Identifying the barriers to access to higher education for African-American students: Opinions of successful African-American educators

William Lewis Taylor
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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IDENTIFYING THE BARRIERS TO ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS: OPINIONS OF SUCCESSFUL AFRICAN-AMERICAN EDUCATORS

by

William L. Taylor, Jr.

Bachelor of Arts
University of Michigan
1972

Master of Arts
University of Michigan
1977

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College of Education

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William Taylor

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Examination Committee Chair

Dean of the Graduate College

Examination Committee Member

Examination Committee Member

Graduate College Faculty Representative
ABSTRACT

Identifying the Barriers to Access to Higher Education for African-American Students: Opinions of Successful African-American Educators

by

William L. Taylor, Jr.

Dr. Paul E. Meacham, Examination Committee Chair
Professor of Educational Leadership
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

The purpose of this study was to examine past and present social, educational, and financial barriers to African American access to and success within United States higher educational institutions, and identify and recommend ways of ameliorating those barriers for African American students in the future. Based on a comprehensive literature review and analysis of responses to an author-designed survey questionnaire mailed to a cross-section of current United States African American higher education administrators, the study identified and analyzed past and present impacts, on African Americans, of social, educational, and economic factors possibly impeding their higher education entry and success. These included, among others, substandard K through 12 preparation; inadequate academic and social support; insufficient financial planning, resources, and opportunities; and affirmative action-based admissions and financial aid policies and

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programs (or the lack thereof). The survey questionnaire mailed to U.S. African American higher education administrators contained 12 questions in all, the first six specific and demographically based, the rest open-ended questions on the perceived nature and impact(s) of social, educational, and financial barriers on African American access to and success within higher education. Respondent answers to these twelve questions then formed the basis of information amalgamated for the latter part of the study. A numerical ranking of respondent-identified barriers based on perceived importance, combined with explanations of why respondents deemed particular barriers significant, and finally, respondent suggestions on what might be done to ameliorate each barrier, provided material for the study’s conclusions and recommendations.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Educational discrimination against African-Americans within the United States has been an unfortunate fact of life since our nation's beginning. Within the U.S. Constitution itself, Negroes (as African-Americans were then called) are explicitly referred to as unequal. As Article I, Section 2 of the United States Constitution states, "Representatives...shall be apportioned among the several States... according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons...and....three-fifths of all other persons" [italics added] ("Constitution of the United States", 2000, pp. 26-27). The 14th Amendment (1868) abolished this rule ("Constitution", 2000).

Nearly a century later, in the 1850's, Justice Roger B. Taney of the United States Supreme Court, in his celebrated Dred Scott decision, argued that the foundation of the American state had not included the Negro as a participating element, or as beneficiary of its privileges (Dred Scott Case, 2002). Justice Taney's argument was in essence overruled by the events of the Civil War itself; since then blacks have been considered, legally and morally at least, equal American citizens. However, educational equality for blacks, due in part, perhaps, to the subjective, often subtle, even unconscious nature of racial discrimination itself, has not yet arrived, even at the dawn of the twenty-first century: It is, quite simply, still a goal, not a reality.
The roots of the many challenges African-American students today face when seeking equal higher educational opportunities in the United States may be traced not only to the original wording of the United States Constitution, but also to early, strictly enforced laws against literacy for slaves (Douglass, 1847) and even to later well-known historical disagreements among leading black educators themselves. Historically speaking, the best known of these is the heated early twentieth century debate about ideal educational aspirations and attainments for blacks that took place between African American educators Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois.

Washington, founder of Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University), the first of the HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges or Universities), stated, in his 1895 "Compromise Speech", that blacks should, at least at that time, accept their inferior status and strive to better themselves through vocational training and economic self-reliance ("Washington, Booker T(aliaferro)", Microsoft encyclopedia encarta, 2000). Du Bois, the first African American to receive a doctorate from Harvard, and far more militant (for that time) in his viewpoints on education, disagreed ("Du Bois, W.E.B.", Microsoft encyclopedia encarta, 2000).

Even in twenty-first century America, attempts to help blacks overcome barriers to educational access have met with mixed reactions, sometimes by African Americans themselves. In the year 2000, for example, Governor Jeb Bush introduced his “One Florida” plan, a strategy he claimed would increase minority enrollment in university admissions (St. John, 2000). But Bush’s plan, according to at least one black educator, merely underscored the fact that "you can't tell folks who haven’t been fair all their lives to be fair . . ." (St. John, p.14).
Yet solutions to the problem of equal access remain unclear. In courts, in classrooms, in the media, and in other walks of life, for example, Americans remain deeply divided over the use of race in admitting students to universities (Bowen & Bok, 1998; Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 1997; Comer & Poussaint, 1975). Still, genuine access to higher education for all blacks shall today require more than a few occasionally successful steps forward, judicially or otherwise. What is instead needed is a bold, persistent, unflinching journey toward that end, one in which minorities and non-minorities alike participate. This study seeks, then, to identify a few possible starting points for that journey, to describe likely roadblocks along the way, and to define goals upon which today's higher education leaders might focus.

Background of the Study

The fact of ongoing unequal higher educational opportunity within the United States for African Americans is what spawned the idea for this study. In addition, research-based evidence of widespread agreement by education experts of all backgrounds that "equality of educational opportunity throughout America remains far more a myth than a reality", and that "for all the rhetoric of school reform that we have heard in recent years, there are no indications that this is about to change" (Kozol, 1992, p. 4) fueled this study. This study is grounded in the idea that equal educational access (contrary to optimistic predictions decades ago) has yet to actually occur. For example, in 1970, Wright noted that African–American educators "are now mobilizing, and are beginning to encourage many majority-group
educational leaders to help them remove the barriers for good, and thus bridge the gaps between many African-American students and equal access to higher education" (p. 18). Presciently for his time, Wright added that "The goal of total reorganization and equalization in American society is, even in the eyes of most confident Blacks [sic], a long way off" (p. 19).

Clearly, blacks' limited access to higher education all too often follows other discrimination within the elementary, middle, and high schools. Obstacles to equal educational opportunity for African-American students are still routinely established early on in their educational careers. At the earliest levels of formal education, instruments such as the IQ test are the primary measure of verbal and mathematical abilities, thus identifying where a student fits on the bell-shaped curve (Parnell, 1995). On this basis we label students as bright or gifted or college bound, average or general, and slow or learning-deficient (Parnell).

Equal educational opportunity in the United States for African-Americans has today evolved, in essence, from an initial policy of total exclusion to one of legal inclusion, even though this inclusion still provides at best limited access. Themstrom and Themstrom (1997) further note that the predominant reason for failure by so many American blacks to achieve their potential in school has to do with an ongoing stigmatization in the classroom: "Society as a whole, then, must ultimately realize that racial progress depends on our common understanding that we are one nation, that Black [sic] poverty impoverishes us all, and that Black [sic] alienation eats at the nation's soul" (p. 1).
Fortunately today, many of the nation's community colleges have established reputations for successfully fulfilling their mission to encourage and provide wide access to higher education, especially for underrepresented and disadvantaged citizens. Some community colleges have initiated programs focused on specific underrepresented groups, therefore helping present and potential students overcome class and social barriers that can impede academic participation and achievement.

One program for minority and disadvantaged students currently operating at the Community College of Southern Nevada in Las Vegas, Nevada, for example, is the federally funded TRIO Project, designed to assist low income, minority, or first generation community college students financially and in terms of academic and community support. This program offers eligible students counseling, tutorial assistance, and other services designed to help them remain and succeed in college. Not all minority and other students who would benefit from such services, however, meet TRIO's eligibility requirements. Therefore, other such programs are needed, particularly for African-American students, who, at community colleges and other institutions of higher learning alike, possess the complex task of learning while simultaneously facing many lingering social and educational injustices.

Statement of the Problem

The problem this study addresses is that for many African Americans today, equal opportunities for post-secondary education remain beyond reach. Still, the reasons for and the solutions to the problem of unequal higher learning opportunity for blacks remain unclear. Additionally, gains in post-secondary educational equality for blacks made in
earlier decades, namely the 1960's and 1970's, seem, in more recent times to have slowed (Affirmative action, 2002) and, within some institutions and regions, ceased altogether, or even reversed themselves (Bowen & Bok, 1998). Barriers [of many kinds] to higher educational opportunity for African Americans have [thus] resulted in limited access and restrictions on college attendance for numerous African-American students (Eaton, 1994).

Clearly, opportunities for higher learning are important to all Americans, but perhaps especially to black (and other minority) students as their primary (and, quite often only) means to upward mobility, social status, and eventual financial security. Thus today's persistent lack of equal higher educational opportunity for many black students represents what numerous African-American educators and students alike still see as a key reason for many black individuals' lingering inabilities to actually achieve the upward social mobility and financial gains they seek (Journal of Blacks in Higher Education (2000/2001). Therefore, until and unless equal higher education opportunity for blacks is achieved, this key means of social mobility will remain out of reach for all too many African Americans in the twenty-first century.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify, define and analyze, through a review of available literature combined with responses from African-American education leaders to a survey questionnaire, lingering aspects of discrimination African-Americans face in post-secondary education; to shed light on ways some African-American educational leaders managed to overcome such barriers in the past, and, based mostly on analysis of
survey results, suggest future remedies to the problem of unequal educational opportunity for blacks today. The study will pinpoint specific obstacles to higher educational opportunity for today's African-American students as identified through the survey sample, as well as making recommendations and drawing conclusions higher education leaders might consider in their ongoing efforts to provide African Americans today greater opportunity for higher education access and success.

Conceptual Basis of the Study

Eaton (1994) believed that although much rhetoric has been devoted to open access, U.S. public policy is [still] most accurately described as a commitment to limited access. The fundamental rationale underlying the present study, then, is that much work remains to be done to actually reduce or remove racial and/or institutionalized roadblocks that remain for African-American students.

The term "open access" was used here to refer to a fully available system of higher education in which everyone who wishes to attend may do so. "Limited access", refers to the practice of placing restrictions on college attendance that can result in someone who wishes to attend college being prevented from doing so (Eaton, 1994).

However, in discussing equality of opportunity as it relates to schooling, it is important to make a distinction between equality of opportunity and the school and equality of opportunity in the marketplace (Spring, 1980). For instance, if the school were to prepare students for equal opportunity to compete in the marketplace for occupations, it might provide everyone with the same knowledge and skills so that when competition began, all would start at the same point (Spring). Unfortunately, however, in today's
higher education institutions and job markets alike, unequal higher educational opportunities all too often result in unequal ability to compete for and secure the most desirable jobs, and therefore to succeed professionally overall.

Significance of the Study

The information obtained from the study might be used in the future by institutions, administrators, and faculty to design programs, practices, and policies to more effectively identify and assist African-American students in first gaining access to institutions of higher learning, and, once there, achieve success within them. Results of the study may prove especially relevant to higher education decision-makers and administrators currently in positions to encourage African-American students to strive for higher education access and success. Moreover, results of the study might prove useful to majority and non majority-group educational leaders within the United States as a whole, encouraging them to work together in a focused way so all students can enjoy equal educational opportunity in the future.

Nearly thirty-five years ago, the May 1969 issue of *The Negro Digest* depicted a little black boy sitting down pondering his future. The caption was "Don’t despair, Little Man, Tomorrow Belongs to You". Unfortunately, however, even as we begin the twenty-first century, that long-promised tomorrow has not yet arrived.
Research Questions

The study was driven by nine research questions:

(1) What is the history, based on a review of the literature, of higher educational opportunity for blacks, or the lack thereof, in the United States?

(2) Based on a review of literature, what information exists on why opportunity for higher education for African-Americans has been and continues to be restricted?

(3) Based on survey responses and a review of the literature combined, what gains have been made toward equal higher education opportunity for blacks, and to what ends?

(4) Since Affirmative Action began, how, based on a review of the literature and survey responses combined, have its policies affected black access to, and performance within, higher learning institutions?

(5) Based on survey results, what factors either facilitated or impeded opportunities for higher education within the responding group?

(6) Based on survey responses, how did the African-American educators in the group overcome their respective social, educational, and financial barriers?

(7) What social, educational, and financial barriers to equal higher educational opportunity continue to exist for African-American students today, and what suggestions do respondents have to help students overcoming them?

(8) How did survey group respondents, many of whom themselves experienced restricted opportunities for higher education, still succeed, academically and professionally, and what stories, strategies, and suggestions can they share?
(9) What can be learned by educators today, African-American and otherwise from success stories of those surveyed, and how might that information also be used to help create more equal higher educational opportunity for blacks in the future?

Delimitations and Limitations

The study did not take into account the entire target population of African Americans who may have sought, or currently be seeking, opportunities for higher education. The study surveys only African American individuals in full-time, permanent administrative posts at two- and four-year United States colleges and universities, and includes data collected through a limited sample of survey responses. The study depends on voluntary participation by those individuals invited to complete the survey. The study assumes honest, complete answers from survey respondents.

In this study, only African Americans currently holding administrative positions within institutions of higher learning were invited to complete the survey. Therefore, potentially valuable input from members of other ethnic groups, as well as from African-American faculty and students, was not considered. Survey responses may not reflect views of a broader, more experientially diverse cross-section of African-Americans (for example individuals who left college before graduating; former faculty members denied tenure; persons who may have tried but failed to become administrative employees of a college, university, or other higher educational institution).
Definition of Terms

1) Abolition—The legal prohibition and ending of slavery, esp. of slavery of blacks in the U.S. (Zdrok-Ptaszek).

2) Access—The ability, right, or permission to approach, enter, speak with, use, or be admitted. Within the study, "access" refers to rights or abilities of African American students to be educated at the post-secondary level in the same manner as Caucasian Americans or other students (Blair).


4) African-American—An American of African and American descent, i.e., a black American (Jackson, C.L.).

5) Civil Rights Movement—A social movement begun in 1906 with the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), founded and initially led by W.E.B. Du Bois, and re-energized in the 1960's by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his peers with the aim of gaining for African Americans equal access to education, employment, housing, and other fundamental rights (Zelnick).

6) Community college—Non-residential, two-year public college with an open enrollment policy, usually offering both associates' (A.A.) degrees and vocational
training, established to serve a specific community and supported in part by local government funds (Bowen, & Bok).

7) Discrimination- The making of a distinction in favor of or against a person based on the group, class, or category to which that person individual belongs rather than according to merit. The showing of partiality to one individual or group over another individual or group (Bond).

8) HBCU- Historically Black College or University: an institution of higher learning, for example Spellman College; Morehouse College, or one of several select branches of state colleges or universities (for instance, The University of Maryland, Eastern Shore) founded in the 19th century with the exclusive goal of educating black students (Heintze; First Draft Films).

9) Higher education- Education beyond high school, especially education at the levels provided by colleges, universities, and graduate and professional programs (Pincus; Bowen & Bok).

10) Segregation- Separation or setting apart of one individual or group from (an) other individual(s) or group(s). In the study, "segregation" refers to educational exclusion or segregation of, or discrimination against, black Americans (Pincus).

11) Survey-To gather a general or comprehensive view of (for example) a situation, problem, or issue (Bowen & Bok). In the present study, "survey" refers to the content of a survey questionnaire distributed to African American higher education leaders throughout the United States who hold or have held administrative positions in United States colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher learning.
Summary

Within many institutions of higher learning in America today, equal educational opportunity for blacks remains a goal, not a reality. Historically, African Americans have faced discrimination in education since the founding of our country. Additionally, for decades now, numerous opinions have existed, and continue to be voiced, on ways to end discriminatory attitudes and practices in higher education once and for all African Americans. Still, the problem persists.

Moreover, American society's level of determination to solve the dilemma of unequal educational opportunity for African Americans has waxed and waned throughout United States history. Following Abolition and ratification of the 14th Amendment (Constitution, 2000), blacks may have experienced renewed optimism that other barriers (like equal higher educational opportunity) might soon disappear. However, even among African American educators, scholars, and activists, differences of opinion on how best to proceed toward equal educational opportunity for African Americans have sometimes impeded progress toward the common goal (Washington, 2000).

In the 1960's and 1970's, the Civil Rights Movement, combined with United States governmental Affirmative Action policies, offered renewed hope for, and commitment to, the idea of equal opportunity for higher education for blacks. Minority recruitment efforts and admissions to colleges and universities thus enjoyed a heyday of sorts during these decades (Bowen and Bok, 1998). Later, however, landmark events like the 1978 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (Affirmative action, 2000) substantially relaxed earlier Affirmative Action standards that
had previously allowed African Americans, for the first time, genuine and significant inroads to post-secondary educational equality. Further:

The regents of the University of California voted in 1995 to end all affirmative action in hiring and admissions for the entire state university system, and minority enrollment in the system's entering undergraduate class plummeted in 1998, when the changes took effect. In 1996 California voters approved Proposition 209, an initiative that ended affirmative action throughout the state in public hiring, purchasing, and other government business. However, legal challenges have stalled the implementation of most of the initiative's provisions. In 1996, the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court barred the University of Texas Law School from 'any consideration of race or ethnicity' in its admissions decisions. As in California, the termination of affirmative action at the University of Texas Law School led to a sharp drop in minority enrollment. With legislatures, the courts, and the public divided ... the status of affirmative action remains uncertain. (Affirmative action, pp. 2-3)

Clearly, colleges and universities seeking solutions to the lingering problem of unequal higher education opportunity for African-Americans can no longer depend on Affirmative Action policies, as in earlier decades, to level the playing field. Instead, new and innovative institutional programs, policies, and procedures designed to create more equal educational opportunity for blacks to post-secondary education must be implemented.

Toward that end, the present study intended to collect survey responses from U.S. African American higher education leaders that would reveal how those individuals overcame obstacles to their own educational and career success. Survey answers also
were expected to identify ways current education leaders might begin creating conditions of greater possibility for success in college and beyond for African American students today and tomorrow.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

A survey of literature pertaining to African-American access to higher education, or the lack thereof, revealed that the roots of today's lingering inequalities lie firmly within the institution of slavery itself. In southern states before Abolition in 1865, for example, various laws within each state for and about slaves, known as "Slave Codes" decreed that teaching slaves to read or write was illegal (Fox-Genovese, 1988). Among the Georgia Slave Codes of 1848, "Punishment for teaching slaves or free persons of color to read" is described as follows:

If any slave, Negro, or free person of color, or any white person, shall teach any other slave, Negro, or free person of color, to read or write either written or printed characters the said free person of color or slave shall be punished by fine an whipping, or fine or whipping, at the discretion of the court (Randall, 2001).

Even after Abolition, however, such basic educational discrimination continued, if less overtly, within the unique economic, social, and class challenges faced by multiple generations of the slaves' descendents. Moreover, even in the heyday of affirmative action creation of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (Affirmative action, 2001)) equal educational opportunity for blacks at any level remained an ideal, not a reality.
Still, based on genuine affirmative action gains earlier on, especially in the mid-1960's through the early 1970's, more equal opportunity in higher education for blacks seemed attainable with government intervention alone, albeit slowly, at least until the partial setback represented by the 1978 Supreme Court decision *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (Affirmative action, 2001). In the two and a half decades since *Bakke*, various other court decisions and citizens' initiatives have continued to both positively and negatively impact affirmative action (Affirmative action).

One such initiative was California's Proposition 209 in 1996, which "ended affirmative action throughout the state in public hiring, purchasing, and other government business" (Affirmative action, 2001, p. 3). Additionally, in 1996, the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court prohibited the University of Texas Law School from 'any consideration of race or ethnicity' in future admissions decisions. As in California after the U.S. Supreme Court *Bakke* decision of 1978, the curtailment of affirmative action at the University of Texas Law School resulted in a dramatic decline in minority enrollment (Affirmative action).

More recently, on December 2, 2002, the United States Supreme Court agreed to hear two separate race discrimination appeals by unsuccessful white applicants to the law and undergraduate schools, respectively, of the University of Michigan.

In the suit filed against the law school, *Grutter v. Bollinger, et al.* (Holland, 2002) a rejected white applicant sued for race discrimination in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan but lost, and the decision was upheld May 14, 2002 by the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati (Overview of recent affirmative action developments, 2002). A second appeal will now be ruled on by the U.S. Supreme Court, which "will decide by next June [2003] if race can be used in college admissions, an issue
that the justices have dealt with only once before, in a cloudy 1978 ruling (Regents of the University of California v. Bakke) that led to more confusion" (Holland, 2002, p. 1).

The other race discrimination suit against the University of Michigan, Gratz v. Bollinger, et al. (2000) filed by two rejected white applicants to undergraduate programs, was also heard by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. In December 2000, that court found for the University of Michigan (Springer, 2002). The 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has not yet ruled, however, on Gratz v. Bollinger, et al. (2000) Still, "Justices took the unusual step of taking the case [Gratz v. Bollinger, et al.], without awaiting a ruling" (Holland, 2002, p. 2). It remains to be seen, then, whether the United States Supreme Court's expected June 2003 rulings in both cases will positively or negatively affect affirmative action in higher education admissions (Holland).

That pending United States Supreme Court ruling, whatever it is, will significantly impact black access to higher education in the 21st century. As Theodore Shaw, counsel for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, stated on December 2, 2002: "We come to this with a great deal of trepidation because affirmative action has been under assault. Confusion isn't going to go away until the Supreme Court decides this question" (Holland, p. 2. See also Anti affirmative action suits, 2002; Open letter, 2002).

Much of the literature published on higher educational opportunity for blacks during the late 1970s and beyond, following the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark ruling on Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978), focused on individual institutions of higher education or groups of like-minded higher educational institutions. This focus was on their practices, policies, academic environments and social atmospheres, and how they might continue to take positive steps toward educational equality for blacks (First
Draft Films, 1994; Bowen & Bok, 1998; McCormick, 2000; Gurin, 2002). Other, more specialized literature, both before and after *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978) identifies institutional and other factors contributing to higher education inequality, including discrimination against African-American students in elementary, middle, and high schools, resulting frequently in their receiving lower grades and college entrance exam scores, on average, than non-minorities (Bond, 1966; Wright, 1970; Kozol, 1991; *The Atlantic*, 1995; Blair, 1998; Kohn, 2000); unfair college and graduate school admissions standards and practices (Ehrenberg & Rothstein, 1993; Jackson, 1995; Kerlin, 1995; Raskin, 1995; Myers, 1996; Williams, 1996; Ellwood, 2000; Price, 2000; Rubio, 2001; Woodford, 2001); and racial biases inherent in standardized U.S. college admission tests such as the ACT and the SAT (Borg, 1993; Jennings, J.F., 1998; Ellwood, 2000; Kohn, 2000; Florida action diversity project, 2001).

Analysis, summary, and synthesis of the literature reviewed in this chapter provided either full or partial answers (with additional ones gleaned from survey results) to the first four of nine research questions that drove the study. These were:

1. What is the history, based on a review of the literature, of higher education opportunity, or the lack thereof, in the United States?

2. Based on a review of the literature, what information exists on why opportunity for higher education for African Americans has been and continues to be restricted?

3. Based on survey responses and a review of the literature combined, what gains have in fact been made toward equal higher educational opportunity for blacks, and to what ends?
(4) Since Affirmative Action began how, based on a review of the literature and survey responses combined, have its policies affected black access to, and performance within, higher learning institutions?

To answer these questions, the literature survey was divided into four chronological sections: (1) *Pre-Abolition*; (2) *Post-Abolition*; (3) *Affirmative Action in Higher Education Before Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978) and (4) *Affirmative Action in Higher Education After Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978). These categories, while broad, provided a timeline upon which to trace the path of higher (and other) educational opportunity for blacks (or the lack thereof), as well as the necessary latitude to discuss various attitudes, trends, or developments, within those respective periods, that separately or together helped or hindered post-secondary educational access for African Americans.

*Pre-Abolition*

Literature written either by former slaves or about slavery itself leading up to the 1865 ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment (Constitution, 2000) offers partial answers to the first and second research questions, respectively: (1) "What is the history, based on a review of the literature, of higher education access, or the lack thereof, in the United States?" and (2) "Based on a review of the literature, what information exists on why access to higher education for African Americans has been and continues to be restricted?"

Well into the 19th century, opportunity for higher (or any) formal education was but a pipe dream for the vast majority of those born slaves. Indeed, from the outset of American slavery, but particularly during the Industrial Revolution, with field labor
needed more than ever to meet an increased demand for cotton and textiles, slaves who managed to become even minimally literate did so against the expressed will of their masters (Watkins, 2001).

Slaveholders' attitudes during the early 19th century about a slave's becoming literate are perhaps most clearly expressed by Hugh Auld, master of the (then) nine-year-old Frederick Douglass, a future Abolitionist leader and the author of his autobiography Narrative of the Life of an American Slave (1845). The occasion was Auld's first learning that his wife Sophia has begun [illegally] to teach young Frederick to read:

If you give a nigger an inch, he will take an ell. A nigger should know nothing but to obey his master -- to do as he is told to do. Learning would spoil the best nigger in the world . . . if you teach that nigger . . . how to read, there would be no keeping him. It would forever unfit him to be a slave. He would at once become unmanageable, and of no value to his master. As to himself, it could do him no good, but a great deal of harm. It would make him discontented and unhappy. (p. 2014)

Douglass's Narrative (1845) further describes its author's struggle to continue learning to read by enlisting white neighborhood boys to help him with his letters in exchange for handouts of bread from the Auld kitchen.

Autobiographical accounts by other male ex-slaves, including William Wells Brown refer, similarly, to being self-taught (Zdrok-Ptaszek, 2002). Even Harriet Beecher Stowe's fictional runaway slave, George, in her widely read, politically influential novel Uncle Tom's Cabin (1851) tells his wife Eliza of his master: "I can read better than he can; I can write a better hand, --and I've learned it all myself, and no thanks to him, --I've learned it in spite of him . . . [italics added] (p. 1636).
True accounts of life in bondage by former female slaves, including autobiographer Harriet Jacobs who was better known by her pen name, Linda Brent (Yellin, 1978) and child prodigy poet Phillis Wheatley (Baym et al., 1998), among others, describe their being taught to read by kindly mistresses. Such educational largesse, however, was the exception, not the rule, even for those (few) female slaves of relative privilege.

A more typical example of the enforced illiteracy of even the brightest female slaves is perhaps that of Sojourner Truth (born Isabella Bett), who, freed from slavery at age 40, subsequently became an important spokesperson for both the Abolitionist and Woman Suffrage Movements. Yet Sojourner Truth, despite her obvious intelligence, articulateness, and public speaking ability, never learned to read or write fluently (Shafer, 1974).

Sadly and ironically, then, as these and numerous other slave biographies and autobiographies attest, Frederick Douglass; Linda Brent; Phillis Wheatley; Sojourner Truth and numerous other 19th century African Americans, many of whose speeches and writings are now integral to college and university courses in literature; African American studies; history; sociology, education, and other subjects, never saw for themselves, as students, the inside of a college or university classroom. Moreover, nowhere in pre-Abolition writings either by or about slaves is there but scant mention of organized schools for blacks (much less colleges or universities) except for occasional secret, illegal ones where those few slaves who had managed to become literate furtively taught their bonded peers to read and write (Douglass, 1845; Woodson, 1919).

The most comprehensive source of information to date on how blacks were educated prior to Abolition in 1865 remains Carter G. Woodson's landmark study The education of
the negro prior to 1861 (1919). This book describes in exhaustive detail how, before the Industrial Revolution, many American slaves were, interestingly enough, encouraged to become literate in keeping with the noblesse oblige attitudes of their owners during that period.

Later, though, in response to the industrial revolution; attitude changes among slaves themselves; increased abolitionist sentiment nationwide, and invention of the spinning jenny, steam engine, power loom, wool combing machine, and cotton gin, the end of the period of friendly relations between masters and servants occurred. Most slaveholders also now began changing their minds about their previously held idea that the mental improvement of slaves made them better servants (Woodson, 1919). Moreover, according to Watkins (2001) to educate slaves at that time was to threaten the [increasingly] delicate balance of power between those slaves and their masters:

Beyond its role in capital accumulation, southern slavery also forged social and racial relationships for the next several centuries [italics added]. Shaped and entrenched during the epoch of slavery were notions of economic and social privilege standing alongside racial subservience. Helping to perpetuate this subservience was the fact that most states had no provisions for educating slaves prior to the Civil War. In fact, education was anathema to the interests of keepers of chattel slaves [italics added]. (p. 12)

At age 16, future Abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass organized, in the absence of other options, a "Sabbath School" (Douglass, 1845) for a small group of his fellow Maryland plantation slaves who wished, like Frederick, to secretly learn to read and write. Clearly, as Douglass and his peers realized early on, literacy was key to any hope
they might have of future freedom and equality. Still, it is unlikely, given the time period and its dominant attitudes, that college attendance ever crossed any of their minds, including that of Douglass himself (Woodson, 1919).

There were indeed a few exceptions to the pre-Abolition attitude that blacks should remain uneducated. For instance, "In 1794 the Quakers of Philadelphia employed Sarah Dwight to teach the colored girls sewing" (Woodson, 1919, p. 77). Additionally, "In 1794 the American Convention of Abolition Societies recommended that Negroes be instructed in 'those mechanic arts which will keep them most constantly employed and, of course, which will less subject them to idleness and debauchery, and thus prepare them for becoming good citizens of the United States [italics added]'" (Woodson, p. 78).

Even such forward-looking individuals and institutions as these, however, dared only provide or recommend specific types of vocational or technical training to increase blacks' usefulness without stirring either their ambitions or imaginations. Interestingly, these late 18th century advocates of black education foreshadow, in terms of their goals if not their philosophies, the widely influential ideas of African American education leader Booker T. Washington in the first half of the 19th century (Du Bois, 1906).

However, Frederick Douglass's autobiographical Narrative of the Life of a Slave (1845) and similar accounts by former slaves all repeatedly emphasize the unquestionable value of attaining not just vocational aptitude, but literacy, even to the point of risking death. True equality, though, even for a highly literate freed slave, as these authors and countless other ex-slaves would learn after Abolition, would require much more than just learning to read and write (Zdrok-Ptaszek, 2002).
For, as Abolitionists as early as the 1820's and 1830's realized, the roots of racial prejudice ran deeper than a mere scorn for widespread black illiteracy (Zdrok-Ptaszek, 2002). Therefore, to convince doubters about the truth of African American equality and capability, these early Abolitionists reasoned, what was now needed was to "demonstrate the abilities of Negroes and thereby prove racial practices unwarranted" (Zdrok-Ptaszek). To that end, various groups, many led by members of liberal Christian sects (e.g., Quakers; Methodists; Baptists, and Presbyterians) (Zdrok-Ptszek; Woodson, 1919) founded a number of free primary and secondary schools for blacks, aiming primarily, at that time, to provide "ample evidence . . . of the Negro's intellectual capacity" (Zdrok-Ptaszek). And, according to numerous reports, black children attending such schools did in fact learn to read, write, add, and subtract about as well as white ones (Zdrok-Ptaszek).

Such accomplishments, however, in fact did little to erase the ingrained prejudices of the white majority (Zdrok-Ptaszek, 2002). Instead, "All available evidence suggests that despite the efforts of white humanitarians and of Negroes themselves, racial restrictions and discriminations increased rather than diminished after 1820" (Zdrok-Ptaszek, p. 49).

Moreover (and arguably of greater, more lasting harm) "The effect of that stubborn prejudice on black children was often discouragement" (Zdrok-Ptaszek, 2002, p. 49). Such feelings do not often lead to post-secondary educational aspirations. And, as Carter G. Woodson (1919) states:

No Negro had graduated from a college before 1828, when John B. Russworm, . . . received his degree from Bowdoin. During the thirties and forties, colored persons, however well prepared, were generally debarred from college despite the protests of prominent men. We have no record that as many as fifteen Negroes were
admitted to higher institutions in this country before 1840. It was only after much debate that Union College agreed to accept a colored student on condition that he should swear that he had no Negro blood in his veins [italics added]. (p. 265)

The dominant pre-Abolition mood demonstrated, then, that most whites, even when faced with clear evidence of the equal intellectual capabilities of blacks, would not concede that African Americans were in fact equal to themselves, either mentally or socially. Indeed, the poisonous tendrils of the roots of racial prejudice would follow future generations of African-Americans who sought to advance, educationally, professionally, economically, and otherwise, far beyond Abolition (Watkins, 2001; Rubio, 2001; Zdrok-Ptaszek, 2002).

Literature on pre-Abolition African-American education (or what existed of such education) clearly suggests, then, that today's lingering barriers to equal higher educational opportunity for blacks spring from slavery, its aftermath, and the stubborn prejudices of those who controlled (and control) such access, namely whites. Moreover, as W.H. Watson (2001) suggests, it was whites whom both before and after Abolition, mainly shaped, with inherited wealth and political influence, the direction of black education during the mid to late 19th century and well into the next.

Opportunities for higher education for blacks before the Civil War, then, were altogether absent in the south, and rare even in the north. One of a handful of early institutions of higher learning for blacks was Cheyney University in Pennsylvania, which was founded in the 1830's "to counter the prevailing practice of limiting or prohibiting altogether the education of blacks, most of whom were still slaves (see Historically black colleges and universities, September 1996, p. 1). Additionally, "Lincoln University in
Pennsylvania and Wilberforce College in Ohio were the only two black schools established in the 1850s by blacks in their effort toward self-education" (pp. 1-2).

**Post-Abolition**

Understandably, educational opportunity at all levels was of key concern to the newly freed African Americans following the Civil War (African Americans and the pursuit of education after the Civil War, 2002). Moreover, the question of "what to do with millions of newly freed slaves" (Watkins, 2001, p. 14) in terms of their elementary, secondary, and post-secondary educations, so that they might now fit better into American society given their newly liberated status, caused numerous Abolitionists, Christian charity groups, and northern philanthropists alike to redouble their earlier efforts to create more widespread, equal educational access for blacks nationwide (Watkins). Toward that end, "Northern help was essential in establishing a broader system of education open and accessible to the majority of blacks . . . Southern states opposed taxation for education, and in many southern states the education of blacks was [still] illegal" (African Americans and the pursuit of education after the Civil War, p.1).

As another study of the history of African American education states: "Abolitionists believed it necessary to combine encouragement and coercion to make white people "share" . . . rights and responsibilities while simultaneously ensuring that there would be nothing unfairly preferential to blacks or discriminatory against whites in those measures that ultimately benefited everyone" (Rubio, 2001, p. 53).

The American Missionary Association (AMA) was then the major Northern organization to support black educational efforts at all levels immediately following the Civil War. As such, that group helped found some 500 schools, colleges, and universities

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for African Americans. The AMA was also first to advocate a public school system (African Americans and the pursuit of education after the Civil War, 2002). During that time, "The curriculum . . . for blacks dealt with forgiveness, hard work, and morals. . . . [Textbooks] made no mention of equality. Readings . . . reiterated to African American students the importance of . . . being content with a lowly station . . . "(African Americans and the pursuit of education after the Civil War, pp. 1-2).

Also at about this time, as Woodson (1919) observes:

Having had . . . little to encourage them to expect a general admission into northern institutions, free blacks and abolitionists concluded that separate colleges for colored people were necessary. The institution demanded for them was thought to have an advantage over the aristocratic college in that labor would be combined with study, *making the stay at school pleasant!* [italics and punctuation added] and enabling the poorest youth to secure an education. The desired college was, [intended] 'to kindle the flame of emulation,' 'to open to beginners discerning the mysteries of arithmetic and other mysteries beyond,' and above all *to serve them as Yale or Harvard did as the capstone of the educational system of the other race* [italics added]. (pp. 265-266)

It was these widespread segregationist attitudes, then, that helped spawn, particularly in the south, a group of private and public colleges and universities exclusively for ex-slaves and other African-Americans. In the twentieth century and beyond, these institutions would become known as Historically Black Colleges and Universities [HBCU's] (National Center for Education Statistics, 1996).
The Rise of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's)

Following the Civil War, churches, religious groups, philanthropists, and the U.S. government (through the Freedmen's Bureau) combined forces to create separate but equal institutions of higher learning for African Americans, especially in the south (Historically black colleges and universities, September 1996). Today, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (Historically black colleges and universities), the basic definition of an HBCU [Historically Black College or University] is a postsecondary institution specifically established to educate African-Americans.

Some 75 percent of currently operating HBCUs were established after the Civil War, between 1865 and 1899. Over 90 percent were located in former slave states (Jackson, 2001). Most post-secondary institutions for blacks that opened during that period were religiously oriented, and privately funded by philanthropic northern whites. Fisk University of Tennessee was one such example (Historically black colleges and universities, September 1996). What public support there was, "aside from that provided by the Freedmen's Bureau (which formally closed in 1873) came primarily in the form of land grants for the purpose of constructing educational institutions" (National Center for Educational Statistics, p. 2)

The Freedmen's Bureau, from the end of the Civil War until 1873, provided educational and other support for recently freed slaves (Watkins, 2001). One HBCU opened in Washington, D.C., and supported by the Freedmen's Bureau from 1866 to 1873, was the Howard Normal and Theological Institute, later renamed Howard University after General Oliver O. Howard, head of the Freedman's Bureau during those years (National Center for Educational Statistics, September 1996).
In 1868, another HBCU, the Hampton Institute (future alma mater of black educational reformer Booker T. Washington) opened its doors on 159 acres along the Hampton River in Virginia. The architect of Hampton's educational mission, and its first President, was a white man, Samuel Chapman Armstrong (Watkins, 2001). Armstrong's influence on Booker T. Washington would prove key to the direction of black educational leadership in future decades (Watkins).

Armstrong, the son of Christian missionary parents and already a leader in the relatively new area of African American higher education, secured financial help from the American Missionary Association to purchase the property on which the Institute was located (Watkins, 2001). Hampton's educational philosophy, which strongly reflected that of Armstrong, was to educate blacks for future self-sufficiency by teaching them useful trades they could practice within a white-dominated society:

Armstrong's vision for Hampton was multidimensional. It would be a manual labor school. It would provide badly needed teachers for a mostly illiterate, alienated, and displaced Black population. It would provide training in character building, morality, and religion to "civilize" the "childlike" and "impetuous" Negro. (Watkins, p. 48)

While absorbing at Hampton the basics of his later educational philosophies, Booker T. Washington became that institution's top student, and the most distinguished graduate of his day (Watkins, 2001).

Philosophically, Booker T. Washington, like his mentor Samuel Chapman Armstrong, favored a vocationally oriented approach to African-American education. In this way, he believed, blacks would slowly gain respect from, and (eventual) equality with whites. In all likelihood, it was at least partly because Washington's ideas were
compatible with those of southern whites, including Armstrong himself, that he became not only: "... Hampton's prize student, ... [but] a major educator and leader of the Black population for several decades" (Watkins, 2001, p. 59). Additionally, "Washington's ideas were non-controversial to whites, and helped allay their anxieties at a time when "southern whites [still] feared that education of any kind [for blacks] would diminish the control whites [still] sought over blacks" (African American education after the Civil War, pp. 1-2).

As Watkins observes of the bond between Armstrong and the teenage ex-slave, Booker T. Washington: "The two were tailor-made for each other. Armstrong was looking for students who would quickly and enthusiastically embrace his views on Negro socialization and education. Washington was looking for decent Whites not committed to the slaver's whip" (2001, p. 59).


Two African American educational leaders, whose opinions influenced black higher education well into the mid twentieth century, were Booker T. Washington and his ideological opponent, W.E.B. Du Bois (Heintze, 1985; Jackson, 2001; Watkins, 2001).
Notwithstanding their shared African-American heritage, the two could hardly have been more distinct.

Washington had been born into slavery on a Virginia plantation in 1856, nine years before Abolition; thus his formative years were spent as a slave. Washington was entirely self-taught until he arrived (on foot, having walked a considerable distance) at Hampton in his mid teens (Up from slavery, 1901). Perhaps due, then, to his own experiences, first as a slave, and then a teenage freedman in the south, Washington saw vocational training as a means for former slaves like himself to achieve slow but certain self-sufficiency, self-respect, and respect from whites (Booker T. Washington delivers the 1895 Atlanta Compromise speech, 2002; Heintze, 1985).

W.E.B. Du Bois, on the other hand, had been born to free African Americans in Massachusetts in 1868, three years after Abolition. Unlike Booker T. Washington, Du Bois never knew slavery or economic hardship (Du Bois, W.E.B., 2002, Microsoft encarta encyclopedia, 2002). And, as the first African-American ever to earn a Harvard Ph.D., Du Bois believed higher education for blacks should be mainly academic, thus his philosophical differences with the (older by thirteen years, southern-born) Booker T. Washington.

Although Du Bois would become Booker T. Washington's harshest critic, Washington was in fact never without detractors, even before Du Bois ever appeared on the scene. In the early 1890's, for instance, many of Washington's fellow blacks were already charging that his approach undermined the necessary quest for racial equality (Watkins, 2001, p. 59). These critics took particular issue with Washington's view, as expressed within his Atlanta Compromise speech, that:
... Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the productions of our hands, and fail to keep in mind that we may prosper in proportion as we learn to dignify and glorify common labour, and put brains and skill into the common occupations of life; shall prosper in proportion as we learn to draw the line between the superficial and the substantial; the ornamental gewgaws of life and the useful. No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. *It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not at the top* [italics added]. Nor should we permit our grievances to overshadow our opportunities (p. 2).

Following this address, however, many whites, pleased by Washington's views, and many blacks, awed by his prestige, accepted Washington as the best spokesperson for black higher education (Washington, Booker T(aliaferro), 2002, Microsoft encyclopedia encarta). Moreover, should Washington have had any doubt whatsoever that his ideas suited the time, the *Plessy v. Ferguson* U.S. Supreme Court ruling of 1896, which found a "separate but equal" approach to education constitutional (Turner, 1990, p. 3) would have reassured him.

"In part, his [Washington's] methods arose for his need for support from powerful whites, some of them former slave owners. It is now known, however, that Washington secretly funded antisegregationist [sic] activities" (Watkins, 2001, p. 59). But, as Du Bois further points out in "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others" (The souls of black folk, 1993, p. 51):

His [Washington's] doctrine has tended to make the whites, North and South,
shift the burden of the Negro problem to the Negro's shoulders and stand aside as critical and rather pessimistic spectators; *when in fact the burden belongs to the nation, and the hands of none of us are clean if we bend not our energies to righting these great wrongs* [italics added].

In other writings and speeches by Du Bois (Herbert Aptheker, ed., 1973, The education of black people: Ten critiques, 1906-1960) Washington's foremost critic continues to suggest that *blacks need only be given viable educational tools and sufficient contact with whites to help them achieve racial equality* [italics added]. Further, Du Bois argues, a feeling of ethnic equality, which can only be gained through education and experience, must be based on combined self-image and the [non-prejudiced] perceptions of others (Du Bois, 1993, The souls of black folk). And, as Du Bois further states in "The College Bred Community":

What the Negro needs . . ., he must largely teach himself . . . what he learns of social organization . . ., he must learn from his own people. . . . social uplift and philanthropy must come from within his own ranks, *and he must above all make and set and follow his own ideals of life and character* [italics added]. Now, this is putting upon a people just emerged from slavery, *with neither time, tradition, nor experience* [italics added], a tremendous task. In strict justice, it is asking more of this people than the American nation has any right to ask. Nevertheless, this race is not stopping to await justice . . .; it is not asking about the righteousness of past conduct; it is not even pausing—as perhaps it ought—to discuss the advisability of present policies; *but it is asking you, here and now, to place in its hands the*
indispensable facilities for teaching itself those things... it must know... to share modern civilization [italics added]. (p. 48).

In this same essay, Du Bois identifies what he sees as the underlying roots of whites' contempt for blacks:

... the ignorant Southerner hates the Negro, the workingmen fear his competition, the money-makers wish to use him as a laborer, some of the educated see a menace in his upward development. ...Through the pressure of the money-makers, the negro is in danger of being reduced to semi-slavery, the workingmen, and... the educated who fear the Negro, have united to disenfranchise him, and some have urged his deportation. (pp. 49-50)

Loury (2001) sheds additional light on these earlier observations by Du Bois in suggesting that the real barrier to educational opportunity for blacks is neither racial discrimination nor "race-blindness" (i.e., treating blacks and other ethnic minorities as if there are not and have not been any racial problems), but rather, "race indifference" (p. 33) by whites.

As Loury argues, due to the legacy of African-American slavery, white Americans, even after Abolition, remained unwilling to see blacks as equals. Moreover, white Americans, then and now, have failed to recognize their social responsibility to help others within their nation achieve the same rights and privileges they themselves enjoy (2001). Interestingly, as Loury further suggests, these same whites most likely would have done just that for members of their own group, and in fact did so for numerous European immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
Loury (2001) further identifies "racial stigma" (p. 20), as rooted in the aftermath of slavery, and a lingering reason for today's ongoing disregard for the welfare of blacks by white society as a whole:

The social isolation and negative perception of urban ghettos is a leading example of racial stigma at work in America today. These black ghetto dwellers are a people apart, ridiculed for their cultural styles, isolated socially, experiencing an internalized sense of despair, with limited access to communal networks or mutual assistance. The purported criminality, sexual profligacy, and intellectual inadequacy of these people are the frequent objects of public derision. It does not require enormous powers of perception to see how this symbolic degradation ties in with the history of race relations in the United States.

... The historical process that produced these urban black ghettos graphically illustrate how racial stigma, operating over the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, helped create the facts that are its own justification. (pp. 20-21)

Perhaps, then, Booker T. Washington the "gradualist", his own slave days freshly in mind, correctly perceived, as W.E.B. Du Bois apparently did not (or maybe refused to do) that the "racial stigma" described by Loury as late as 2001 would be stubborn to remove, and removable, if at all, only "gradually."

As late as 1947, novelist Ralph Ellison's narrator in Invisible man delivers a youthful version of Booker T. Washington's "Atlanta Compromise" speech at his high school graduation, echoing the (then) half-century-old perception that for blacks "humility was the secret, indeed, the very essence of progress" (p. 17). White community leaders in
attendance are so impressed that the young valedictorian is invited to repeat the speech word for word at a later club social of theirs.

Here, however, Ellison's eager-to-please graduation speaker and several of his African American peers are humiliated by being forced to fight each other for show. Next, the graduation speaker is humiliated separately during his speech: continually heckled and interrupted by the very individuals who invited him there (Invisible man, 1947).

Finally, Ellison's young narrator, having endured hours of public degradation to "entertain" his white hosts, is ceremoniously awarded "a scholarship to the state college for Negroes" (p. 32) tucked inside a briefcase donated by a [no doubt vocationally trained] black leather worker in the community. (Ellison, 1947.) This scene from Ellison's novel depicts the nightmarish results, for at least one (albeit fictional) black student, of Booker T. Washington's educational philosophies gone awry.

For his part, W.E.B. Du Bois (1993) seems to have realized, perhaps having even imagined scenarios similar to the one Ellison (1947) depicts, that for blacks to reach educational, economic, and social parity, whites would need to become more invested in helping them achieve equality for the sake of America's future.

Due to the powerful yet distinct influences of Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois, most private and public black colleges and universities established around the turn of the twentieth century sought to strike a balance between the ideals of each. For example, in the state of Texas, as Heintze (1985) states:

Although both Washington and Du Bois commanded . . . support within the black community, most whites, including prominent philanthropists and businessmen,
favored the founder of Tuskegee [Booker T. Washington]. Consequently, by the
opening of the twentieth century, industrial education had become visible in most
black colleges. . . Washington was the dominant black leader of his time.
Vocationalism seemed strongest in the public black colleges, however; in the private
black colleges, vocationalism shared the academic spotlight . . . with liberal arts
courses. [But] Apparently for idealistic as well as religious reasons, the majority of
the denominational colleges quietly continued to build their liberal arts offerings,
while accepting the rising popularity of vocational training. Such attempts to address
simultaneously the philosophies of both Washington and Du Bois were clearly visible
in the church related black colleges . . . (p. 58)

Booker T. Washington died in 1915. However, W.E.B. Du Bois, who also founded
the NAACP in 1909 (The NAACP, 1968), perhaps foreshadowing the Civil Rights
Movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and others some 60 years later (see Du
Bois, W.E.B., 2000) continued expressing his more radical, though sparsely accepted,

In hindsight, neither man's philosophy, even had it been put into exclusive practice,
would likely have resulted in a straight path to equal higher education opportunity for
blacks at the time. In effect, Washington may have asked too little from whites in terms
of "accommodations" and "compromise" when they themselves needed to do more to
help millions of newly freed, underprivileged, fellow Americans. Du Bois, on the other
hand, may have been asking too much.

Whatever the reasons, few gains in higher educational opportunity for blacks were
actually made until decades beyond the heyday of either Washington or Du Bois. Only in
the mid-1960's, 50 years after Washington's death, did the U.S. government's affirmative action policies begin impacting black admissions to colleges, universities, graduate, and professional schools to benefit significant numbers of African-Americans.

In 1954, the United States Supreme Court effectively foreshadowed affirmative action and its goals by ruling, in *Brown v. Board of Education*, that segregation was illegal in U.S. schools, colleges, and universities, i.e., "[s]eparate educational facilities are inherently unequal, thereby expressly rejecting the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision (see Turner, 1990, p. 5), even if after 58 years.

Additionally, in 1962, U.S. troops stood ready to protect African-American student James Meredith on his first day at the University of Mississippi as its first black student (Rubio, 2001). Soon afterward, in the early 1970's, affirmative action policies designed to remedy longstanding statistical imbalances of white, black, and other minority students at U.S. colleges, universities, and graduate programs became the law.


For over forty years, the term "affirmative action" has been used in the United States to designate programs, policies, and procedures intended to promote equal opportunities for African-Americans, other minority groups, and women, "by favoring them in hiring and promotion, college admissions, and the awarding of government contracts" (Affirmative action, 2000, p. 1.) (See also *Affirmative Action Review*, 2002, 2.4 Education; Brunner, 2002; The history of affirmative action, May 13, 1998; The history of affirmative action policies, 2002; What is the history of affirmative action? 2001).

Additionally, "From 1961 to 1965, the phrase "affirmative action" can be found in a number of official [U.S. government] documents, though with a meaning altogether different from the one that it was to acquire a few years later" (Sabbagh, D., 2000, p. 5). Further, "Some affirmative action efforts actually sprung [sic] up prior to the explosion of interest in civil rights issues in the fifties and sixties. However they did not actually become instituted until it became clear that anti-discrimination statutes alone were not sufficient enough means to reverse the longstanding patterns of discrimination that plagued society" (What is the history of affirmative action? 2001, p. 1).

A March 1965 report written by [then] Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan "strongly emphasized the gap between blacks' surging aspirations in the wake of the Civil Rights Act and the few tangible benefits that the new law would bring them ...." and further suggested 'the main challenge will be to make certain that equality of results will follow'" (Sabbagh, 2000, p. 5).

Only two months later, in May 1965 at Howard University, President Lyndon B. Johnson first used the term "affirmative action" in a public address, declaring:

You do not take a person hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, 'you are free to compete with all the others' [sic]
and still justly believe that you have been completely fair. (...) [You need to take]

affirmative action towards equality [italics added]. (Sabbagh, 2000, p. 6)

Prior to the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the formation of the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunities Commission), colleges, universities, professional and graduate schools in the United States were attended almost entirely by white males:

In 1955, only 4.9 percent of college students ages 18-24 were black. This figure rose to 6.5 percent during the next five years, but by 1965 had slumped to 4.9 percent. Only in the wake of affirmative action measures in the late 1960's and early 1970's did the percentage of black college students begin to climb steadily (in 1970, 7.8 percent of college students were black; in 1980, 9.1 percent, in 1990, 11.3 percent).

(Affirmative Action Review, 2002, 2-4 Education)

Since higher education has always been a gateway to upward mobility and greater social and economic opportunity, it has, since the early days of Affirmative Action, been a main focus of civil rights efforts (Affirmative Action Review, 2002, 2-4 Education). Yet, despite such efforts, and even as late as 1995, according to Jesse Jackson (1995) national statistics continue to indicate that minorities still have a long way to go to achieve equal access to higher education:

Today African Americans comprise only 9.9% of the 12 million students [sic] enrollment in two- and four-year undergraduate institutions. . . . in 1993, of the 6,496 doctorates awarded in physical sciences, only 41 (0.6%) were awarded to African Americans . . . Of all of the 39,754 doctorates awarded in 1993, African Americans received 1,106 (2.8%). (People of color need affirmative action, p. 12)

And more recently, as the Office of Minorities in Higher Education (2002) reports:
College participation rates [among blacks] show no improvement from 1996 through 2000. . . . students of color were underrepresented in degree awards compared with their enrollment levels. . . . students of color achieved no gains in the undergraduate degrees in life science and health professions. . . . Faculty of color made no progress at the full professor level from 1997 to 1999. The number of minority full professors declined by nearly 1 percent during this period. . . . women of color experienced a decrease of 4.5 percent, while white females had a gain of 5.1 percent . . . (Office of Minorities in Higher Education, pp. 1-5)

Numerous colleges, universities, and other U.S. higher education institutions first adopted affirmative action programs with the initial aim of increasing black enrollment and numbers of black faculty (Allen, 1988). From the outset, however, such programs [especially those impacting college, university, and graduate and professional school admissions] were controversial, with critics charging preferential treatment of some based on membership in a group, thus violating the principle that all individuals are equal under the law (Affirmative action, 2000)

Supporters of affirmative action argued, however, that discrimination is by definition unfair treatment of certain individuals based on membership in a group; therefore, effective remedies must be used to systematically aid these [as a result] underrepresented groups, i.e., those who have experienced past discrimination (NEA Today, 1998; Affirmative action, 2001). Since their start, affirmative action admissions programs have generated much heated debate over their very existence. They have also generated debate over whether such programs actually help, or instead hinder, the very individuals whose educations and careers they seek to assist (see for example Worthen, 1978; Carter, 1993;

Not surprisingly, in 1978, less than a decade after affirmative action in higher education began, the United States Supreme Court ruled, in the landmark decision *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, that admissions policies which included the use of racially based "set-asides" (i.e., spaces in an entering class reserved for minority applicants) were unconstitutional. The *Bakke* decision (1978) thus weakened affirmative action in terms of its now being unable to offer "set-asides", which, prior to *Bakke*, had virtually guaranteed an entering class at least a few minority students. (Perez, 2001)

The Supreme Court also found, however, within its ruling on *Bakke* (1978), that higher education admissions based partly on race, if driven by either "remedial justification" (i.e., a need to remedy past discrimination or exclusion of members of a group) or a "diversity rationale" (i.e., the rationale that the class or profession itself will benefit from an accepted applicant's being a member of a diverse group, were indeed constitutional (Perez, p. 98).

*Affirmative Action In Higher Education After Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978)

Following the *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* U.S. Supreme Court decision of 1978, then, colleges and universities throughout the U.S., while mostly eliminating "set-asides" for minorities, sought nevertheless to preserve affirmative action by using the still constitutional "remedial justification" and "diversity rationale" criteria.
within their admissions processes whenever possible. This, in turn, led to more criticism and charges of reverse racism by those still opposed to affirmative action in any form, including, in California, the passing of Proposition 209 in 1996, which altogether outlawed affirmative action-based admissions in the state's college and university systems.

In the decade leading up to the twenty-first century, various other attempts to dilute the remaining strength of affirmative action in the form of race discrimination lawsuits brought by white university or professional school applicants have been made. For instance, in another key race discrimination suit, *State of Texas v. Hopwood* (1996), a white female applicant denied admission to the University of Texas Law School sued and won for discrimination based on race. That ruling, by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, effectively expanded *University of California Regents v. Bakke* (1978) by ruling against the "diversity rationale" in college, university, and graduate-level admissions. In that case, the Fifth Circuit Court ruled that race could not be used at all in admissions processes, except in certain narrowly defined, rare situations.

In the years 2000 and 2002, respectively, two lawsuits in many ways reminiscent of *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978) by rejected white applicants to an undergraduate program and a law school, respectively, were filed against the University of Michigan. In *Gratz v. Bollinger, et al.* (2000) and *Grutter v. Bollinger, et al.* (2002), however, first the U.S. District Court of Eastern Michigan and then the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals found for the university, ruling that the "diversity rationale" used by the university was constitutional (Alger, 2002). On December 2, 2002, the United States Supreme Court agreed to hear appeals by both plaintiffs (Holland, 2002).
Conversely, however, in 1998, California (the same state that spawned the original *Bakke* lawsuit), voted affirmative action programs in higher education out of existence entirely (*Bakke* and beyond: Executive summary, 1998). Ironically, among those most actively and vociferously opposed to affirmative action in higher education is Ward Connerly, the sole African-American University of California Regent, who successfully spearheaded Proposition 209, the state's voter initiative to eliminate race-based college and university admissions (Moos, 2001). As Connerly suggests, affirmative action in higher education:

... operates under the premise that being a minority confers entitlement ...

we went straight from the end of segregation and Jim Crow into affirmative action ...

I concluded that our approach to affirmative action wasn't working

... now we've redefined merit. ... You can't assume that a black person is, by definition, disadvantaged. ... It does a lot of harm to a lot of people on both sides if you assume white privilege and minority disadvantage. (Moos, 2001, p. 2)

Other education leaders, however, including William G. Bowen and Derek Bok, the former Presidents of Princeton and Harvard Universities, respectively, differ from Connerly and other affirmative action foes in their views of the relative benefits and drawbacks of affirmative action. As Bowen & Bok concluded in their own landmark study, *The shape of the river* (1998), (the most comprehensive analysis yet done of affirmative action undergraduate admissions programs) much is still to be gained from continuing to support and maintain them.

In *The shape of the river* (1998), Bowen & Bok tracked, over a ten-year period, the progress through college and beyond of several groups of minority students who had
been admitted (all of them through affirmative action programs) to some of the United States' most selective colleges and universities, including Princeton; Harvard; Yale, and Dartmouth. Academic and professional achievements by these minority students were then compared against those of non-minority student cohorts from each participating college or university. Based on their results, Bowen & Bok (1998) concluded:

... academically selective colleges and universities have been highly successful in using race-sensitive admissions policies to advance educational goals important to them and societal goals important to everyone. Indeed, we regard these admissions policies as an impressive example of how venerable institutions with established ways of operating can adapt to serve newly perceived needs. (p. 290)

Since the United States Supreme Court's decision in Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, 438 U.S. 265 (1978) various other court decisions on affirmative action in higher education have often challenged, but at other times supported the principle of diversity that affirmative action represents (Alger, 2002; Gurin, 2002). Opinions from college and university students, faculty members, administrators, and others vary on the fairness and usefulness of affirmative action, but not always along (seemingly predictable) racial lines (Emanuelson, 1996; Kellog, 2000). Anne Worthen, an African-American, stated, following the 1978 Regents of the University of California v. Bakke decision:

Any fair-minded person ought to applaud the recent Supreme Court decision to uphold the California Supreme Court's ruling that Allan P. Bakke should be admitted to the University of California at Davis Medical School on the basis that ethnic and racial quotas are unconstitutional according to the 14th Amendment. (p. 1)
However, as Worthen (1978) continues:

But one would have to be quite concerned that, in reversing that part of the California Court's ruling to prohibit the university from establishing future affirmative action programs that take race into account, the Supreme Court did not rule Affirmative Action unconstitutional. (p. 1)

Here Worthen refers to Justice Powell's decision to include within his *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, 438 U.S. 265 (1978) opinion language stating that it is still constitutional to use race as one factor in higher education admissions as long as it is driven either by "remedial justification" or a "diversity rationale" (Perez, 2001). It was these two phrases within the U.S. Supreme Court's written decision that effectively kept affirmative action in higher education alive after *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, 438 U.S. 265 (1978).

Worthen (1978) then adds, from a personal perspective:

As a member of both the gender and racial groups so favored [i.e., female; African-American] I reject the opinion that preferential treatment of racial minorities should be allowed if it serves a social good. There is nothing humanitarian in a policy that uses racial classifications to 'further a compelling government purpose,' as the [U.S. Supreme Court] Justices put it. *Any government purpose which must be served in such a manner may be suspect as having sinister motives [italics added].* It may increase the numbers of those employed from underrepresented groups in industry and education, but at what price? (p. 2)
Next, Worthen (1978) goes on to quote conservative African-American political commentator Thomas Sowell, that: "What affirmative action has done is to destroy what look like questionable accomplishments, or even outright gifts" (p.2)

But Worthen and Sowell are hardly alone among successful African Americans who oppose affirmative action. Other vociferous foes include sitting U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas and University of California Regent Ward Connerly, who successfully spearheaded Proposition 209, the voter initiative to ban affirmative action in California colleges and universities (Moos, 2000).

The language, tone and sentiment of Worthen's and Sowell's remarks in 1978 are echoed within the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals' 1996 decision in Hopwood v. Texas 78 F. 3d 932 (5th Cir. 1996) cert. denied, 116 S. Ct. 2581 (1996), a race discrimination suit decided nearly two decades later (1996). Here, the Fifth Circuit Court ruled it unconstitutional that race be used *at all* in higher education admissions, except in rare, narrowly defined instances, and even then, with "strict scrutiny". In its Hopwood (1996) opinion, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals also quoted Justice Scalia in Croson 488 U.S. at [p.] 521 (Scalia, J., concurring in judgment) that a higher education race-based admissions decision, to pass "strict scrutiny" criteria, would need to rise to the level of a possible compelling state interest: a social emergency "where state or local action is at issue, only a social emergency rising to the level of imminent danger to life and limb" (Hopwood decision, 1996, pp. 1-2).

In the final paragraph of its Hopwood v. Texas 78 F. 3d 932 (5th Cir. 1996) cert. Denied, 116 s. ct. 2581 (1996) opinion, the Fifth Circuit Court stated, in words reminiscent, in both language and tone, of Worthen's and Sowell's in 1978:
...one gets beyond racism by getting beyond it now: a complete, resolute, and credible commitment never to tolerate . . . in the practices of one's government the differential treatment of other human beings by race. Indeed, that is the great lesson for government itself to teach: in all we do in life, whatever we do in life, to treat any person less well than another or to favor any more than another for being black or white or brown or red, is wrong. Let that be our fundamental law and we shall have a constitution universally worth expounding.

In sum, the use of race to achieve a diverse student body, whether as a proxy for permissible characteristics, simply cannot be a state interest compelling enough to meet the steep standard of strict scrutiny. These latter factors may, in fact, turn out to be substantially correlated with race, but the key is that race itself not be taken into account. Thus, that portion of the district court's opinion upholding the diversity rationale is reversibly flawed. (p. 5)

The Hopwood v. Texas 78 F. 3d 932 (5th Cir. 1996), cert. Denied, 116 S. Ct. 2581 (1996) by the Fifth Circuit Court narrowed the "diversity rationale" at least as originally defined by Justice Powell in Bakke (1978), representing a significant setback for affirmative action, at least within the Fifth Circuit Court's jurisdiction (i.e., the states of Texas, Louisiana, and Missouri (Hopwood decision, 1996) and (at least by implication, if not yet in fact) within other U.S. jurisdictions as well. After Hopwood (1996) it seemed to many in higher education that affirmative action's days were numbered (Emanuelson, 1996).

Additionally, as Swain, Rogers & Silverman (1999) observed with respect to attitudes about affirmative action a full three years after Hopwood:
the current admissions regime based on Justice Powell's opinion in Bakke may be reaching the end of its days. Consequently, advocates of diversity in higher education should closely analyze public opinion data in order to gain valuable insight into options to pursue if faced with Bakke's demise. It is crucial that scholars begin to look beyond racial preferences and towards alternative policies that the public might support with slightly more enthusiasm [italics added]. . . . neither whites nor blacks are enthusiastic supporters of racial preferences or the use of race as a tie-breaker between two similarly advantaged applicants. (p. 1).

As it turned out, affirmative action did survive into the 21st century, even if sometimes just barely. Most recently two lawsuits by white applicants who were denied admission to the University of Michigan, were decided for the university by the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. (Alger, 2002) In the first, Gratz v. Bollinger (2000), a white student denied undergraduate admission to the University of Michigan sued for racial discrimination and lost (Alger).

Two years later, a rejected white law school applicant, Barbara Grutter, sued the University of Michigan for racial discrimination in Grutter v. Bollinger, 288 F. 3d 732 (6th Cir. 2002) (Alger, 2002). As in Gratz v. Bollinger (2000) the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals found for the University of Michigan, essentially concurring with the 1978 U.S. Supreme Court in Regents of the University of California v. Bakke that race could constitutionally be used in higher education admissions based on a "diversity rationale" (Brunner, 1996; Alger, 2002; The history of affirmative action policies, 2002; Springer, 2002; Woodford, 2002).
Summary

This literature survey has tried to fully or at least partially answer the first four of nine research questions driving the study:

(1) What is the history, based on a review of the literature, of higher education opportunity, or the lack thereof, for African Americans in the United States?

(2) Based on a review of the literature, what information exists on why opportunity for higher education for African Americans has been and continues to be restricted?

(3) Based on survey responses and a review of the literature combined, what inroads have in fact been made toward equal higher educational opportunity for blacks, and to what ends?

(4) Since Affirmative Action began, how, based on a review of the literature and survey responses combined, have its policies affected black access to, and performance within, higher learning institutions?

Causes, effects, and realities of restricted higher education opportunity. To answer the first and second research questions, (1) "What is the history, based on a review of the literature, of higher education opportunity, or the lack thereof, in the United States?" and (2) "Based on a review of the literature, what information exists on why opportunity for higher education for African Americans has been and continues to be restricted?" the literature survey has endeavored to be comprehensive, investigating attitudes on black higher educational opportunity (or the lack thereof) from slavery to present. A comprehensive review of available literature indicated that obstacles to higher (or any) education for blacks began with slaves' being prohibited, by law, from learning to read or write.
Such obstacles, as the literature further suggests, had less to do with a lack of proven ability by black students than with stubborn white prejudices that linger even today (Douglass, 1845; Ellison, 1947; Zdrok-Ptaszek, 2000; Loury, 2001). Nineteenth and twentieth century black education leaders Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois, given their distinct philosophies on higher education for blacks, may also have created further confusion, even among black educators and students themselves, about which direction African American higher education might best take (see Gibson, 1978).

Higher education opportunity for most blacks remained extremely limited up until the 1970's, when U.S. affirmative action policies were first used in college and university admissions processes (Price, 2002; Vital signs, 2001-2002). These, while not guaranteeing complete equal opportunity, did steadily increase African American student numbers in higher education nationwide. (Jackson, J., 1995) The landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978) narrowed but did not eliminate affirmative action in higher education. Later, however, lawsuits by other whites alleging race discrimination in admissions occurred, yielding mixed results and no clear pattern of national judicial thinking (Brunner, 1996; Hopwood decision, 1996; Bakke and beyond: Executive summary, 1998; Affirmative action and equality in U.S. higher education, 1999; Rubio, 2001; Alger, 2002; Gurin, 2002; Information on admissions lawsuits, 2002).

Today, affirmative action in higher education has been weakened in some areas (Hopwood decision, 1996) but strengthened in others (Alger, 2002; Gurin, 2002). Still, it remains unknown at this writing (in spring 2003) how today's U.S. Supreme Court will
rule in the future in cases brought by white college or university applicants claiming race discrimination today, as did Bakke and the rest in past decades.

Should the Supreme Court rule in the two race discrimination appeals currently before it as of April 2003, *Gratz v. Bollinger, et al.* (2000) and *Grutter v. Bollinger, et al.*, (2002) to narrow Justice Powell's 1978 opinion on the constitutionality of "remedial justification" and the "diversity rationale" (Perez, 2001, p. 98), and should "remedial justification" and the "diversity rationale" as we now legally define them be ruled unconstitutional, education leaders shall need alternative means to continue protecting and expanding the numbers of African American students admitted to colleges, universities, and post-graduate programs nationwide (Swain, Rogers & Silverman, 1999).

The review of available literature has also sought to partially answer research questions 3 and 4, respectively. These are: "Based on survey responses and a review of the literature combined, what inroads have in fact been made toward equal higher education access for blacks, and to what ends?" and "Since Affirmative Action began, how, based on a review of the literature and survey responses combined, have its policies affected black access to, and performance within, higher learning institutions?"

Available literature from slavery on describes few gains for blacks in higher education before affirmative action in the 1970's, except those resulting from the largesse of the northern white families who founded certain Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's), such as Spelman and Fisk (Watkins, 2001).

In the twentieth century and later, however, at least in terms of raw numbers, the greatest gains in black access occurred after U.S. government affirmative action policies began impacting college, university, and graduate-level admissions nationwide in the
Setbacks to affirmative action in the mid-1990's and beyond, however, created new obstacles to black higher educational opportunity at institutions like the Universities of Texas and California (the two state university systems within which *Hopwood* (1996) and *Bakke* (1978), respectively, originated) and others. As *NEA Today* observed in 1998, following both the *Hopwood* decision and the passing of Proposition 209 in California: "The numbers speak for themselves. The new first year class at the University of California's law school has exactly one African-American student. But that's better than the first-year class at UC San Diego's medical school. It has none." (p. 1). Further, "as a result of the *Hopwood* decision, Black student enrollment for the entering class of 500 at the University of Texas Law School dropped from 31 in 1996 to four in 1997" (p. 2).

Within the literature surveyed, affirmative action friends and foes alike offered opinions on what specific ends affirmative action inroads have accomplished. Viewpoints of education and legal scholars; students; faculty; administrators; judges; community leaders, and others greatly differ. For example, Worthen (1978); Allen, 1988; Carter (1995); Puddington (1995); Emaneulson, (1996); Zelnick (1996); Bakke and beyond: Executive summary, 1998; Connerly, (see Moos, 2000); Steele, (see Pankow, 2000); Jones, (see Pankow, 2000); Higher education' affirmative action' train wreck, 2002; Jennings, M.M., 2002; and Liu; 2002) believe affirmative action policies in higher education hinder rather than help black students and professionals; insult the intelligence of blacks and other minorities; represent unfairness to non-minorities; cause competitiveness and divisiveness among minority groups themselves; possess a social
stigma; and occasionally even allow unqualified or poorly qualified individuals to advance beyond their true levels of ability. On the other hand, literature favoring affirmative action in higher education suggests diversity increases the quality of education for all (McCormick, 2000; Woodford, 2001; AACU; 2002; Gurin, 2002; NACM, 2002; Springer; 2002); levels the playing field for minorities (Jackson, J.L, 1995; Raskin; 1995; Williams, 1996; Moses, 1997; (Knagg, 1999; Loh; 1999; Swain, Rogers, & Silverman, 1999; Bell, (see Pankow, 2000); Kellog, 2000; Price, 2000; Shaw, (see Pankow, 2000); Statement on affirmative action, Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002), and increases minority presence in the professions and in underserved communities (Perez; 2001).

Still other affirmative action proponents suggest that affirmative action policies again be targeted more toward blacks, as originally intended by the Johnson Administration in the 1960's (Sabbagh, 2000) due to African Americans' unique background of slavery, and to the extreme difficulty of overcoming obstacles and prejudices originating with slavery (Loury, 2001). Moreover, the quest for "diversity" in higher education has diluted affirmative action's power to help those who still need it most, and who have needed it longest: African-Americans (Myers, 1996).

Most available literature favors affirmative action, opining that it increases African American access to higher education. However, a fair amount of the available literature, by Caucasians, African-Americans, and others alike considers affirmative action counter-productive, divisive, unjust, and racist.

To partially answer research question 4, "Since affirmative action began, how, based on a review of the literature and survey responses combined, have its policies affected
black access to, and performance within, higher learning institutions?" one must rely exclusively, at least at present, on Bowen & Bok's *The shape of the river* (1998) the only long-term empirical study addressing these precise issues. The Bowen & Bok study concludes that (at least among the selective participating colleges and universities) affirmative action in higher education increased black access. Moreover, minority students admitted to those colleges and universities, under affirmative action programs, have performed academically and professionally as well or better than their white cohorts. Input from survey respondents in the present study however, provided fuller answers to the third and fourth research questions, respectively, and the remaining five as well.

**Conclusion**

As of spring 2003, various court verdicts in higher education race discrimination cases nationwide since *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978) have yielded mixed results. (Affirmative action and equality in U.S. higher education, 1999, Gose; 2001; What is the history of affirmative action? 2001; Springer, 2002.)

The future of affirmative action in higher education at the start of the twenty-first century, then, remains unclear at this writing. One fact indeed worrisome to today's affirmative action supporters is that the current U.S. Supreme Court is (presently and for the apparent future) substantially more conservative than was the Supreme Court that heard *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* in 1978 and specifically defined both "remedial justification" and the "diversity rationale" as constitutional.
Therefore, should today's U.S. Supreme Court choose to rule, in June 2003, against the University of Michigan in either of the two race discrimination cases currently before it, *Gratz v. Bollinger, et al.* and *Grutter v. Bollinger, et al.*, such a ruling would represent a substantial setback for affirmative action in higher education opportunity for African Americans (Holland, 2002). Today's nine sitting U.S. Supreme Court Justices might well even regard this pair of cases as their long awaited opportunity to narrow if not altogether eliminate the constitutionality of, "remedial justification" and the "diversity rationale" in United States college, university, and graduate level admissions. Such a ruling, were it to occur, would likely weaken affirmative action as we now know it now to the point of near extinction. If today's U.S. Supreme Court rules even to narrow, much less eliminate "remedial justification" and the "diversity rationale" as first defined by Justice Powell in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978) it shall become more important than ever for education leaders to find new ways to continue ameliorating present barriers higher educational opportunity and success for African Americans, obstacles that remain within higher education institutions in many areas of the United States.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction and Review of the Study

The study identified and analyzed, through comprehensive review of available literature and analysis of survey answers from various African American higher education leaders, lingering aspects of discrimination in higher education African-Americans faced historically and continue to face today. Moreover, the study determined that since slavery, discrimination against African Americans in education and other areas has impeded, and continues to impede, African Americans' efforts to gain greater, more equal, higher education opportunity and academic success within United States post-secondary institutions.

Further, responses to survey questionnaire questions mailed by the author on February 8, 2003, to 100 African Americans now in administrative posts at United States higher education institutions, shed light on ways the various respondents managed to themselves overcome personal and societal obstacles to higher education entry and completion. Survey question responses moreover suggested general remedies to the problem of unequal higher education opportunity for African Americans today.

The purpose of the study was to suggest, based on a comprehensive literature review and responses to survey questionnaire questions by African American higher education
leaders, ways equal higher education opportunity and success for African Americans could become a reality, not just a goal, in America today. To that end, the study was driven by nine research questions:

(1) What is the history, based on a review of the literature, of higher educational opportunity for blacks, or the lack thereof, in the United States?

(2) Based on a review of literature, what information exists on why opportunity for higher education for African-Americans has been and continues to be restricted?

(3) Based on survey responses and a review of the literature combined, what gains have been made toward equal higher education opportunity for blacks, and to what ends?

(4) Since Affirmative Action began, how, based on a review of the literature and survey responses combined, have its policies affected black access to, and performance within, higher learning institutions?

(5) Based on survey results, what factors either facilitated or impeded opportunities for higher education within the responding group?

(6) Based on survey responses, how did the African-American educators in the group overcome their respective social, educational, and financial barriers?

(7) What social, educational, and financial barriers to equal higher educational opportunity continue exist for African-American students today, and what suggestions do respondents have to help students overcoming them?

(8) How did survey group respondents, many of whom themselves experienced restricted opportunities for higher education, still succeed, academically and professionally, and what stories, strategies, and suggestions can they share?
(9) What can be learned by educators today, African-American and otherwise from success stories of those surveyed, and how might that information also be used to help create more equal higher educational opportunity for blacks in the future?

The first and second research questions, respectively, (1) "What is the history, based on a review of the literature, of higher educational opportunity for blacks, or the lack thereof, in the United States?" and (2) "Based on a review of literature, what information exists on why opportunity for higher education for African-Americans has been and continues to be restricted?" were answered in Chapter 2, which traced roots of discrimination against African Americans to slavery and explored how such discrimination continues in higher education and other areas of American life today.

Research Question 3, "Based on survey responses and a review of the literature combined, what gains have been made toward equal higher education opportunity for blacks, and to what ends?" and Research Question 4, "since Affirmative Action began, how, based on a review of the literature and survey responses combined, have its policies affected black access to, and performance within, higher learning institutions?" were partly answered in the Chapter 2. The literature review found that concrete gains in opportunity for higher education among blacks remained modest from Abolition until the late 1960's and early 1970's. Beginning in late 1960's, U.S. government Affirmative Action policies created conditions of possibility for greater numbers of African Americans to attend colleges, universities, graduate and professional schools.

Research Questions 5 through 9, (5) "Based on survey results, what factors either facilitated or impeded opportunities for higher education within the responding group?" (6) "Based on survey responses, how did the African-American educators in the group
overcome their respective social, educational, and financial barriers?" (7) "What social, educational, and financial barriers to equal higher educational opportunity continue exist for African-American students today, and what suggestions do respondents have to help students overcoming them?" (8) "How did survey group respondents, many of whom themselves experienced restricted opportunities for higher education, still succeed, academically and professionally, and what stories, strategies, and suggestions can they share", and (9) "What can be learned by educators today, African-American and otherwise from success stories of those surveyed, and how might that information also be used to help create more equal higher educational opportunity for blacks in the future, were answered in the 31 returned survey responses used for data collection in the study" were addressed by survey respondents' answers to various open-ended questions. Survey responses to those latter five research questions offered personal, professional, and general (i.e., societal) ideas about why discrimination against African Americans lingers in higher education today, how such discrimination affects the self-confidence and self-esteem of prospective and present black higher education students, and what might be done to eliminate such discrimination today.

Participants

The participants selected for the study were from a target population of African American higher education leaders in full-time administrative posts at United States public or private colleges, universities, professional schools, or research institutions. Data used in the study were limited to survey responses collected from these participants who had six or more years experience at their current jobs.
A convenience sample selection for the study was selected based on author acquaintance with some individuals within the target population and the recommendations by professional colleagues of others within that population. A total of 100 such educators comprised this pool of participants. This pool of participants was made more robust by the mailing of survey questionnaires to African American college and university presidents and other high-level administrators whose names, job titles, and campus addresses appear on the National Association for Equality in Education (NAFEO) internet web site.

Survey questionnaires and cover letters explaining the study's purpose and goals, and requesting assistance through survey responses, were mailed, by United States Mail, to 100 members of the target population, i.e., current African American higher education administrators. A stamped, addressed return envelope was included with the cover letter and questionnaire.

Table 1. lists names of survey respondent institutions, states where the institutions are located, and numbers respondents at each institution:
Table 1. **Higher Education Institution Name, State, and Respondents per Institution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Name</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama State University</td>
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<td>Bowie State University</td>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Claffin College</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coahoma Community College</td>
<td>Mississippi</td>
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<td>Community College of Southern Nevada</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
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<td>Compton Community College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuyahoga Community College</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delaware State University</td>
<td>Delaware</td>
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<td>Dillard University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fayetteville State University</td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
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<td>Michigan State University</td>
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<td>Prairie View A &amp; M University</td>
<td>Texas</td>
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<td>St. Augustine College</td>
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<td>Savannah State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spellman College</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Nevada, Las Vegas</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne County Community College</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Institutions: 23  Total States: 17  Total Respondents: 33
Survey questionnaires were mailed to 100 members of the target population of current African American higher education administrators on February 8, 2003. Response level was highest in the first three weeks after the surveys were mailed; by March 2, 2003, 35 (35%) of surveys had been returned. Three weeks later, or six weeks total after the initial mailing, survey questionnaires had been completed and returned by 47 individuals, or 47% of those to whom they had originally been sent. Of those 47, however, 13 (13%) were discovered to have had fewer than six years experience at their present jobs, and one (1%) had a job title connoting technical rather than administrative duties. Those survey responses were therefore not included for data collection. Thirty-three of the 47 completed and returned surveys (33% of those originally mailed out) were ultimately used in data collection, synthesis, and analysis for the study.

Instrumentation

The survey instrument was designed specifically for the study by the author, and was intended to encourage and elicit from respondents full or partial answers to Research Questions 3 through 9 that drove the study. The instrument was a mailed out questionnaire with twelve separate questions divided into two sections of six questions apiece. Section I, "Background Information", consisted of six specific (i.e., non open-ended) questions requesting background information on the respondent, including gender; age range (in ten-year increments, e.g., 21-30; 31-40, etc.); highest academic or professional degree earned; current job title; years of experience at the present job, and nature of the respondent's institution (e.g., junior, technical, or community college; four-year liberal arts college; university; professional school, or research institution).
Section II of the instrument, "Barriers to Higher Educational Opportunity", consisted of six open-ended questions (or, in some cases, not so much questions, as requests for specific information) on higher education opportunity or the lack thereof for African Americans in the United States past, present and future. The intent of each question or information request in Section II was to encourage expression of respondents' reflections on what sorts of barriers to higher educational opportunity and success he or she personally experienced; how he or she overcame those barriers, and what he or she now sees, professionally and personally, as key ongoing social, educational, and financial barriers to African American success in higher education.

Examples of information requests and open-ended questions in Section II of the instrument were: "Please identify three (3) or more barriers, in order of importance, to higher educational opportunity you have personally experienced in college, in graduate school, and/or within your academic career; "Please list in order of importance, and then briefly describe three or more major educational barriers that exist for African American students today; and "Please identify and describe any other barriers you believe exist for African-American students today, and what you feel might be done to overcome them".

Each of the six open-ended questions or information requests in Section II also asked respondents to name three specific examples of social, educational, or financial barriers for African American students today. The instrument provided space to list other such barriers as well.

Questions 9, 10, and 11 of Section 2 each contained two parts: Parts A and B. Part A of each of these three questions asked respondents to list three or more social barriers
(Question 9); educational barriers (Question 10), or financial barriers (Question 11), to higher educational opportunity for African Americans today. Part B of these questions asked respondents to describe what, in their opinions, could be done to eliminate, or at least minimize, such social, educational, and financial barriers in today's higher education environment.

Validity of the Instrument

Between January 25, 2003 and February 8, 2003, when the survey instrument was mailed to 100 African American higher education administrators in the target population, the survey instrument was validated by five higher education professionals in separate and group face to face, telephone, fax, and e-mail consultations. These five were Dr. Paul Killpatrick, a community college president; Dr. Frank DiPuma, an interim director for institutional research and planning; Dr. Chris Kelly, a community college business and management division dean; Dr. N.J. Petit, a community college counselor, and Dr. Sherry Rosenthal, a university and community college English professor.

The individuals asked to validate the instrument were selected based on diverse higher education experience and expertise; professional experience validating, using, and amalgamating survey instrument data, and racial, ethnic, gender, and age diversity (the group contained one black male; two white females, and two white males of ages ranging from 38-55).

To validate the survey instrument, the author met twice informally with group members, first on January 25, 2003, and again on February 1, 2003, to discuss the instrument's design and format, as well as the efficacy of survey instrument question
content in terms of the study’s goal and purposes. Based on those meetings, and on various follow-up conversations in person, by telephone, and by e-mail, second, third, and final drafts of the instrument were written. The version of the survey instrument ultimately mailed out was the fourth draft of the original (Appendix iii).

Collection of Data

The study investigated both historical roots and ongoing realities of social, educational, and economic obstacles that have contributed and continue contributing to the past and present problem of unequal higher education opportunity and success for African Americans in the United States. The goal of the study was to identify, explore, and make recommendations for ameliorating lingering social, educational, and economic impediments that have contributed and contribute now to the remaining problem of unequal higher educational opportunity and success for U.S. African Americans. The instrument used for the survey portion of the study was a questionnaire requesting both demographic information and open-ended respondent opinions on how and why unequal higher educational opportunity for African Americans has existed in America and continues to exist now.

The participant group was composed of a convenience sample of acquaintances who were leaders in higher education plus a survey sample taken from a target population of 100 current African American higher education administrators sent out to those individuals by United States mail. The overall return rate of completed surveys was 45%, but 14% of completed and returned surveys contained faulty or otherwise

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unusable demographic information. Therefore, only 33% of completed and returned surveys were amalgamated for the study.

Analysis of Data

Analysis of demographic data contained in Section I of the returned survey instrument, "Background Information", was done according to gender; age range; highest academic degree earned; current job title; title of the individual to whom the respondent now reports; respondent's years at the present job, and the nature of the respondent's higher education institution (e.g., community college; four year liberal arts college; university, or research institution); institution name; institution state; number of institutions responding, and number of responses per institution.

Data for Section I of the instrument, within each separate demographic category listed above was illustrated within separate tables followed by explanatory narratives. Information gleaned from open-ended responses to questions in Section II, "Barriers to Higher Educational Opportunity", was organized by incidence of occurrence and is illustrated within tables representing information contained within answers to questions 7 through 12, followed by explanatory narratives. Results of amalgamated, synthesized, and analyzed information from survey respondents on all 12 of the survey questions appear in Chapter 4. Chapter 4 also provides answers to the latter seven research questions (Questions 3 through 9) not answered in Chapter 2.
Summary

The study provided today's higher education leaders with historical and current information on past and present obstacles to equal higher educational opportunity for African Americans in the United States. The information was provided by both a comprehensive review of available literature and a survey sample of attitudes on higher educational opportunity for blacks by current African American higher education administrators. Survey responses from those administrators offered reflections on personal and professional obstacles they themselves overcame, and their views of the most stubborn obstacles to equal higher education opportunity and success still encountered by African Americans today. Survey responses also suggest various steps today's higher education leaders might take to help ameliorate the still persistent, often discouraging, and socially harmful remaining obstacles to equal higher education opportunity for African Americans today.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

The results of the survey data analysis are presented in Chapter 4. The purpose of this study was to trace historical roots of unequal access to higher education for American blacks, and, based on answers to survey questions, identify social, educational, and financial barriers that linger today, and suggest ways to achieve future equality of opportunity for African Americans. Toward that end, responses to author-designed open-ended survey questions by African American higher education administrators throughout the United States shed light on personal barriers to higher education access and success that those individuals faced and overcame. Survey answers also described what respondents considered major social, educational, financial and other barriers to equal higher education opportunity today and what might be done to overcome them.

The study, of which data analysis made up the latter portion, was driven by nine research questions:

1. What is the history, based on a review of the literature, of higher educational opportunity for blacks, or the lack thereof, in the United States?

2. Based on a review of literature, what information exists on why opportunity for higher education for African-Americans has been and continues to be restricted?
(3) Based on survey responses and a review of the literature combined, what gains have been made toward equal higher education opportunity for blacks, and to what ends?

(4) Since Affirmative Action began, how, based on a review of the literature and survey responses combined, have its policies affected black access to, and performance within, higher learning institutions?

(5) Based on survey results, what factors either facilitated or impeded opportunities for higher education within the responding group?

(6) Based on survey responses, how did the African-American educators in the group overcome their respective social, educational, and financial barriers?

(7) What social, educational, and financial barriers to equal higher educational opportunity continue exist for African-American students today, and what suggestions do respondents have to help students overcoming them?

(8) How did survey group respondents, many of whom themselves experienced restricted opportunities for higher education, still succeed, academically and professionally, and what stories, strategies, and suggestions can they share?

(9) What can be learned by educators today, African-American and otherwise from success stories of those surveyed, and how might that information also be used to help create more equal higher educational opportunity for blacks in the future?

Research Questions 1 and 2, respectively, "What is the history, based on a review of the literature, of higher educational opportunity for blacks, or the lack thereof, in the United States?" and "Based on a review of literature, what information exists on why opportunity for higher education for African-Americans has been and continues to be restricted?" were answered in the Chapter 2 literature review. Research Questions 3
through 9 are answered by either the literature review and survey results combined or the survey results alone. Data analysis in this chapter categorizes and explains demographic information and open-ended question response information given in the 33 (out of 47) usable returned surveys.

Demographic Characteristics of the Research Sample

The data for this study were gathered during winter and spring 2003. This process was begun when, on February 8, 2003, 100 survey questionnaires requesting opinions from current African American higher education administrators on past and present barriers to higher education access, and on what might be done about these barriers, were mailed out. Within five weeks, 47 (47%) of the surveys had been completed and returned, although only 33 of those, or 33%, proved usable due to faulty demographic data in the others.

Sample selection from among the population of current African American higher education administrators was done based on a combination of author acquaintance, recommendations from colleagues, and blind mailings to individuals whose names appeared on the National Association for Equal Educational Opportunity (NAFEO) internet web site. Of the 100 surveys originally mailed out, 75 (75%) were sent to males, and 25 (25%) to females, a 3:1 ratio reflecting the approximate numbers of male and female African American administrators, respectively, that the author was able to locate through personal acquaintance, peer recommendation, or use of the NAFEO web site.
Of the 75 surveys sent to males, 24 (32.%) were completed and returned. The 25 surveys sent to females were completed and returned by nine respondents, or 36 percent. Table 2 below shows numbers and percentages of returned surveys, in total and by gender:

Table 2. Numbers, Percentages, and Gender Breakdown of Usable Returned Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surveys Returned</th>
<th>Percentage Returned</th>
<th>Male Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Male Respondents</th>
<th>Female Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Female Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33 (of 100)</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section I of the survey instrument, "Background Information", asked survey respondents six specific questions designed to yield demographic information on each respondent, including gender; age; highest academic degree earned; job title and job title of direct supervisor, years at the current job, and type of institution at which the respondent was now employed (e.g., community college, 4-year liberal arts college, university, or research institution). Section I of the Survey Instrument appears below:

1. Background Information

1) What is your gender?
   A) male   B) female

2) What is your age?
   A) 21 – 30   B) 31 – 40   C) 41 – 50
   D) 51-60    E) over 60

3) What is your highest academic degree?
4) What is your current job title, and to whom do you report?

5) How long have you served in your current position (overall number of years)?
   A) 5 or less  B) 6-10  C) 11-15  
   D) 16-20  E) 21-25  F) 26 or more

6) Please indicate your type of institution:
   A) junior/technical/community college  
   B) 4-year liberal arts college  
   C) university  
   D) professional school  
   E) research institution

Tables 3 through 8 below amalgamate respondent answers to each of the remaining five demographic questions in Section 1 of the instrument. Age ranges of respondents ranged from 31-40 to over 60, although the majority of respondents were 51-60 years old. Table 3 shows respondent age ranges by number and percentage.
Table 3  **Age Ranges of Survey Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows age ranges of respondents by gender.

**Table 4  Age Ranges of Respondents by Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All survey respondents held at least a master's degree, and most held doctorates.
Table 5 shows the highest academic degrees earned by respondents, by number and percentage.

Table 5  Respondents' Highest Academic Degrees Earned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master's</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's + 30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's + 60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most survey respondents had the job title of President, although various other respondent job titles ranged from Chancellor to Dean to Site Manager. Respondents reported to direct supervisors bearing equally diverse job titles. Table 6 lists respondents' job titles and job titles of those to whom they report.
Table 6  Job Titles of Respondents and Their Supervisors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent Job Title</th>
<th>Supervisor Job Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chancellor</td>
<td>President of University of North Carolina System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Chancellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Chancellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Chancellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Board of Regents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Board of Regents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President of Administration</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Advisor to President</td>
<td>Campus Chief Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Provost for Research</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assoc. VP Retention &amp; Outreach</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Provost for Research</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent Job Title</td>
<td>Supervisor Job Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>Vice President for Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Dean</td>
<td>Minority Engineering Program Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dir., Student Financial Services.</td>
<td>Vice President of Finance &amp; Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assoc. Dir. of State Outreach</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Student Recruitment</td>
<td>Associate Vice President, Admissions &amp; Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dir, Edu. Opportunity Program</td>
<td>Vice Provost for Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Division Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Manager</td>
<td>Senior Advisor to President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening Administrator</td>
<td>Campus Chief Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of survey respondents had been at their current administrative posts for 6-10 years, although one respondent had been at the job over 26 years. Table 7 illustrates respondents' years at their current jobs.
Table 7  Respondents' Years at Their Current Jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years at Current Job</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The nature of the higher education institutions at which survey respondents held their present jobs ranged from two-year junior, community, or technical colleges to postgraduate research institutions. Table 8 represents numbers and percentages of respondents who were employed by these various types of higher education institutions.
Table 8  Types of Higher Education Institutions Employing Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Institution</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>junior/technical/community college</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year liberal arts college</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>university</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>research institution</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A composite picture of a typical survey respondent for this study was that of a male president of a junior, technical, or community college 51-60 years old, who has been at his current administrative post 6-10 years. That composite individual also holds a doctoral degree and reports directly to a board of trustees, a board of regents, or a chancellor.

Qualitative Analysis (Open-Ended Questions)

Section II of the survey instrument aimed to elicit answers to six open-ended questions, questions 7 through 12, as they appeared within the survey instrument. These questions as they appeared within the survey instrument are listed below:

**II. Barriers to higher educational opportunity**

7) Please identify three (3) or more barriers, *in order of importance*, to higher educational opportunity you have personally experienced in college, in graduate school, and/or within your academic career:

1.  

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Any others? (Please name and describe):

8) How did you overcome these barriers?

9 (2 parts)
A: Please list, in order of importance, three or more social barriers (examples could be racial discrimination, low self-esteem, or social class) that exist for African-American students today:
1.
2.
3.
B. What in your opinion could be done to eliminate, or at least minimize, such social barriers?

10) (2 parts):
A) Please list in order of importance, and then briefly describe three or more major educational barriers that exist for African-American students today:
1.
2.
3.
(B) What in your opinion could be done to eliminate or at least minimize these educational barriers?

11) (2 parts)
(A) Please list in order of importance, and then briefly describe three major financial barriers that exist for African-American students today:
1.
2.
3.
(B) What in your opinion could be done to help eliminate or minimize such financial barriers?

12) Please identify and describe any other barriers you believe exist for African-American students today, and what you feel might be done to overcome them.

The open-ended questions within Section II dealt first with respondents' personal experiences facing and overcoming their own barriers to higher educational access and success. The survey instrument then asked respondents to list various social, educational,
financial, and other barriers for African American students today, and to explain how
these might best be overcome. Responses to each question were inspected and
categorized. These appear below, in the same numerical order in which they appeared on
the survey instrument.

Survey Instrument Question 7

The first of six open-ended survey instrument questions, Question 7, asked
respondents to list three or more barriers to higher educational opportunity that they
themselves had faced and overcome. Understandably, answers varied, but a
preponderance, 17 of 33, or 51.5%, listed financial obstacles, including lack of
scholarship funds or funds for tuition, books, and daily necessities while attending
college or graduate school.

Twelve (36.4%) believed that inadequate pre-college (K-12) preparation had been a
barrier. Nine (27.3%) considered a lack of African American role models, including
mentors, advisors, professors, or college or university administrators, to have been a
barrier, and 8 (24.2%) felt impeded by the lack of a supportive post-secondary
environment. Nine respondents (27.3%) named racial discrimination as a roadblock.
Three (19.1%) stated that personal interest and program compatibility had been an issue.
Nine percent (3), all female, said difficulties of balancing family and career had been an
obstacle. Two (6.1%), again both women, listed a "glass ceiling" and a lack of self-
confidence (6.1%) as barriers.

Two other answers (6.1%) included limited opportunity. Another (3%) listed lack of
opportunity knowledge. Hostile attitudes were mentioned once (3%), as were difficulties
performing well on standardized tests (3%); conflicting study and work priorities (3%); too little peer collaboration (3%); and cultural differences (3%).

Survey Instrument Question 8

The second of the six open-ended survey instrument questions, Question 8, aimed to gather information on how respondents overcame barriers they themselves had faced. As with Question 7, a range of answers appeared. Many respondents, however, mentioned hard work (15, or 45.5%) and perseverance (11, or 33.3%). Seven respondents (21.2%) listed scholarships, fellowships, loans, grants, and other financial aid. Good planning was named by 4 (12.1%), as was help received from mentors (12.1%). Three respondents (9.1%) mentioned determination. Parental encouragement was named twice (6.1%), as was association with the right individuals and groups (6.1%). Prayer was mentioned once (3%). Working to save for graduate school, and only then returning to graduate school full time was listed by one individual (3%).

Survey Instrument Question 9

Survey Instrument Question 9 had two parts, A and B, and focused first (Part A) on asking respondents to list three or more social barriers to African American higher education access (Part A), and then give opinions (Part B) on those barriers might be overcome.

In answer to Part A, 18 respondents (54.5%) listed social class as a barrier. Fifteen (45.5%) named family income or finances; 13 (39.4%) mentioned low self-esteem; 4 (12.1%) a lack of black role models; 4 (12.1%) difficulties combining career and family
responsibilities; and 3 (9.1%) low teacher expectations of black students. Additional responses included too much emphasis on sports and entertainment, and too little on studies (1, or 3%); a preconception by whites that prejudicial behavior is condoned (1, 3%); a waning of societal commitment to altruism (1, 3%); lack of support systems (1, or 3%); hostile campus environment (1, 3%); maturity issues (1, 3%); and castigation by campus police (1, 3%).

In Part B of Question 9, respondents were asked to give ideas about how the social barriers they had identified in Part A might be overcome. Seven respondents (21.2%) said that better paying employment for blacks would help. Six (18.2%) suggested more diversity awareness, training, and accountability. Another 6 (18.2%) mentioned importance of educational awareness, and 6 (18.2%) said perseverance. Six (18.2%) responses listed greater parental involvement. Five (15.2%) named financial information, and 5 (15.2%) suggested stronger peer networks. Four responses (12.1%) identified more and better student enrichment programs and extracurricular activities as possible solutions, and 4 others (12.1%) said more administrative support would help. Three (9.1%) said mentors, and 2 (6.1%) suggested raising awareness of black history, heritage, and culture.

Survey Instrument Question 10

Survey Instrument Question 10 also had two parts, Parts A and B, and focused first (Part A) on asking respondents to list three or more educational barriers to African American higher education access (Part A), and then to give their opinions (Part B) on how such barriers could be eliminated.
In answer to Part A of this question, the most frequent response, mentioned by 17 (51.5%), had to do with inadequate K-12 preparation. Sixteen responses (48.5%) named a lack of finances, grants, loans, and scholarships. Eleven (33.3%) said better advisors and counselors. Seven respondents (21.2%) considered standardized tests a barrier. Five (15.2%) mentioned discrimination, and another 5 (15.2%) low teacher expectations of African American students. Three respondents (9.1%) felt that education needs to be more of a priority among African Americans, and 3 others (9.1%) listed a lack of black role models. Two respondents (6.1%) called retrenchment of Affirmative Action policies a barrier; 2 (6.1%) said hostility, and 2 (6.1%) said a lack of mentors. One (3%) said not enough catch-up courses, one (3%) too little appreciation of black heritage, culture, and history, and one (3%) increased competition for college and graduate admission. Another (3%) said not enough community support. One respondent (3%) gave no answer.

Part B of Question 10 asked for respondents' input on possible ways to eliminate the educational barriers they had mentioned in Part A. In answer, 12 respondents (36.4%) said more black role models would help. Six (18.2%) said better K-12 preparation, and another 6 (18.2%) said African Americans should make higher education more of a priority. Four (12.1%) mentioned more and better funding for higher education; 3 (9.1%) recommended more extensive diversity training; 2 (6.1%) more multiculturalism in teaching, and 2 (6.1%) more parental involvement. Two (6.1%) responses named early intervention programs; one (3%) more emphasis on religious faith; one (3%) said better teachers; one (3%) mentors; one (3%) alternative affirmative action admission policies not based only on race or ethnicity. One respondent (3%) suggested more projects like TRIO. One respondent (3%) did not reply to this part of Question 10.
Survey Instrument Question 11

Like Questions 9 and 10, Survey Instrument Question 11 consisted of Parts A and B. Part A asked respondents to list three or more financial barriers to African American higher education access. Part B requested respondent viewpoints on how such financial barriers might be eradicated.

In response to Part A of this question, 12 (36.4%) named low family income as a financial barrier. Eight (24.2%) said not enough jobs, and 5 (15.2%) said not enough summer jobs, programs, or internships for black students. Five (15.2%) listed a lack of careful financial planning by parents. Four (12.1%) mentioned black families' placing too low of a priority on education. Three (9.1%) listed a lack of student awareness of scholarship and other financial aid opportunities and processes. Three (9.1%) did not answer this part of Question 11. One (3%) said too little employer support; one (3%) weakened [from earlier decades] Affirmative Action admission and financial aid policies; one (3%) a lack of parental involvement; one (3%) racism; one (3%) single parent homes, and one (3%) job market discrimination.

Part B of Question 11 asked respondents to suggest remedies to the financial barriers they named in Part A. Twenty-six respondents (78.8%) suggested better planning, preparation, research, and information seeking by parents and students. Fourteen (42.4%) mentioned more graduate fellowships, scholarships, and other forms of student financial aid. Five (15.2%) listed greater awareness of systems and processes. Two (6.1%) did not answer this part of Question 11. One (3%) suggested addressing poverty; one (3%) said eliminate racism; one (3%) said list college costs on the Internet; one (3%) said that loan and grant money should be continued; one (3%) said strive for better pay;
one (3%) suggested more job placement programs; one (3%) mentioned more evening and weekend courses for working students; one (3%) suggested more summer jobs and internships for students; one (3%) suggested development of more privately funded financial sources, and one (3%) recommended Summer Bridge Programs that address the issue of financial planning.

Survey Instrument Question 12

The final open-ended survey instrument question, Question 12, asked respondents to list additional barriers they felt interfered with higher education access, opportunity, and success among African American students today in higher education not covered before, and to describe possible solutions to these. Fourteen respondents (42.4%) left this question blank. Among the 19 (57.6%) answers given, several mentioned barriers or types of barriers that had been extensively named in answer to previous questions, such as institutionalized racism, discrimination, or systematic exclusion based on race (11, or 33.3%). Other answers proved more varied and unique, including the opinion that many blacks create their own internal barriers due to low self esteem, weak desire, and lack of inspiration (1, or 3%); that white administrators find it difficult to accurately perceive negative effects of inhospitable educational environments (1, or 3%), and that today's post civil rights era student population lacks direct experience with the human rights struggles of the 1960's, and therefore, understanding of and conviction about civil rights (1, or 3%); that there is a backlash among many white students, many of whom see their African American peers as less deserving than themselves, and having been granted special favors (1, or 3%); that African Americans as a race place insufficient importance
on education (1, or 3%); that black students whose parents did not attend college are less likely to attend college themselves (1, or 3%), and that many African American students today tend to place more emphasis on entertainment, sports, and personal appearance than on studying, becoming well educated, and planning for successful academic and professional futures (1, or 3%).

Summary

The purpose of data collection was to discover how a selected sample of a population of current African American higher education administrators faced and overcame various barriers to access and success in higher education, and later, their careers. Data collection also sought to identify specific social, educational, and financial barriers to higher education access and success the sample population considered important, and what might be done to erase or at least minimize them. Demographic data collected on survey respondents also yielded a composite picture of the average respondent to this survey as an African American male 51-60 years old who holds a doctorate, is currently a president of a junior, community, or technical college, and who has been at that post 6-10 years.

During the process of sample selection from the target population surveyed, the author discovered that, based on a combination of personal acquaintance, peer recommendations, and use of a list of current African American higher education administrators on the National Association for Equal Educational Opportunity (NAFEO) internet web site, approximately three African American male higher education administrators could be found for every female African American higher education
administrator. Consequently, the number of surveys sent to males qualified to respond (75) was three times that of surveys sent to females qualified to respond (25), or a 3:1 ratio.

The total numbers of usable returned surveys from male and female respondents, respectively, closely echoed that ratio: of the 75 surveys originally sent to male population members, 24 (32.%) were completed and returned. The 25 surveys originally sent to female population members were completed and returned by nine respondents, or 36 percent.

When survey respondents were asked to list the most important social, educational and financial barriers, respectively, to African American higher education access and success, social class, lack of family income, and low self-esteem were named most often as social barriers. Solutions to those social barriers were most frequently described as better paying jobs; greater diversity awareness, training, and accountability; educational awareness; perseverance; more parental involvement, and stronger peer networks.

Major educational barriers listed most often by the responding group included inadequate K-12 preparation; lack of funds; lack of good advising and counseling, and standardized tests. Possible solutions mentioned most often included more and better black role models, better K-12 preparation, and making education a higher priority within the African American community.

Financial barriers identified most frequently by survey respondents included inadequate family income; lack of well-paying jobs; lack of summer employment and internship opportunities for black students, and insufficient financial planning for college by African-American parents. Remedies most often suggested included better planning,
preparation, and research; more graduate financial aid; and greater student and parent awareness of and follow-up on financial aid, scholarship, fellowship, and grant application processes.

As for other miscellaneous barriers to African American higher educational access, opportunity, and success, survey respondents most often mentioned institutionalized racism, discrimination, and exclusion.

Based on survey results, a composite picture emerges of key barriers to African American higher education access, opportunity and success as seen by the population sample surveyed as social class, lack of family income, poor K-12 preparation, lack of role models, lack of effective diversity training, awareness, and sensitivity in higher education, the relatively low priority given education within African American families and the African American community overall, a need for better counseling and advising of black students, more parental interest and involvement in their children's education, better financial planning by parents and students, and a need for parents and students to seek out and receive information on higher education opportunities, costs, scholarships, and financial aid.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to summarize findings and discuss implications of the study, and offer conclusions and recommendations for further research. The purpose of the study was, first, to trace historical roots and explore present-day realities of unequal educational access, opportunity, and success for African Americans in the United States. Based on research, a comprehensive review of available literature, and survey questionnaire responses from a sample of the population of current African American higher education administrators at United States colleges, universities, graduate and professional schools and research institutions, the study then identified persistent social, educational, financial, and other barriers to equal African American higher education access, opportunity, and success. Finally, the study suggested ways to better achieve future equality of access, opportunity, and success for blacks in those areas.

The study was driven by the following nine research questions:

(1) What is the history, based on a review of the literature, of higher educational opportunity for blacks, or the lack thereof, in the United States?
(2) Based on a review of literature, what information exists on why opportunity for higher education for African-Americans has been and continues to be restricted?

(3) Based on survey responses and a review of the literature combined, what gains have been made toward equal higher education opportunity for blacks, and to what ends?

(4) Since Affirmative Action began, how, based on a review of the literature and survey responses combined, have its policies affected black access to, and performance within, higher learning institutions?

(5) Based on survey results, what factors either facilitated or impeded opportunities for higher education within the responding group?

(6) Based on survey responses, how did the African-American educators in the group overcome their respective social, educational, and financial barriers?

(7) What social, educational, and financial barriers to equal higher educational opportunity continue exist for African-American students today, and what suggestions do respondents have to help students overcoming them?

(8) How did survey group respondents, many of whom themselves experienced restricted opportunities for higher education, still succeed, academically and professionally, and what stories, strategies, and suggestions can they share?

(9) What can be learned by educators today, African-American and otherwise from success stories of those surveyed, and how might that information also be used to help create more equal higher educational opportunity for blacks in the future?
Summary

Research Questions 1 and 2

Research Question 1, "What is the history, based on a review of the literature, of higher educational opportunity for blacks, or the lack thereof, in the United States?" and Research Question 2, "Based on a review of literature, what information exists on why opportunity for higher education for African-Americans has been and continues to be restricted?" were answered within in the Chapter 2 literature review. The literature survey of Chapter 2 investigated attitudes on black higher educational opportunity (or the lack thereof) from the time of slavery until the present. The review of available literature further showed that obstacles to higher (or any) education for blacks first began with slaves' being prohibited, by law, from learning to read or write. Such early educational barriers, as the literature suggested, had less to do with a lack of ability by black students than with stubborn white prejudices that linger even today (Douglass, 1845; Ellison, 1947; Zdrok-Ptaszek, 2000; Loury, 2001). Nineteenth and twentieth century black education leaders Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois, given their distinct philosophies on higher education for blacks, may also have created further confusion, even among black educators and students themselves, about which direction African American higher education might best take (see Gibson, 1978).

As the literature review also found, higher educational opportunity for most blacks remained scarce until the early 1970's, when United States affirmative action policies first began impacting college and university admissions processes (Price, 2002; Vital signs, 2001-2002). Those policies, while not guaranteeing complete equal opportunity, did steadily and significantly increase African American student numbers in higher education.
nationwide (Jackson, J., 1995). The landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978) narrowed but did not eliminate affirmative action in higher education. Later, however, lawsuits by other whites alleging race discrimination in admissions occurred, yielding mixed results and no clear pattern of national judicial thinking (Brunner, 1996; Hopwood decision, 1996; Bakke and beyond: Executive summary, 1998; Affirmative action and equality in U.S. higher education, 1999; Rubio, 2001; Alger, 2002; Gurin, 2002; Information on admissions lawsuits, 2002).

Today, as the literature survey suggested, affirmative action in higher education has been compromised in some areas (Hopwood decision, 1996) yet strengthened in others (Alger, 2002; Gurin, 2002). At this writing (April 2003) two other affirmative action lawsuits, *Gratz v. Bollinger, et al.* (2000) and *Grutter v. Bollinger, et al.* (2002) brought by white plaintiffs denied entrance to the University of Michigan undergraduate and law schools, respectively, are presently being heard on appeal by the United States Supreme Court. The court is expected to rule on both by June 2003.

Clearly, the United States Supreme Court verdicts in *Gratz v. Bollinger, et al.* (2000) and *Grutter v. Bollinger, et al.* (2002) shall represent nothing short of either a major victory or a major blow to continued affirmative action programs in higher education throughout America. Therefore, should today's U.S. Supreme Court rule in 2003 against the University of Michigan, the ruling(s) would represent a substantial setback for affirmative action in future higher educational access, opportunity, and success for African Americans (Holland, 2002).
Research Question 3

Research Question 3, "Based on survey responses and a review of the literature combined, what gains have been made toward equal higher education opportunity for blacks, and to what ends?" was answered by the Chapter 2 literature review and various survey answers combined. As the literature review suggested, most significant gains in numbers of black students achieving access to higher education took place in the late 1960's and early 1970's, when United States government Affirmative Action policies created the condition of possibility for significant numbers of African Americans to attend colleges, universities, and graduate and professional schools for the first time ever. After the United States Supreme Court ruled, in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978), however, that college and university admissions processes could continue to use race as one factor in admissions, yet no longer use race-based "set-asides" in admissions to guarantee a certain percentage of minority presence within entering classes of college, university, graduate, and professional students, these numbers decreased. Permanent gains in numbers of African American students admitted to higher educational institutions have been made, although these gains have not been as great as might have been predicted in the 1960's and 1970's, the early days of affirmative action in America.

Research Question 4

Research Question 4, "Since Affirmative Action began, how, based on a review of the literature and survey responses combined, have its policies affected black access to, and performance within, higher learning institutions?" was answered, like Research Question 3, by both the Chapter 2 literature review and responses to survey questions. The
literature review showed that in the early period of affirmative action, specifically the 1960's and 1970's, substantial gains in numbers of African American students admitted to higher education institutions and programs for the first time were made. Even then, true equality of access in terms of comparative U.S. population numbers of African Americans, Caucasians, and other groups was not reached, but such equality was deemed then to eventually be possible. Numbers of blacks admitted to United States higher education institutions dwindled after the late 1970's, however, and have yet to reach those levels again.

Research Question 5

Research Question 5, "Based on survey results, what factors either facilitated or impeded opportunities for higher education within the responding group?" was answered by responses to survey questions. Responses to survey questions revealed that key impediments to higher education access, opportunity, and success among the sample population were financial obstacles, including low family income, a need to work full-time or nearly full-time in college to survive, a lack of scholarships and other financial aid, inadequate pre-college preparation, a lack of African American role models, and an overall lack of support within the post-secondary environment.

Key factors that facilitated success within the responding group, however, included hard work and perseverance, receipt of financial aid in the form of scholarships, fellowships, grants, loans, and other awards, careful planning, determination, and emotional support and encouragement from parents. It is notable that most obstacles and impediments to academic and professional access and success named by the responding
group were external ones, but that most factors that facilitated higher educational access, opportunity, and success were internal ones.

Research Question 6

Research Question 6, "Based on survey responses, how did the African-American educators in the group overcome their respective social, educational, and financial barriers?" was also answered within the survey responses. The sample group listed, in order of frequency, hard work, determination, perseverance, scholarships, fellowships, grants, and other financial aid, parental support, peer group support, making education a priority, doing research on and developing awareness of how and where funds to finance college and graduate school could be found, good mentors and role models, good planning, remaining focused on long-term educational and career goals, networking, faith in themselves, and religious faith.

Research Question 7

Research Question 7, "What social, educational, and financial barriers to equal higher educational opportunity continue to exist for African-American students today, and what suggestions do respondents have to help students overcoming them?" was answered by survey responses. According to the group surveyed, major social barriers included social class, low family income, low self-esteem, a lack of African American role models, difficulties combining family, educational, and career priorities and responsibilities, and low teacher expectations of black students. Other social barriers, although mentioned less often, included too much emphasis on sports, entertainment, and personal appearance.
and not enough on education and career, a lessening of social commitment to altruism in America; hostile campus environment, maturity issues, and race-based harassment by campus police.

Persistent educational obstacles mentioned most often by survey respondents included poor pre-college preparation, insufficient financial resources, inadequate pre-college advising and counseling, discrimination, and low teacher expectations. Lingering financial barriers mentioned most frequently were lack of jobs, low family income, lack of available workstudy opportunities, internships, and summer employment, and inadequate financial planning for college by students and parents.

Research Question 8

Research Question 8, "How did survey group respondents, many of whom themselves experienced restricted opportunities for higher education, still succeed, academically and professionally, and what stories, strategies, and suggestions can they share?" was answered, like the sixth and seventh research questions, within the survey responses. Success stories, strategies, and suggestions had mainly to do with making the decision within oneself to work hard and persistently; with refusing to give up; with seeking and finding good role models and mentors; with seeking out (particularly financial aid and scholarship) information, with planning ahead, with sacrificing short-term pleasure or distraction in favor of long-term success, and with building one's own self esteem and believing in oneself. The importance of maintaining a positive attitude and having sustained belief in one's own abilities were also mentioned.
Research Question 9

Research Question 9, "What can be learned by educators today, African-American and otherwise from success stories of those surveyed, and how might that information also be used to help create more equal higher educational opportunity for blacks in the future?" may be gleaned from responses to various survey questions. In reflecting on the many and varied responses to questions asked of the sample group within the survey, it appeared that prospective African American higher education students and future professionals most likely to succeed were those who early on made their educations and future careers a priority, planned ahead, learned about, applied for, and made effective use of financial aid resources, believed in and relied on themselves, found good mentors and role models, persisted in the face of hardships and obstacles, stayed focused on long-term goals, and maintained positive attitudes about themselves, their studies, and their futures.

Conclusions

Within this study, results of a comprehensive literature review and survey questionnaire responses combined yielded a view of African Americans as having faced an uphill battle for higher educational access, opportunity, and success from the beginning, due to the stigma of slavery; past and ongoing racial discrimination in American society, and financial difficulties derived from both. Higher education access and opportunity for African Americans has not reached parity with the general population. The closest it has yet come was during the 1960's and 1970's, the early days of United States government affirmative action policies. Since then, however, myriad
and varied factors, including the United States Supreme Court decision *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978), and similar court rulings, have substantially relaxed the original affirmative action policies and standards designed to help blacks achieve equality of opportunity in education and other areas of American life. Such revision of these original affirmative action standards and policies, and its effects on higher education admissions and financial aid standards and practices, has led to fewer opportunities than in earlier decades for African Americans in terms of higher educational access, opportunity, and success.

Survey questionnaire responses from a sample population of current African American higher education administrators reinforced these findings from within the literature review, and also identified major social, educational, financial, and other barriers to African American higher educational opportunity for blacks today. Survey responses also suggested possible ways of eliminating, or at least minimizing, such barriers in the future.

The survey answers also painted a composite picture of the successful African American higher education applicant, student, and future professional as one who makes education a priority; plans ahead; seeks out financial aid; seeks and finds effective mentors; stays focused on long term educational and career goals; persists in the face of hardship, and maintains a proactive, positive attitude.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

The author recommends that additional research be done on the subject of historical and present barriers to higher educational access, opportunity, and success for African
Americans in the United States. Further investigations in this area could include the gathering of a larger survey sample over a longer time period; regional studies of past and present barriers to African American higher education (e.g., the southern United States; the western United States, or within various individual states), and more detailed research on effects of factors such as gender, social class, and family income on African American access to and success within United States institutions of higher learning.

Summary

The study focused on identifying, historically and now, and seeking current solutions to key social, educational, and financial barriers to African American higher educational access, opportunity, and success in the United States. Based on a comprehensive review of available literature, combined with answers to survey questionnaire questions from a selected sample population of current African American higher education administrators, this study identified historical roots of unequal higher education access and opportunity for African Americans, named specific social, educational, and financial barriers based on survey questionnaire responses from a population sample of current African American higher education administrators, and sought and received from survey respondents ideas and suggestions for erasing, or at least minimizing, those social, educational, financial, and other barriers in the future.

Higher education leaders today may find the results of this study useful in helping them to plan future directions for such areas as institutional diversity training; undergraduate and graduate admissions; financial aid publicity; student eligibility and other financial aid-related matters; future faculty, staff, and administrative hiring;
curriculum content and planning; student services including counseling, and campus environment issues.
APPENDIX I

Human Subject Approval Letter

UNLV
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS

DATE: April 3, 2003

TO: William L. Taylor, Educational Leadership
    Dr. Paul Meachum (Advisor)
    M/S 3002

FROM: Dr. Fred Preston, Chair
      UNLV Social Behavioral Institutional Review Board


OPRS# (old) 303S0103-001
OPRS# (new) 303S0303-105

The UNLV Social Behavioral Institutional Review Board reviewed your request for changes of the subject protocol on March 27, 2003. The changes were approved and work on the project may continue.

Should the involvement of human subjects described in this protocol continue beyond March 27, 2004, it will be necessary to request an extension. Should you require any change(s) to the protocol, it will be necessary to request such change through the Office for the Protection of Research Subjects in writing.

If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact the Office for the Protection of Research Subjects at 895-2794

cc: OPRS File
February 7, 2003

Institutional Name
Institutional Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Administrator:

My name is William L. Taylor, Jr., and I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). Currently, I am completing a dissertation that seeks to identify factors affecting access to higher education for African-American students. To conclude my research, however, I need input from successful African-American administrators such as you. I would greatly appreciate you taking about 15-20 minutes to help me identify, based upon the attached survey, a few factors that in your view either encourage or impede access to higher education for African-American students today. Examples might include standardized tests; Affirmative Action Programs; K-12 educational programs; academic support systems, or financial assistance.

Additionally, if you could identify, based on experience, one or more other potential factors not listed above, and briefly explain its/their significance, I would be most grateful. I plan to defend my dissertation in spring 2003, and would therefore appreciate receiving your survey response as soon as possible. I have enclosed a stamped return envelop for your convenience.

Thank you very much for your time and help. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

William L. Taylor, Jr.
Compliance Officer/Academic Advisor
Dept. of Athletics
CCSN
APPENDIX III
Survey Instrument

I. Background Information
1) What is your gender?
   A) male       B) female

2) What is your age?
   A) 21-30      B) 31-40      C) 41-50      D) 51-60      E) over 60

3) What is your highest academic degree?
   A) Master's   B) Master's +30   C) Master's +60   D) Doctorate

4) What is your current job title, and to whom do you report?

5) How long have you served in your current position (overall number of years)?
   A) 5 or less   B) 6-10   C) 11-15   D) 16-20   E) 21-25   F) 26 or more

6) Please indicate your type of institution:
   A) junior/technical/community college   B) 4-year liberal arts college
   C) university   D) professional school   E) research institution

II. Barriers to higher educational opportunity

7) Please identify three (3) or more barriers, in order of importance, to higher educational opportunity you have personally experienced in college, in graduate school, and/or within your academic career:

1.

2.

3.
Any others? (Please name and describe):

8) How did you overcome these barriers?

9 (2 parts)
A: Please list, in order of importance, three or more social barriers (examples could be racial discrimination, low self-esteem, or social class) that exist for African-American students today:

1.

2.

3.

A) What in your opinion could be done to eliminate, or at least minimize, such social barriers?

10) (2 parts):
B) Please list in order of importance, and then briefly describe three or more major educational barriers that exist for African-American students today:

1.

2.
3.

C) What in your opinion could be done to eliminate or at least minimize these educational barriers?

11) (2 parts)

A) Please list in order of importance, and then briefly describe three major financial barriers that exist for African-American students today:
   1.

   2.

   3.

B) What in your opinion could be done to help eliminate or minimize such financial barriers?

12) Please identify and describe any other barriers you believe exist for African-American students today, and what you feel might be done to overcome them.
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VITA

Graduate College
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

William L. Taylor, Jr.

Home Address:
4608 Candlas Way
North Las Vegas, NV 89031
(702) 651-4374

Degree:
1972 Bachelor of Science
University of Michigan
Major: Education
1977 Master of Arts
University of Michigan
Major: Adult Education

Special Honors and Awards:
National Football League, Drafted 5th Round, 1972
Three-time All-American, University of Michigan, 1969-1971
All Big-Ten First Team, 1969-1971
Most Valuable Player, University of Michigan, 1971

Dissertation Title:
Identifying the Barriers to Access to Higher Education for
African-American Students: Opinions of Successful African-American
Educators

Dissertation Examination Committee:
Chairperson, Dr. Paul Meacham, Ph.D.
Committee Member, Dr. Dale Andersen, Ed.D.
Committee Member, Dr. Gerald Kops, J.D., Ph.D.
Graduate Faculty Representative, Dr. Porter Troutman, Ph.D.