educational facilities in the state of Oklahoma. It was even unlawful for White teachers to teach Black students. But African Americans believed that the separate educational facilities were inherently unequal and fought vehemently to make a change. The most important landmark case came in 1946 when Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher first sought entrance into the University of Oklahoma Law School.

FISHER: It was in January of 1946. I had never met Dr. Cross. Mr. Dunjee had and I was thinking at the time that Cross would be flabbergasted at my arrival there and the question of admission. But Dunjee had sort of alerted him when he called him over the weekend to tell him that we would be down, I believe that Monday morning or Tuesday morning, to meet with him personally. Cross as always was a very pleasant man, a very gentle man, and he was very courteous to us. Cross was an employee of the State and so he had to tell us no. But he said it in such a way that you knew it wasn't personal. He was doing what the law commanded him to do.

K. CLARK: What was working with Thurgood Marshall like?

(MORE)

FISHER: He was a scholar of the law! And he was a very humane person. The very first time I saw him he grabbed me and picked me up off the floor, when Dunjee said this is the lady I've been talking to you about. I was a little bit afraid. I had heard of this great barrester and I had read about him in *The Crisis* and so I timidly stuck my hand out in Dunjee's office, a few days after I first applied, and Marshall knocked my hand aside, reached over and hugged me, picked me up off the floor and kissed me. We were strangers no more. He was a magnificent man.

K. CLARK: Were you aware of the magnitude of your case?

FISHER: Not fully! I understood that they were going to tell me no. I understood that we were going to end up in court. I don't know, I was rather surprised at the amount of national attention that the case drew. Dunjee and Bullock had told me that I would be rejected and had inquired as to whether I would be willing to invest one, two, or even three years in the legal struggle. So, I knew that it would be a fight but I didn't know it would attract as much national attention as it did.

ANNCR: Receiving admittance was just one of the hurdles Ada Lois would face. Another obstacle would be the conditions she, and other Blacks would encounter inside the classroom.

FISHER: We were not allowed to sit with our classes. The classrooms in the law barn... and each one of those rooms would seat close to a hundred students... they moved all of the white students down to the first three rows and they left three or four blank rows, and then behind the last row they found a large wooden chair, with a big pole with "colored" written on it, and so I had to climb the steps, seven steps up, to get to the "colored" chair. Mac (McLaurin) perhaps had it worse than any of us. They sat him in the hall. They told me it was an alcove but I went over to see it and I said, "This looks more like part of a hall to me." We couldn't eat with the other students. We couldn't get in the line with them. We had to go into the side door of the cafeteria. They pulled some steam tables together and put a heavy chain around it and I couldn't understand why they needed a big burley armed guard with a big pistol on his hip, standing there guarding our table.

(MORE)

I later determined that he was probably there to keep the White kids out, because everytime the guard would leave the room, the White kids would climb under the chain and sit there and eat with us. But it was a bad humilating situation until Thurgood came back and filed a second suit, McLaurin, which said having admitted Blacks you could not segregate them within the college. So, when we went home one Friday, there were "for colored signs everywhere. I came back Monday morning; Friday was what they called decision day at the Supreme Court; so the McLaurin decision came down that Friday evening and I came to school Monday and there wasn't a sign in sight. So I moved right down to the front row, right directly in front of the instructor, and I haven't sat in the back row sense. I remember to well when I had to.

K. CLARK: How do you view your contribution today?

FISHER: I view my success as a success in the litigation of the Constitution of the United States. As I often say, when I am talking to a group, the Sipuel decision was not a decision for Ada Lois. It was a decision for America. It was a victory for the Constitution of the United States.

MUSIC: UP FULL AND THEN UNDER

K. CLARK: Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher's fight and eventual victory in 1949 led the way for other Blacks to attend institutions of higher education in Oklahoma. Nancy Davis was the first Black to gain admittance to Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College now named Oklahoma State University, as a result of the Sipuel case.

MUSIC: FADE OUT

DAVIS: Well, my first experience in 1949 was to attend Oklahoma State University. It was called, at that time, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College. I had heard so much about Oklahoma State at that time. My teacher at my school always talked about Nora Talbert, who was the dean of the Home Economics education, we studied out of her book and I was determined to go to OSU since Ada Lois Sipuel had opened doors over at OU.

(MORE)

Upon teaching for one year after graduating from Langston University I decided I would go to Oklahoma State University and major in home economics. It was not an easy task. Mrs. Talbert told me when I got there that, "Oh we don't want Negroes here and I think you should go to school in Chicago, Illinois, or maybe to Iowa, or some of these others schools where you would not feel like you're not being segregated. Because the law here in Oklahoma is that we not have Blacks in the classroom with the Whites," and I told her, "That is the law but our law must change," and so she told me, and that was very discouraging, because she told me that, "Black people were just not ready and should not try to get into the schools, that Black people were not even trustworthy..." She said, "I just don't think you are going to be accepted." I told her, "I was not there to be accepted with the others," that, "I was there to get an education." After about three or four days I was able to enroll at OSU. I was taking home economics education, which was my major, and while I was in classes for about a week I had to be placed in a doorway, in a little office nook, in the back of the classroom and all of these sorts of things... The students in the classroom, when I took my first test was there the second or third week, I made the second highest score, the second highest score, and most of the students decided that they were just going to take me with them anywhere I go. We worked together on projects. We were in the library working together and it was just a real nice situation how we worked together. The students there told the teacher, after the second week, that they didn't care what the laws of Oklahoma said they wanted Nancy in the classroom with them. So I would take my seat in the front, over to the side, maybe on the second row. I would never take the back seat any more. About the third week or fourth week, because I think it was probably July, because it was in June when I enrolled, in July the law passed where Blacks could be in the classroom with Whites and they did not say any bad words to me. They were always encouraging. They were people that really looked upon me as trying to be somebody and my teachers even complimented Sapulpa High School and they complimented Langston University for giving me such a wonderful background in home economics and at that time Lenolia Gandy was my supervisor and she had prepared me to reach out and touch others and I did.

(MORE)

K. CLARK: What do you feel has been your biggest contribution to education in Oklahoma?

DAVIS: Well, my biggest contribution to education is to work with people in the community, in the schools, and to teach home economics that would be practical and where students could learn the skills of actually learning how to be a good family member, how to cook, how to sew, how to decorate their homes, how to be a good mother and a good father.

MUSIC: UP THEN UNDER

K. CLARK: Clara Luper's fight for civil rights in the area of public accommodations allowed her to turn her classroom into living history. As a history and social studies teacher, her ability to inspire the young to action was instrumental in her organizing the NAACP Youth Council in staging non-violent sit-ins to gain equal access to public accommodations in Oklahoma City.

MUSIC: FADE OUT

LUPER: Being Black has really meant to me that I have been looked on differently. For example, I grew up in the northeastern part of Oklahoma where segregation was a way of life and as a child I hated it with a passion and tried as a child to find answers to questions that were very difficult and made some people very uncomfortable. It came about because my mother accepted segregation as a way of life and my father would repeat to us often someday, someday you will be able to ride in a bus. Someday I will take you to a restaurant. But my father died in 1957 without ever having the opportunity to take us to a restaurant and something boils inside of you, something cries out for freedom!

ANNCR: In leading the fight against segregation the primary objective was to remain non-violent. But that was not always an easy task.

LUPER: You've got to remember that I was always involved in church, and I could go into a church and I could listen to "love everybody, love

(MORE)

their neighbors." That was so easy. But here I am talking about a different battle field. Where you would have to go out in the streets and practice love to those that spit in your face, that cursed you, and kicked you and that became all together something different and unique.

K. CLARK: What do you feel has been your hardest challenge as an educator?

LUPER: As an educator, my hardest challenge has been with educators who don't understand the make up of our student body. I call my students diamonds because I realize that in order to get diamonds somebody is going to have to dig. My challenge in education has been those teachers who have not been willing to dig. Let me give you a good example. I had a student at John Marshall High School who was not by any means an A student, in fact he was in special education and he came into my human rights class with his head down because somebody told him he was dumb and my job was to stand at the door and say, "Here comes my diamond."

MUSIC: UP AND FULL THEN UNDER WHILE NARRATION FROM A SPEECH BY MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AND VISUAL SHOTS OF PROTEST MARCHES AND DEMONSTRATIONS

K.CLARK: There is no doubt that African American-Women educators have made great achievements and have done much to further the education of all of the citizens of Oklahoma. Sylvia Lewis was appointed in April of 1986 as the first Black to be a member of the University of Oklahoma Board of Regents.

MUSIC: FADE OUT

LEWIS: (Laughing) Well that was another step that I had never dreamed of. Never even thought such would happen in my life time. Most of the things you're asking me were far beyond my level of aspirations because I merely always wanted to be a good teacher. That was the height of my goal. However, I guess there were other things in my future and when I joined the Board of Regents-- I guess one of the hardest things was being accepted by the general community. You would not believe the many persons who as I walked in the department stores where I had always gone and shopped who said, "Oh you're the one that they named

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to the Board of Regents aren't you." Oh it was really, really nasty and I never shared that because, and neither did I expect it but, let me say that the people at the University of Oklahoma, the president, the students, faculty, staff, administrators were just great. I guess that is why I was so determined to accept the challenge and to do the very best job that I could. One of the first things that faced us when I went on the board was a building that the Black community had attempted to remove a name from... it was the chemistry building which was named for a person who had been a member or a dragon in the Klu Klux Klan and Black legislators and the NAACP and others had worked at this, and students, to remove this name for some time. Well I was in a state of shock when it came before the board as one of the first items on the agenda was for the Regents to vote to remove the name and all six of the other Regents just voted with no questions no comment, when they had been faced with protests of all kinds before that, so that said to me the importance of the job of a Regent for the University of Oklahoma and what it could mean to people of color and women if the person who served in that capacity was concerned about improving the lives of those who we, who I represented and so that was just one indication of what happened. My first commencement at that time, the Regents were invited to congratulate students in different colleges. The College of Arts and Sciences was the largest for Black students who were graduating and so I was asked to serve there. One of the most rewarding things was as I tried to congratulate the students who were graduating they were congratulating, tearfully crying, hugging, saying how pleased they were to have somebody at the University that they could identify with and who they felt could make a difference for them there.

K. CLARK: What is your educational philosophy?

LEWIS: My goodness! After you retire your thoughts retire with you. Let me just say always place the student at the center of whatever your plans are. That has been mine throughout. That is one reason that at the University of Oklahoma the students felt that I was really one of the better friend they had ever had on the board because whenever a decision was to be made I always asked, "How will this affect the students." I placed students first, faculty next, administrators somewhere out there.

(MORE)

K. CLARK: You've touched the lives of many people over the years as an educator, tell me about some of the students you are most proud of now?

LEWIS: My goodness! There are so many. There is a young woman whose name is Vanessa Powell who I taught in her second year and I can not forget that, in the second year, not only Vanessa but many, many of the students in that class were reading at levels, let's just say she was at the second year level and she was reading at oh 6th, 7th, 8th year level. Now that was in 1960, mind you not anything recent. Persons were asked to come from central office and all around to interact with this group of kids because they were just normal, second year students but they achieved at such a high level until it was just almost impossible to believe that students would do so well. But today Vanessa is a RN at St. Anthony Hospital. She is the head person in the emergency area and she does such a fantastic job until anytime I see her I'm just elated. I have another student who went to the Wharton School of Business who is now an attorney and a CEO for an outstanding corporate entity there in Philadelphia who has just done so well. Now I also worked with a group of students who, at that time were considered emotionally disturbed. There were eight boys. It is amazing that all of the kids in that class were boys. I got them at their fifth year of school. They could not read one line, nor could they write their name or know it if they saw it. But if you understand that there was so much anger there that was defeating anything they tried, I'm happy to say that six of those students graduated from high school with honors which was unbelievable to me. One young man was incarcerated. A fine little fellow, but his home life was so disturbing that I didn't see, at that time, how he was going to survive and he didn't. But to see seven out of eight I thought was remarkable. So those instances of that kind, and I could name any number of students who came through that second year or any second year, really who have achieved at such levels but I just always think of Vanessa because I see her so often doing her job so well at St. Anthony Hospital.

MUSIC: UP FULL THEN UNDER

(MORE)

K. CLARK: Dr. Betty Mason has had an impressive career leading up to her being named Superintendent of the Oklahoma City Public Schools in 1993. The first Black and the first woman to hold that position. She feels that her most important contribution in this position is...

MUSIC: FADE OUT

MASON: It may be that probably the greater gift that I have given is in being supportive, a mentor, a friend, to other educators, younger than I, who are trying to move forward. That may be my greatest contribution. I think that I have given as much of my time and energy to that as anything else.

K. CLARK: You have an impressive list of professional and educational positions leading up to your current position as superintendent. How does all these positions and experiences help you as superintendent now?

MASON: Yes, I must say that I consider myself very fortunate to have had the opportunity to hold positions that brought me straight up the ladder. My resume shows that I was first an elementary teacher. Then I was a secondary teacher. Then I became an assistant principal, and I served as assistant director of Title I schools at one time. Then I was an elementary principal. Then I went on to be director of elementary education. I also served as a high school teacher at one time and all that together gives me a pretty good grip of everything that causes the system to operate. Another thing Karen that I think is important to my development, if you will, is the fact that I worked in a small school district at one time. But a very viable district. I was in the Berkley Unified School District for ten years and I got the bulk of my administrative training there. Because of the small size of the district I was able to learn all of the intracacies of a school district. I also served once as the assistant director of personnel services. So it has caused me to be far more comfortable in the position of superintendent than I probably would be otherwise. I know something about how all of these different programs and departments are suppose to work.

K. CLARK: What do you see as your greatest challenge as superintendent?

(MORE)

MASON: Well, certainly the greatest challenge for me is to provide an educational environment where children will learn. I don't think that there is any other way to determine your effectiveness accept that children are progressing year after year and that is an ongoing, continuing challenge.

K. CLARK: What are your goals as superintendent of an urban school district?

MASON: I would say to you that probably a goal will always depend on what district you are in, in any point in time. When I came into this district as superintendent my major goal was, and still is, to create a warm, caring environment and to improve the facilities of the schools, while we continue to improve the education process and that is my goal for whatever period of time I am here. I will be trying to have a warm, caring environment , improve facilities, and cause children to continue to learn.

K. CLARK: What is your philosophy of education?

MASON: Well I think I've almost said it to you. My philosophy is that schools are for children and that we need to do everything we can to cause the school experience to be a good one for all children, and if what we choose to do is not good for children, we should not be doing it.

CLARK: What advice would you give women educators that would want to make a significant contribution to educating children?

MASON: Well, probably not what you would think. I would suggest to do the the job that you have well. I think that all of us, women and men, all of us, should take every job that the good Lord gives us and give it our very best. And let the next job present itself because of what you did on the previous job. I just think that quality at every step of the ladder is what's important and I would suggest to anybody who wants to be successful at anything take the gift that you have and give it your very, very best and the next one will come.

MUSIC: UP AND FULL THEN UNDER

(MORE)

CLARK: With more than 25 years of experience, Dr. Jean Bell Manning holds the position of Vice President of Academic Affairs at Langston University. With poise and dignity she has the distinction of holding the highest position of any Black or any woman at Oklahoma's institution of higher education.

MUSIC: FADE OUT

MANNING: I certainly have been very fortunate, as an educator. I believe that ones experiential background is the thing that makes the person. So all of those experiences that I have had, have been important to where I am now. My study abroad. My positions abroad at the University of Liberia in Monrovia have certainly added to what I am today. My experiences in dabbling in writing as I have taught the subject matter of English I have tried to capture ideas and things that are important that I have used in my teaching. But basically my belief is that ones experiential background contribute very much to what one becomes.

CLARK: What do you see as your greates challenge in your current position?

MANNING: Ah my greatest challenge? Certainly I would see my greatest challenge as being one that involves maintaining a culturally diverse, sensitive faculty at Langston University. One that is sensitive to the mission of this institution and one that understands that it is important to be futuristic, goal oriented as we move into the 21th Century. I think with the faculty in place that understands, then we can generate that to students. I believe that education should teach one how to live and how to make a living. If we can combine that, we become a responsible citizen one; who has values, one who has integrity, and one who makes a contribution to ones country. Very simple.

CLARK: What do you feel has been your greatest contribution to Langston University?

MANNING: I want to say staying afloat. (Laughing) Certainly if I were to answer that question I would say that perhaps my greatest

(MORE)

contribution has been one of exciting, motivating faculty and students to be all that they can be in this world. Probably, also bringing through the faculty and the administration curricular changes that would be effective and viable as we move toward the 21st Century. Langston University is now involved in satellite teaching. We are involved in the Stars School Program through the Black College Satellite Network where we have professors teaching foreign languages, Spanish, French. We have professors teaching calculus, biology. That we can bring the entire world right to this campus and take this campus to the world, I think that's exciting. Certainly the latest technologies and innovations that's going on, Langston will be a part of it. We are talking about robiotics that kind of teaching and learning making the classroom real as we talk about periods in history, as we talk about the future. Langston is going to be a part of that because we already are. And I think its exciting, we will be right in the forefront. We are involved in international affairs, in our business area in our health professions and we are going to be there. Any institution that plans to be a part of this 21st century will have to plan to use those survival techniques and that's the latest technology, and finding the people who understand that technology so that they can use it with students and for themselves.

CLARK: What advice would you give to women educators today who would like to make a major contribution to education?

MANNING: Hang in there! (Laughing) Certainly be prepared. Be widely read. Be diverse and learn to work within the system to affect the changes. We certainly have a long way to go in terms of being able to move in positions without a lot of hassle without a lot of concern. But I would suggest that we understand the agenda.

MUSIC: UP AND FULL AND THEN UNDER

CLARK: Feisty, determined and caring Thelma Parks has had a long and rewarding career in education culminating with her tenure as a board member of the Oklahoma City Public Schools. Thelma Parks likes a good fight especially if it is for the benefit of the students.

MUSIC: FADE OUT

(MORE)

PARKS: Well, I'm an Okie from Muskogee. Born the sixth of nine children. Born to parents who were really concerned about our getting a good education and during the early segregation days there was very little that Blacks or African Americans could do and that was to teach or preach and so they were making sure that we would get that kind of education so we could give back to the community what the community had given to us. I attended elementary school in Muskogee and then I went on and graduated from high school and matriculated at Langston University where I received the bachelor's degree in elementary education.

ANNCR: After earning her degree, Parks would soon discover that returning home to gain employment would not come easy.

PARKS: They told me that it was not a practice to hire their own, and I said that there is a position that is open here and I am qualified and I want a job. My parents having worked two jobs trying to get me through college and I come back to my hometown and not have a job and this is what I had prepared myself. Well after convincing them that my mother didn't pay taxes in the county that they wanted me to go and get some experience and I said no I want to teach here in Muskogee and so finally they consented to let me teach so I was really the first Black, first teacher to graduate from Muskogee Public Schools and be hired by that school system. So in this manner I sort of feel like that I was a pioneer in breaking down that racial barrier, and really the barrier between hiring people who had finished school in Muskogee and those person who had not.

CLARK: What were your reasons for deciding to run for the Oklahoma City Public Schools Board?

PARKS: I really can't tell you that that was a decision that I made. What had happened, when I retired I went to California to visit my daughter and while I was there Cecil Williams, the board representative for District 5, died and people from Oklahoma City called me and said get back here we want you to run for that school board seat and I said I'm not going to come back I have twelve more days on my vacation with my daughter I said I'll just wait and come back and I knew out of difference to Cecil that they were not going to hire anybody and so when I came back I decided that if not me who? After giving 36 years of my life and

(MORE)

teaching career in Oklahoma City what better way to come back and give to the community who had given me so much than to run for the school board. In that first race of mine there were people and the educators in Oklahoma City were determined that I should serve in that capacity because they believed in me and I believed in them and I had done this all my life, so why not?

CLARK: OK! What do you feel has been your greatest contribution to the Oklahoma City School Board?

PARKS: ...I guess Karen it would have to be that the people of this community allowed me to sit on the board of education and allowed me to bring to that board some of the experiences that I had as a classroom teacher and a counselor and for that I was very greatful. And I guess maybe if you think about one single contribution it was that my board members allowed me to serve three years as the president and during this tenure as president we returned credibility and stability to the Oklahoma City Public Schools System. We allowed parents to have some genuine input. We sort of restructured the direction in which the schools were going because there was some unrest.

CLARK: What is your educational philosophy?

PARKS: My educational philosophy is to make sure, as it relates to my board's function, that we provide the educational opportunities for all children to get an education. I do strongly believe that we can not afford the luxury of hate and misplaced values because if we do we get lost in that big picture. So my philosophy is that every child should be given the opportunity to have an education so that they can move forward and become a productive citizen and able to compete in the global society in the 21st Century.

MUSIC: UP FULL THEN UNDER

CLARK: Articulate, sharp, and, a real go getter, Ruby Hibler Hall believes that action gets results and her career in education exemplifies this philosophy. Her long and successful career in education reached it pinnacle when she became the first Black woman to served on the state Board of Regents for Higher Education.

(MORE)

MUSIC: FADE OUT

HALL: It was really a rewarding experience, a challenging experience, I should say that and I think that my most rewarding experience was when we were able to save Langston University and create new missions for it and I was the chairman of the Regents at that time, 1979, and one of my great accomplishments was bringing to the Regent's staff Black professionals and that was a very rewarding experience because I did that shortly after I was nominated, shortly after I was approved, but when I met with them for the first time and saw all of their employees and there was not a Black professional at the higher levels. There was one there in the finance department, Mr. Thrower, but that was it. Of course the first thing I did was to approach the Chancellor about a Black professional that would answer to nobody but him. He said, "Well let me think about it," and he said, "I don't know of anybody, do you? I said, "Yes I know somebody," and of course after I named the person he contacted him and he was appointed and he was the key person to helping us save Langston University and that was Dr. Melvin Todd.

CLARK: What things went into saving Langston? What were the problems at the time and how did you solve them?

HALL: The problem at the time was simply that the sentiment here was since Blacks could now go to all the other institutions there was no longer a need for a predominantly or well for historically Black institution and my husband, the late Ira D. Hall, led the move to prevent this and It was a tough situation but you know I think God works in many mysterious ways and I think if you seek wisdom from him he kind of shows you the paths and sort of puts words into your mouth and we were able to change the Regent's position. I know enough about Oklahoma politics that some other policy makers, those that have some influence upon the policy makers, had to be changed too but Dr. E.T. Dunlap had such a hold on the political situation, that having him earnestly help us was really the key because the summer that they were going to close Langston, the A and M Regents had voted to close it I was called the night they made their vote by Herman Duncan, who was then the only Black member on that board

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to tell me that they wanted to let me know first that they were closing Langston for the summer. Well I was dumb founded! I couldn't believe it ! I said, "You're kidding!" And I said, "You, you have to change that Herman. You can't let that stand." He said, "Well we've already voted," and I said, "Well go back and tell them you've change your vote and if you change your vote that will stop them from closing it." I don't know what they did but the first thing I did was call the Chancellor and he said, "They can't do that. We've already appropriated the funds for Langston for the summer," and their argument was that the books were in such poor condition that they would have to close the institution in order for the finance people to be able to go over the books. Well it didn't make sense. So at any rate, the Chancellor said that they couldn't close it. So in a small meeting with the executive secretary of the A & M Board he made this threat in my presence, "Well you can make us keep the institution open but you're not going to have any students because every student that is previously enrolled," see the kids were home in between... summer school and the end of the regular session and some had pre-registered for the summer session. Well he pointed out to us that every student who had pre-enrolled owed the institution money and, "We're not going to let a single one of them enroll who owes that money." Well the kids were at home and had just a few days in which to come back; so there wasn't even time to notify them so I said, well, we'll handle that. I didn't know how. But as soon as the meeting was over I called my husband and he said, "We'll find out how much they owe and we'll get the money raised." So in calling the institution we found out that of all the debts that were owed it was just under or just above $10,000, or something like that. So my husband said, "That's no problem. We'll raise that in just a weeks time," and sure enough he lead a group, the Coalition, and they raised the ten thousand plus dollars. My husband said we had the largest enrollment that ever had. Because some people who had already graduated came back and took some other courses just to raise the enrollment. So that was a great challenge. We felt that once they closed the institution they would never re-open.

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Epilogue

MUSIC: UP FULL THEN UNDER

CLARK: The women featured here today is just a small sample of the kinds of African American women that have contributed to the education of Blacks specifically and to the citizens of Oklahoma as a whole. Their trail blazing spirit can not be denied and their contributions to education in Oklahoma significant and important. Thank you for joining me. I'm Karen Clark.

MUSIC : UP FULL WHILE CREDITS ROLL THEN FADE OUT

APPENDIX C
DOMAIN ANALYSES

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Means to an end.

2. Form: X (is a way to) Y

3. Example: Reviewing notes is a way to study.

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. The Jim Crow Philosophy		
2. Fear of the Klu Klux Klan		
3. Incidents of racial brutality	Is a way of	Life for Blacks in early statehood in OK
4. Backdrop of hatred and suffering		
5. The Tulsa Race Riot		

Structural Question: What was life like in early statehood in Oklahoma?

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Leaving plantations and rural areas for employment in the cities.		
2. Gaining an education		
3. Breaking down the walls of segregation	Is a way for	Blacks to gain a viable place in OK
4. Schools becoming a powerful instrument in the caste system		

Structural Question: How could Blacks gain a viable place in American society?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1.Semantic Relationship: Means to an end.

2. Form: X (is a way to) Y

3. Example: Reviewing notes is a way to study.

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Second Morill Act of 1890		
2. Introduction of a plank to the Resolution Committee at the OK Territorial Convention		
3. Association of Negro Teachers used a strategic move to give the legislature a nudge in the right direction	Is a way to	Establish a university for Blacks in Oklahoma
4. After several years of political dickering, Langston University was founded.		

Structural Question: What ways were used to establish a university for Blacks in Oklahoma?

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Establishment of Langston U.		
2. Accreditation of Langston U.	Is a way to	Use Langston U. as a pawn to keep separate-but-equal doctrine.
3. Establishing the LU Law School at the State Capitol		

Structural Question: How was Langston University used as a pawn to keep the separate-but-equal doctrine intact?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Means to an end

2. X (is a way to do) Y

3. Example: Reviewing notes (is a way to) study.

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Separate-but-equal doctrine		
2. Teachers must be of the same race as the students they teach	Is a way to	Operationalize segregation in education
3. Blacks must leave the state to obtain a graduate education.		

Structural Question: How was segregation in education achieved in Oklahoma?

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Dilapidated buildings		
2. Substandard books and supplies	the result of	Separate-but-unequal applications by those in power.
3. Teachers with little or no training		
4. Little or no equipment		

Structural Question: What ways were used to create unequal conditions in education?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion

2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y

3. Example: An oak is a kind of tree

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Met with Pres. Cross regarding gaining admittance to OU Law School		
2. Received a letter from Pres. Cross denying admittance, which was needed as the ground work for the test case	is a kind of	Accomplishment of the first Black admitted to OU Law School
3. Finally enrolled in OU Law School after a three year battle		
4. Attended OU Law School the summer of 1949		

Structural Question: What accomplishments were made to gain admittance into the University of Oklahoma Law School?

1. Semantic Relationship: Means to an end

2. X (is a way to) Y

3. Example: Reviewing notes is a way to study

Included Term	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Set up facility at the State Capitol		
2. Sit in the back of the classroom	Is a way White institutions	Minimized the effects of integration
3. Not allowed to sit with class		
4. Wooden chair with "colored sign" behind a pole		

Structural Question: What ways, other than legal segregation, separated Blacks in school?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEETS

1. Semnatic Relationship: Strict Inclusion
2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y
3. Example: An oak is a kind of tree.

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Determined to gain admittance to OSU grad. school		
2. Was told "Negroes are not wanted here," so Dungee came to help	Is a kind of	Accomplishment of the first Black at OSU
3. Dungee was able to convince university officials to admitt Davis		
4. Attended OSU grad. school summer of 1949.		

Structural Question: What accomplishments were made to gain admittance to OSU?

1. Semantic Relationship: Means to an end

2. Form: X (is a way to) Y

3. Example: Reviewing notes is a way to study.

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Say, "Don't want Negroes here."		
2. Separate-but-equal law	Is a way to	Deny Admittance
3. Basis of race		
4. Constitution and Statues of Oklahoma		

Structural Question: How was admittance to OSU denied?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion

2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y

3. Example: An oak is a kind of tree.

Included Term	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Accepted by university community		
2. Accepted by fellow students	Is a kind of	Break through for Blacks who sought an education in White institutions
3. Help with studying		
4. Provide notes		

Structural Question: What kinds of favorable treatment did Sipuel and Davis received after being admitted to OU and OSU respectively?

Included Term	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Persistence		
2. Leadership		
3. Self Confidence	Is a Kind of	Character trait for for success
4. Dedication		
5. Determination		
6. Patience		

Structural Question: What character traits did these African-American women have to succeed?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Means to an end

2. Form: X (is a way to) Y

3. Example: Reviewing notes is a way to study.

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Landmark law suits		
2. Acts of demonstrations		
3. Public forum	Is a way to	Fight for civil rights
4. A well planned strategy		
5. Overcoming injustices		
6. Doctrine of non-violence		

Structural Question: What ways were used to fight for civil rights?

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Laws must be changed		
2. Amend segregation laws	Is a way to achieve	Equal educational opportunity
3. Litigation of the U. S. Constitution		
4. Remove "colored" signs		
5. Using the legal system		

Structural Question: What ways were used to achieve equal educational opportunities?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion

2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y

3. Example: An oak is a kind of tree.

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Providing an environment where all children can learn		
2. Refer to students as "diamonds"	Is a kind of	Educational philosophy held by Black female educators
3. Education should teach one how to live and make a living		
4. To help others and give service		
5. Opportunity for all children to learn		

Structural Question: What are the educational philosophies of female educators?

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Equal pay for teachers		
2. Gaining equal access to education	Is a kind of	Contribution to education made by Black female educators
3. Representing the concerns of all students		
4. Improving the educational process		

Structural Question: What contribution was made to education in Oklahoma?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion

2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y

3. Example: An oak is a kind of tree.

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. First Black admitted to OU		
2. First Black admitted to OSU		
3. First Black Superintendent of OKC Public Schools	Is a kind of	Milestone in the history of equal education in OK
4. Highest ranking Black female at state intitutions for higher education		
5. First Black appointed to OU Board of Regents		
6. First Black appointed to State Regents for Higher Education		

Structural Question: What are the milestones for achieving education in Oklahoma?

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Would be denied admittance to OU Law School sevral times		
2. The battle would end up in court	Is a Kind of	Understanding of the fight to gain admittance to OU Law School
3. The battle would take several years		
4. Willing to wage the battle despite the odds		

Structural Question: What was the understanding of what it would take to be admitted to OU Law School?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion

2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y

3. Example: An oak is a kind of tree.

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Taught at Dunjee High School		
2. Taught at Star Spencer H. S.	Is a kind of	Accomplishment made in a career once receiving a graduate degree from OSU
3. Practice racial tolerance		
4. New challenges		

Structural Question: What accomplishments were made once receiving a graduate degree from OSU?

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Utilized a well planned strategy of demonstrations		
2. Used tactic of the sit-in to get businesses to allow Black patronage on an equal basis with Whites	Is a Kind of	Strategy made to the civil rights movement
3. Used civil rights demonstrations as a "living classroom" with students		

Structural Question: What strategies were used to participate in the civil rights movement?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion

2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y

3. Example: An oak is a kind of tree.

Included Term	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Define their objective		
2. Must be honest	Is a kind of	Way to train students in peaceful demonstration
3. Love your enemy		

Structural Question: What ways were used to train students in peacful demonstrations?

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Gov. Night appointed Sylvia Lewis as first Black to serve on OU Board of Regents		
2. Accepted by university community	Is a kind of	Accomplishment of the first Black named to the OU Board of Regents
3. Succeeded in removing the name of a Grand Dragon of the Klu Klux Klan from the chemistry building at OU		
4. African-American students at OU proud to have Lewis representing their concerns as a Regent		

Structural Question: What accomplishments were made while serving on the OU Board of Regents?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion

2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y

3. Example: An oak is a kind of tree.

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Began as a fourth grade teacher		
2. Title I Project Assistant for Berkley, CA school system		
3. Assistant Director of Certified Program	Is a kind of	Career accomplishment of the first Black Superintendent of OKC Public Schools
4. Director of High Schools and Adult Education		
5. Superintendent of Gary, Indiana Community School, Corp.		
6. Superintendent of OKC Public Schools		

Structural Question: What have been the career accomplishment?

Included Term	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. High school English teacher in Ardmore, OK		
2. Visiting Professor of reading at Texas Southern U.		
3. Professor of English and reading at Jarvis Christain College	Is a kind of	Career accomplishment of the highest ranking Black female in Oklahoma's higher education
4. Professor of English at the University of Monrovia, Liberia		

Structural Question: What kinds of career advancements have been made?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion

2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y

3. Example: An oak is a kind of tree.

Included Term	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Director of Learning Resource		
2. Associate Professor of English	Is a kind of	Career Avancement at Langston U.
3. Vice President for Academic Affairs		

Structural Question: What kinds of career advancements were made at Langston University?

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Developed Satellite Teaching		
2. Involvement in Star School Program	Is a kind of	Career accomplish-ment at Langston U.
3. Motivating and exciting faculty and students		

Structural Question: What kinds of accomplishments were made at Langston University?

4. Making curricular changes

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Strict Inclusion

2. Form: X (is a kind of) Y

3. Example: An oak is a kind of tree.

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. First Black to teach in Muskogee Public Schools		
2. Selected to teach at Truman Elementary School, the first school to integrate in OKC	Is a kind of	Career accomplishment for OKC School Board member
3. First Black counselor at U. S. Grant H. S., the last school to integrate in OKC		

Structural Question: What kinds of career advancements were made?

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Three year tenure on the board		
2. Returned credibility and stability to OKC Public Schools	Is a kind of	Accomplishment on the OKC Board
3. Restored teacher morale		
4. Will have a new OKC school named for her		

Structural Question: What kinds of accomplishments were made while serving on the OKC Public Schools Board?

DOMAIN ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. Semantic Relationship: Means to an end

2. Form: X (is a way to do) Y

3. Example: Reviewing notes is a way to study.

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
1. Understanding of the political situation		
2. Support of the Chancellor for Higher Eucation	Is a way to	Keep Langston U. from closing
3. Change the views of the policy makers		
4. Raise money to clear $10,000 debt		

Structural Question: What ways were used to keep the State of Oklahoma from closing Langston University?

VITA

Karen Marie Scott Clark

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Dissertation: THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN TO EDUCATION IN OKLAHOMA

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Biographical: Personal Data: Born in Chicago, Illinois on September 1, 1953 to Robert James and Dolores Marie Purnell Scott. Married Ronald Clark on June 1, 1975 and having three sons Darian Jermaine, Kyle Steven, and Bryant Kristopher and one daughter Ariel Marie.

Education: Graduated from Aquinas Dominican High School in Chicago, Illinois in 1971; received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Speech Communications from Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois in 1975; received a Masters of Education Degree in Journalism from the University of Central Oklahoma in 1986. Completed the requirements for the Ed. D. degree at Oklahoma State University in December, 1996.

Professional Experience: Equal Opportunity Specialist, Bloomington, Illinois Human Relations Commission, 1975-1976; Youth Counselor, Madison, Wisconsin Community Action Program, 1977-1978; Career Counselor, Madison, Wisconsin Technical College, 1978 -1979; Academic Specialist, the University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1979-1980; Media Coordinator,Urban League of Greater Oklahoma City, 1980-1981; Reporter/Photographer, Black Dispatch Newspaper, 1981-1983; Employment Specialist and Media Coordinator, Urban League of Greater

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