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**ABSTRACT**

This bibliography presents references concerned with the history of blacks in higher education, 1875-1975. Contents include general reference works; black periodicals; books, articles, and periodicals concerned with the history of black colleges and universities; black history books; and criteria concerning race relations and ideologies. (MJM)
A HISTORY OF BLACKS IN HIGHER EDUCATION, 1875-1975:
A Working Bibliography

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A HISTORY OF BLACKS IN HIGHER EDUCATION, 1875–1975:
A WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY

by

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INTRODUCTION

The written histories of Black colleges and universities, unlike that of some white colleges and universities present a special case for historians because the Black colleges have been the leading source of Black leadership in the United States. Even though there appears to be great interest in studies of Black institutions of higher education, little attention is given to historical studies of those schools. Black schools, however, have been the continuing subject of controversy concerning the quality of their curriculum, their effectiveness and the degree of their success.

Frederick Chambers succinctly summed up the need for and the significance of writings on Black colleges and universities:

"There is the likelihood that if the present status of the historical literature on Black colleges and universities remain unchanged, the legacy of the contributions, origins, and development of these institutions in American culture will become another point of controversy for future generations, lost altogether, if the college passes out of existence. New stereotypes could be created for Black institutions. Ironically, the many Blacks who seek now the 'Black experience' of American life are, like their elders, overlooking the institutions mainly responsible for Black leadership, past and present."
There are a number of good books on Black colleges: George Ruble Woolfork, *Prairie View: Study of Public Conscience*, 1876-1946; Clarence Bevotte, *The Story of Atlanta University*; and Rayford W. Logan, *Howard University: The First Hundred Years*, 1867-1967. I will, however, limit my discussion to only doctoral dissertations. Between 1940 and 1976 thirteen doctoral dissertations were written on Black institutions of higher learning. Eleven dissertations were Ed.D's and two were Ph.D's in history. Most of the above works were narratives and surveys, biographies of the presidents of the schools, and listing of institutional firsts. All of the dissertations, except two, were uncritical and made little use of oral interviews of alumni. Few of the histories dealt with the external forces that influenced the establishment of higher education for Blacks. The majority of the works discussed the development of the institutions as being aloof from race relations in the United States. The study of one Black college did not deal with other aspects of higher education for Blacks even though other colleges were established under the auspices of the same religious organization in the state. Few of the histories made use of the standard Black histories, such as Franklin and Quarles. In summary, one can clearly see that most of the Black college histories have been written from the "top." That is, the histories did not attempt to look at the development or growth of the institutions from the students' point of view (or from the "bottom" up). Hence, one can readily conclude that the reader of college histories only sees the administrators point of view.
The first two Black colleges opened in the North before the American Civil War. Yet the first class to graduate with B.A. degrees did not occur until after 1865. During the Reconstruction period many Northern white philanthropists and religious organizations helped establish Black colleges in the South. With the help of the Freedman’s Bureau and the American Missionary Association, something like two hundred private Black colleges were established. By 1900 only about half of these colleges still existed and only half of these remaining had any college-level students. The mortality rate for white colleges founded in the nineteenth century was also well over 50 percent, and the proportion doing mainly secondary work remained nearly as high until the founding of public high schools became common in the last quarter of the century. Many of the Black colleges closed because they did not receive the financial support necessary to educate poorly prepared applicants. Robert Cruden concluded that like many Northern colleges of that period, the new Southern (Black) colleges were little better than high schools, but that in itself was meeting a need when high schools were relatively uncommon even in the North. In 1916 the Phelps-Stokes study of Black education reached the same conclusions as Cruden. A. J. Klein in his study on Black education in 1928 arrived at a similar conclusion. These studies were descriptive of the success or failure of these separate colleges in relation to the general problems of higher education. The essence of most studies of Black schools of higher learning was that they were incapable and unable to meet the thrust of providing viable education for Blacks in the twentieth century.
The picture that emerges from the literature is one of success or failure for all Black colleges and universities. Moreover, the limited treatments of the histories of the colleges failed to show the connection of the origin, growth, development and contributions of these colleges to the broader aspects of American life and culture, race relations, concepts of Black identification, mobility, and leadership within the Black institutions of higher learning as well as society as a whole. Most writers of Black colleges and university histories do not emphasize the complex and important function that these schools have fulfilled for Black people in America. The study of the histories of Black colleges can shed additional light on our understanding of the history and development of Blacks in the United States. Hence, Black college histories can serve a useful purpose in helping us understand Black people in present society.

Many of the early Black colleges were church related schools. Their primary objective was to train Black ministers. These schools were financed by white philanthropists and religious organizations. Jencks and Risesman argue that these Black colleges differed from white ethnic colleges in several important respects. First, and perhaps most important, Blacks played a much smaller role in founding what were "their" colleges than other ethnic groups played in founding theirs. Since the private Black colleges were partly financed by white philanthropists they controlled the cards of trustees, elected white college presidents, and selected white faculty.
It has been argued by some, for example, that wealthy whites supported Black colleges in order to control the Black masses. However, it would appear that wealthy whites such as Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, Julius Rosenwald, John F. Slater, and others had less reason to feel threatened by poor Blacks than by almost any other impoverished group in America. Jencks and Risesman further argue that rather than assuming a Machiavellian plot to support "Uncle Toms" like Booker T. Washington against "militants" like W.E.B. DuBois, the Northern whites who backed private colleges for Blacks were moved by genuinely philanthropic motives. The authors conclude that unlike Southern segregationists, the Northern whites saw no necessary conflict between improving the condition of the Southern Blacks and preserving their own privileges. Moreover, continued Jencks and Risesman, "believing in progress on all fronts they assumed Blacks could be better off without rich whites being worse off."

Black religious organizations also founded Black colleges—especially the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Even though the colleges established by these groups were poorer and less distinguished than those founded by whites, they were solely administered and staffed by Blacks. The Black private colleges, at least in one state, North Carolina, laid the foundation for the development of public higher education among Blacks in that state by training leaders who realized that the adequate growth of a state must reside in its provision of higher educational facilities for all its citizens. Nelson H. Harris concluded that the outstanding
work of these pioneering colleges stimulated the state to use a larger share of its incomes for the advancement of a more adequate higher education facilities for its Black population.

These colleges, along with other Black institutions of higher learning, provided a freer and more comfortable environment for intellectuals than any other place in the South. Along with the Black church, Black colleges were among the few places where Blacks could meet freely and openly with one another and often with whites. In part this was because the Black campuses were so completely sealed off from white society that whites simply did not notice what went on there. But it was also because the presidents of some of these colleges were willing to protect their faculty and students. Joseph Charles Price, founder and president of Livingstone College was one such president who exemplified this aspect in the firm stand he took for civil rights.

Black colleges and universities have rendered an important function for the Black community. Even though the Black church has been the largest and probably the most influential institution among Black people for more than a century and a half, it was in the Black colleges that many of the ministers received their formal education. Many of these ministers became the chief sources of inspiration and instruction in the communities in which they settled. DuBois aptly summed up the Black minister when he said: 'The preacher is the most unique personality developed by the Negro on American soil. A leader, a politician, an orator, a 'boss,' an intriguer, and idealist—all these he is, and ever, too, the centre of a group of men, now twenty, now a
thousand in number." He continued, "the combination of a certain adroitness with deep-seated earnestness, of tact with consummate ability, gave him his preeminence, and helps him maintain it."

Even though most of the early Black private colleges had as their primary objective to train Black ministers, many found it necessary to accept non-clerical students in order to survive. Many later became teachers in colleges because emphasis was now on teacher education. Once again, however, they served a basic function for the Black community.

In order that the contributions of Black colleges and universities be made known, more attention must be given to the histories of individual schools. Many so called "predominantly" Black colleges and universities have been and are capable as well as able to meet the academic challenge of the twentieth century.
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A. Dissertations and Thesis


B. BOOKS


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**RACE RELATIONS AND IDEOLOGIES**


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