

Time Not Ripe: Black Women's Quest for Citizenship and the Battle to End Jim Crow at The
Ohio State University

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ABSTRACT

In the early 1930s, Jim Crow practices at Ohio State University prevented African American students Wilhelmina Styles and Doris Weaver from taking a mandatory course for their Home Economics major. The Home Management Laboratory class required a one-quarter residency at the Grace Graham Walker House, an all-white women's dormitory. Admitting Styles and Weavers would have resulted in the integration of the residential hall, an act prohibited by the University's policy against racial intermingling. This essay depicts the racialized and gendered social order maintained by Ohio State University in the early 1930s as well as the political and legal challenges launched by Styles, Weaver, and their supporters throughout the state to protest the school's version of Jim Crow. The previously unstudied cases of Styles and Weaver offer three significant insights regarding race and gender relations. First, the efforts to prevent Styles and Weaver from fulfilling their educational requirements expose how institutions in the North maintained separate and unequal practices without the legal underpinnings that existed in Southern states. Second, the opposition that Styles and Weaver faced illuminates how white women actively engaged in constructing racial barriers to prevent African American from achieving what Alice Kessler-Harris has termed "economic citizenship." Finally, the resistance efforts of Styles, Weaver, and their supporters reveal how black women defined citizenship during this bigoted era, how they came to imagine the role Home Economics training could play in their pursuit of that citizenship, and how black and white communities began to mobilize legally and politically in an effort to foster racial integration.

INTRODUCTION

On 11 May 1932, Doris Weaver submitted an Application for Reservation in the Grace Graham Walker House, a requirement for young ladies enrolled in the Home Economics program at Ohio State University (OSU).¹ Weaver, a rising senior, had satisfied all of the prerequisites for taking Home Economics 627 (Laboratory in Home Management) and scheduled the course for the winter quarter of her final year of matriculation. Just a year earlier, Wilhelmina Styles, then a junior, also had completed the curricular requisites for registering the 627 course and applied to live in the Grace Graham Walker House. On the surface, the respective requests made by these Cleveland-bred, black women were not unusual. In fact, their desire to live in the home economics dormitory was a *sine qua non* for female students wishing to fulfill degree requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Home Economics. However, the rejection of the applications by Styles and Weaver led to protests against OSU's racial practices and eventually resulted in a NAACP-supported legal and political campaign that culminated in an Ohio Supreme Court case.

This essay offers a historical retelling of the Styles and Weaver cases. It documents the racial and gender injustice encountered by Doris Weaver and Wilhelmina Styles during their enrollment in the Home Economics program at OSU. This history of Jim Crow in the North during the interwar period has largely been ignored by scholars interested in race relations. Instead, the historical gaze has been fixated on the South where the landmark *Plessy* decision became the Constitutional bulwark for the "separate-but-equal" doctrine that ushered Jim Crow unto the American landscape. I attempt to rescue the North from being neglected by scholars as a place where Jim Crow and other segregationist acts were also performed during the first half of the Twentieth Century.

However, the essay does not simply offer an account of a racial trouncing at the hands of Jim Crow. I also chronicle black community resistance and the particular efforts by African American women to carve out paths to citizenship through the means of gaining economic access. My research aims to enlarge the discourse examining black women's political and social activism by scrutinizing their middle-class aspirations and connecting those aims to the larger goals of achieving economic justice within what historian Jacquelyn Dowd Hall has termed the "long Civil Rights Movement."

Finally, this paper is critical to understanding on a localized level the NAACP's national campaign objectives to redress racial discrimination. Particularly, the research highlights the Ohio Supreme Court case involving *Doris Weaver versus Ohio State University*. This case reveals the NAACP's efforts to develop "test" cases—those cases that could be used to legally attack and remedy widespread racial injustices. The case also demonstrates the differential treatment that Weaver and Styles received from OSU as well as the NAACP. Weaver was light-skinned and could pass for white while Styles was dark-skinned. Their status within the university and black community efforts to eradicate racial segregation reveal the significance of skin color in these interactions.

In pursuing these themes, I will make three pivotal arguments. First, I will contend that white and black women differed in their understandings of Home Economics. Viewed through a black feminist framework, the discipline of Home Economics, not typically known as being a site of white feminist engagement, could be reinterpreted as an avenue for black women to seek "economic citizenship."² Historian Alice Kessler-Harris defines economic citizenship as "the independent status that provides the possibility of full participation in the polity."³ For African Americans like Styles and Weaver, achieving educational success in Home Economics served as

a tactical response to the political and social inequity that resulted from gender and racial exclusion. Second, I will demonstrate the capacity that black women, and the black community as a whole, had in mobilizing resistance. The NAACP's state-wide protest drive aimed at contesting OSU's Jim Crowism were instrumental in cultivating extensive grassroots support in Ohio and throughout the country. But I argue the NAACP's dependency on skin color as a part of its legal strategy undermined its objectives. Finally, I will elucidate the potential—ultimately unrealized—that the *Doris Weaver v. Ohio State University* case offered for overturning the “separate-but-equal” doctrine of the *Plessy* decision. By analyzing how black women's educational aspirations were stymied by a gendered form of Jim Crow and by examining how individual aspirations catalyzed community resistance and fostered innovations in legal strategies, this essay seeks to contribute to a fuller understanding of how social hierarchies were constructed and challenged in the North.

African American Women and the Quest for Economic Citizenship

Home Economics at OSU had its origin in the 1862 passage of the Morrill Act, which allowed for the creation of land-grant colleges. Unlike private institutions, which largely promoted the education of men and concentrated heavily on legal and medical training, land-grant colleges were open to women and offered a wider range of subjects that focused on more hands-on and skill-based practices. These included “domestic science” curricula—courses that aimed to teach management of the home and family through a more scientific approach.⁴ As Michael McGerr asserts, the “home economics movement tried to help women by making their housekeeping more systematic, businesslike, and scientific.”⁵ Such courses were welcomed by legislators who were eager to subsidize training for girls only if the programs safeguarded gender stereotypes.⁶

This belief that home economics should serve an essential role in preparing women to solve problems of both family and home hearkened back to the Progressive Era of the late 19th and early 20th Century. Progressivism served as a crusade to clean up the most evident causes of urban and industrialized corruption, disease, and privation.⁷ Progressive reformers, most of them middle-class, white, and native-born, believed that the home provided the foundation not only for the material, mental, and moral development of children but also a fertile ground for the building of America's national life.⁸ This progressive mindset framed the earlier turn-of-the-century purpose of the home economics movement, namely that women could not produce a home up to the American standard unless she was trained for the job. Women who did not already have these skills, particularly working-class, immigrant, and racialized women, needed to be taught how to spend money wisely and the proper nutrition to provide for the welfare and happiness of their families. By focusing on nutrition and spending, home economics programs would help minimize the need for women to work outside the home as women would be scientifically-trained to lower household consumption and monthly expenditures. Accordingly, the Laboratory in Home Management course, which was first offered at OSU in 1931, was established to address problems in family relationships, household expenditure, food nutrition, and care of the home by allowing young women to live together and collectively solve these dilemmas.

However, early on, the home economics departments created at these Midwestern schools provided career opportunities for college-educated women to become gainfully employed outside the home and to gain traction in academia. The home economics faculties at these land-grant institutions prepared students more for careers in teaching and institutional management than for domestic roles such as housekeeping. Further, home economists—seeking to increase opportunities and secure some measure of gender equity for women—were willing to negotiate

traditional views of a woman's place; they used conventional terms to conceal untraditional activities.⁹ As Sarah Stage contends, "Home economics could be whatever anyone wished it to be—conservative or reform, traditional or innovative, scientific or domestic."¹⁰ This strategy would quickly become ineffectual with the passage of a series of national legislative measures and land-grant laws that further affixed the educational training of women to traditional notions of domesticity.¹¹ Nonetheless, the tactics by early home economists opened the door for black women to assert their own grasp of what home economics connoted. Just as home economics educators were buttressing the discipline as a gendered domain that aimed to resituate a woman's place in the home, black women like Wilhelmina Styles and Doris Weaver were looking to the field as a route toward gaining economic empowerment.

Styles and Weaver pursued degrees in Home Economics at OSU at a time when middle-class blacks across the country, particularly women, were responding forcefully to the exploitation of black workers. Black women had already found themselves excluded from political participation in campaigns for women's rights due to in large part to racism. But with the shifting role of women from production in the home to consumption in the marketplace, black women increasingly felt marginalized and sought to carve a new path to citizenship. Emboldened by the "New Negro" and "New Woman" rhetoric of the 1920s, black women with middle-class aspirations began to see their problems as economic, not simply political and certainly not capable of being ameliorated through a politics of respectability intended to win whites over with disciplined-behavior and moral suasion. Instead, middle-class African Americans—gradually more skeptical of the "uplift" ideological solutions they had previously espoused as an adequate cure to racial inequality—began to perform a more economics-oriented examination of the racial quandary in which they found themselves.¹² They could see that despite

their commitment to respectability and uplift, the overwhelming majority of black workers in the early 1930s were concentrated in a handful of unskilled jobs. This was especially true for black women as seventy percent of them worked in the service sector as domestics.¹³ The remaining group of black women worked in similarly, labor-intensive jobs as laundry workers, kitchen helpers, and cleaners. Thus, black women, and middle-class blacks in general, developed a strong conviction that only access to resources and economic self-sufficiency in the form of good, professional jobs could provide an equalizer against racial injustice. As Thomas Sugrue emphasizes, “What had been a marginal position among civil rights activists—that class and race were intertwined, that jobs were necessary for freedom, that unionism was a prerequisite to civil rights—moved to the center of the black freedom struggle.”¹⁴

For Styles and Weaver, home economics offered a viable option toward a professional job that could provide middle-class respectability. Both young ladies, with degree in hand, could pursue careers in teaching and establish their fundamental “right-to-work.” The “right-to-work” had beforehand been indispensable to the hegemony enjoyed by white men who had exclusive access to the full benefits of citizenship. Yet the perceptions by Styles and Weaver of the economic citizenship and equality that their education could offer them differed from the conceptualizations that the framers of the program intended at the university. The home economics program at OSU was designed to reaffirm the central purpose for which the field was first established—namely to train women for the improvement of home and family living, not to bolster the emerging right-to-work campaigns.

But living in a depression-laden era complicated the roles for all women, and particularly swelled the aspirations of middle-class black women. Home economists were forced during the 1930s to confront the harmful exigencies of economic life triggered by the Great Depression.

According to Lizabeth Cohen, “unemployment hit particularly hard at middle-aged men, those between thirty-five and fifty-five, just at the time in their lives when their family responsibilities were greatest.”¹⁵ The threat to the economic welfare of families prompted more women to enter the workforce as households had to depend on what Cohen terms a “family economy” to survive. Women were able to locate work during the Great Depression far easier than their husbands and could gain employment in service occupations where the labor was cheaper and the jobs managed to survive the difficult times better than manufacturing trades.¹⁶

But while earnings by women outside the home contributed much-needed income to insure family survival, they were still regarded as secondary wage workers. Their presence in the job market sparked hostility in a work-scarce environment. As Cohen asserts, “When the male breadwinner suffered prolonged unemployment, traditional authority relationships within the family, between husbands and wives and between parents and children, began to break down.”¹⁷ Men’s declining status as breadwinners led to a lost sense of authority. The anxiety and conflict that this generated can be gleaned from social workers’ reports of increased and frequent friction between husbands and wives.¹⁸

In black communities, however, the depression-era conflicts regarding the right-to-work took a different form. For black women, the yearning for more fulfilling, remunerative work and a sense of entitlement to jobs increased.¹⁹ “As the depression deepened throughout the 1930s,” Kessler-Harris explains, “racial segregation made wage work an absolute necessity for many black women, regardless of their marital status.”²⁰ Even before the Depression, black women were obligated to enter the circumscribed job market because their black male kith and kin experienced racist, labor exclusion. In fact, twice as many married black women earned income as their white counterparts during the early 20th Century.²¹ When black women became wage

workers, they not only benefitted their communities but also began to presume a connection between economic self-support and citizenship. Though black women would encounter gender and racial bigotry, and worked heavily in domestic jobs as servants or launderers, a significant segment of middle-class African-American women did enter professional ranks. They took advantage of opportunities to become teachers, nurses, librarians, and social workers—jobs for which black men could not compete. These women easily became aware of the advantages of professional work; the more prestigious the job, the greater opportunity they would have to gain the full rights of citizenship.

Styles and Weaver could look to these examples as they sought to carve out paths to economic citizenship. Nearly two-thirds of black working women worked in domestic service.²² But a degree in Home Economics meant that Styles and Weaver could develop an opportunity to attain a professional status and achieve middle-class respectability. Both women desired to launch careers as teachers, which could afford them the economic resources they assumed would make them viable citizens. Further, for Styles and Weaver, a degree in Home Economics would endow them with the capability of providing for their families and buttressing their right-to-work. As Stephanie Shaw argues, wage earning augmented the power of women in African-American communities.²³ However, black women wage-earning was still located in a gendered context that valued family roles; inevitably, as Shaw points out, this wage-earning did not alter broader social sensibilities as to women's claims to the right-to-work.²⁴

Eventually, the teaching of home economics as a way to train women for the main role of working in the home prevailed. Preparing women for marriage became the discipline's principal objective. The Laboratory in Home Management course was vital in this regard for women who had been enlisted in the Home Economics program. Though OSU's bulletin advised students

preparing to enter the teaching profession to schedule Home Economics 642 (Supervised Home Economics Teaching) course concurrently with Home Economics 627, it was generally assumed that most women would utilize their degrees to become more attractive candidates for marriage. This was especially true for middle-class white women who mostly did not attend college to prepare for a vocation. Instead, the expectation of matrimony and maternity dictated their educational motives. Marriage was so tantamount to the pursuit of home economics training that some vocational guidance manuals explicitly referred to it as an instructional target. OSU's bulletin was never as overt as other schools were in linking home economics education with marriage. However, the administrators in OSU's Home Economics department definitely understood the connection between their course of study and the promotion of women's roles in the family. Ruth Lindquist articulated the purpose of home economics education in a seminal book she published in 1931. She wrote, "Education for marriage and parenthood is no longer an experiment; it is a reality."²⁵

But the reality was different for Styles and Weaver and other middle-class black women. "Racial realities," as Susan Hartmann avows, "put different pressures on black women."²⁶ A survey taken in the early 1950s reported that ninety percent of Negro women—many of whom received their degrees during the early 1930s—attended college primarily to train for a vocation, not as preparation for marriage.²⁷ Weaver even contended that her purpose for taking the Home Economics course had little to do with marriage. According to her account of the home economics controversy, she was seeking educational privileges, not social benefits such as matrimony.²⁸ Thus, when the University decided against her living in the Grace Graham Walker House, Weaver indicated she lost an average of \$75.00 a month in income, because under the Smith-Hughes Act, additional money was allotted to those individuals who taught in the field of

home economics and agriculture.²⁹ By treating home economics as groundwork for marriage, OSU created class and racial barriers that ignored Styles and Weaver's economic aspirations. Thus, the path to economic citizenship was elusive for black women like Styles and Weaver, and would unfortunately be made more daunting and delayed by the dictates of OSU's own version of Jim Crow.

Jim Crow at Ohio State University

A home economics degree was a plausible route to middle-class respectability and the Laboratory in Home Management course served as the culmination of four years of training for these matrimonial and middle-class aims. But Weaver and Styles would never be provided the opportunities to take the course at OSU. After being sent a letter of approval on 26 September 26 1932, Weaver subsequently received another correspondence, dated 4 October 1932, asking that she return the prior communication to the office of the Department of Home Economics.³⁰ The department had learned of Weaver's African descent and decided against her taking residence in the all-white Home Economics dormitory. OSU was even more defiant in denying Styles' request to live in the Grace Graham Walker House. Styles was informed that she could not live in the home economics dormitory "for the reason of color and tradition."³¹ OSU had a long standing practice of not allowing colored students and white students to live in the same dormitory together, and President George Rightmire, Home Economics Chair Ruth Lindquist, and Professor Faith Lanman were hostile to any breach of this custom by Weaver and Styles.

This tradition of African-American exclusion was reflective of local, regional, and national racial mores. Prior to the integration of the University, as Pamela Pritchard has noted, "If a Negro had attended Ohio State...local custom would not have permitted the Negro student to intermingle with white students, and the hardships in attending Ohio State would have been

insurmountable.”³² Pritchard maintains that black students were not well-received on campus even after their enrollment had been sanctioned, and some aspiring applicants were even discouraged from attending the university. For Styles and Weaver, attending OSU meant that they would come face-to-face with a northern university commitment to upholding the “separate-but-equal” policies that first emerged in the South with the *Plessy* decision.

In some ways, the University had already shown a commitment to “separate-but-unequal” prior to the incidents involving Styles and Weaver. William Bell, the star tackle on OSU’s football team, was benched twice during the 1930 football season in games against Navy and Vanderbilt, respectively, because of those institutions’ Jim Crow clause prohibiting their teams from playing against Negro players. Rather than uphold the supposed egalitarian customs of the North, the University chose to capitulate to the South’s variety of Jim Crowism—a decision that would be championed by President Rightmire.³³ Other schools in the Midwest, particularly throughout the Big Ten, carried out similar acts of racial discrimination, revealing the national reach of Jim Crow practices.³⁴

Thus, the approach taken by the OSU was in keeping not only with the position it had always taken when race became a factor but also with the Jim Crowism practiced by its northern counterparts. At times, OSU’s racial bigotry adversely impacted whites just as it indubitably did blacks. Herbert Miller, a distinguished white professor working in the Department of Sociology, was dismissed from the University in 1931 after the Board of Trustees discovered that he escorted a group of white students on a trip to Wilberforce University, a state-operated institution for African-American students, and sanctioned the racial intermingling between the two groups.³⁵ It was alleged that fifteen to twenty students were taken to a fraternity party at Wilberforce and permitted to dance with Wilberforce’s colored students. Dr. Miller commented, “Our girls said

that they did not mind it because they thought the colored boys could dance better than white boys.”³⁶ While Miller’s dismissal from OSU by the Board of Trustees was blamed on a trip that he had taken to deliver a speech in India in the wake of Gandhi’s “Salt March,” it was Miller’s convictions on race that sealed his fate. Miller, himself, charged the true reasons for his firing to the enmity of OSU for his liberal views on race questions.³⁷ The reaction of one Board of Trustees member affirmed Miller’s belief regarding the OSU’s decision to oust him and made clear the school’s position on racial intermingling: “He made his students dance with niggers.”³⁸

It is in this milieu that Ruth Lindquist declared to Wilhelmina Styles that “the time is not ripe for Colored and white students to be so intimately associated.”³⁹ Styles was informed that she would have to complete her work in a colored family’s home off-campus. In a letter sent to Attorney Chester K. Gillespie, Styles shared the bitter racial prejudice that Lindquist expressed. Lindquist vowed to Styles “that as long as she [Lindquist] stayed at Ohio State University there shall never be a colored girl live in the Home Management House.”⁴⁰ Lindquist then offered Wilhelmina an ultimatum that she had “until four o’clock the following day (Friday, April 15),” to answer: either accept practical training in a private, colored family’s home or take library work as a substitute.

The belief that the “time was not ripe” for Negroes and whites to be so warmly allied was indicative of a feeling shared by even the most liberal-minded whites. They felt that racial justice needed to be gradually pursued. For OSU officials, it was also reflective of their opinion that white students were strongly opposed to residing in the same living space with black students. President Rightmire would repeat on several occasions his opinion that “both colored and white people would be very unhappy under such an arrangement.”⁴¹ So entrenched was this line of reasoning that John Cunningham, Dean of the College of Agriculture (where the Department of

Home Economics was housed), would declare, “There is nothing unfair in our opposition to social intermingling of the races.”⁴²

In response, Styles’ initially attempted to challenge the assumptions of Cunningham and other members of OSU’s administration. Styles interviewed her white classmates to determine if they objected to her living side-by-side with them in the cottages provided by OSU. As anticipated by Styles, all of the students stated no objection to her living amongst them and uniformly agreed that they would welcome her presence in their midst.⁴³ By evincing that her presence would not stir the friction between the races, Styles had all but debunked the false excuse given by OSU for separating the races. Nonetheless, Lanman and Lindquist would cleave to the idea that racial mixing was imprudent. Lanman would go as far as to suggest to Styles that even if her colleagues were willing to accept her, the guests of these young ladies might be repulsed by her presence. Lanman’s defended the school’s decision to withhold Styles from the home management house by stating: “We reserve the right to make for each student the plan which seems most desirable.”⁴⁴ Thus, despite Styles’ efforts to prove that her presence in the Home Economics dormitory would not be objectionable, OSU chose to maintain the ‘separate but equal’ policy that they believed to be in line with the times.

The racial ignominy experienced by Styles was surpassed by the humiliation she felt from having Lanman and Lindquist devastate her aspirations of completing the Home Economics program. It was made worse by Lanman’s patronizing rhetoric with regard to Styles’ previous success in the program, and Lindquist’s own assertion that she was committed to racial uplift. Both Lanman and Lindquist likely felt the need to assuage criticism that OSU would receive over the decision to Jim Crow Styles. In a letter to C.E. Dickinson, President of the Ohio Conference NAACP Branches, Lanman even spoke fondly of Styles as a model student who was

adored by her peers: “We are glad to tell you that during her college course Miss Styles has made a very good record and that she is respected and appreciated by both students and staff.”⁴⁵

Lindquist also endeavored to show her own concern for improving race relations: “May I take this opportunity of assuring you of my very deep and genuine interest in promoting appreciation and understanding between races, an interest which has continued to grow since my undergraduate years at the University of Minnesota.”⁴⁶ But the encomiums by Lanman and the supposed dedication by Lindquist rang hollow to Styles.

Lanman and Lindquist were not successful in denying that racism had governed their decisions in regards to Styles. Lanman began circulating the excuse during the winter quarter that Styles could not live in the home management house due to overcrowding. However, two vacancies occurred in the last six weeks enrollment. Lanman sought to have the two vacancies filled by young ladies who had been placed on the waiting list, a futile effort “since this time,” according to Styles “was so close to the time to move into the house, which was April 7th, it was a little difficult to find girls.”⁴⁷ The residential tuition for living in the Grace Graham Walker House was \$32.50 with an extra \$5.00 laboratory fee, which would have been a burdensome expense for students who had already made other living arrangements prior to being notified of the two vacancies. Styles who had been prepared to pay the residence fee did not receive an invitation. Instead, Lanman and Lindquist eventually found two young white women to fill the vacancies. “One girl, Miss Sarah DeWeis,” Styles would agonizingly explain to Attorney Gillespie, “was given the opportunity to live in the house for practice before taking the theory course that is required to be taken before or concurrently with the practice work.”⁴⁸ DeWeis, who had not fulfilled the prerequisites needed to take up residence in the home management house, was nevertheless given a chance to live there while Styles was left to languish.

Doris Weaver, only months removed from the incident involving Styles, would also be Jim Crowed by OSU. Initially, the university took a more judicious approach to handling the request by Weaver to take the Laboratory in Home Management course alongside white students in the Grace Graham Walker House. It is possible OSU was responding to its earlier blunder in assuming Weaver to be white. Weaver insisted that had she not reported to the College of Education her racial identity, the Grace Graham Walker House would have been “desegregated” Autumn Quarter of 1932.⁴⁹ However, Miss Winters, a practice-teaching supervisor from the College of Education, reported to Lindquist the department’s oversight. Like Styles, Weaver’s goal to integrate the Home Management house was thwarted.

Still, the University, perhaps aware of its declining reputation after previous racial incidents on campus had invited widespread criticism and protest, undertook to find a new solution for the race problem now imposed by Weaver. Rightmire, maybe sensing more than others the gravity of the situation, went on a fact-finding mission to locate other solutions that might appease Weaver. Rightmire wanted to prevent the latest incident from escalating into a scandal like the Styles’ controversy, which drew national attention. Rightmire first consulted L.W. St. John, Director of Physical Education at OSU on the use of swimming facilities in Pomerene Hall by black and white students. St. John responded, “Since the opening of the swimming pool in Pomerene Hall seven years ago, colored students have been admitted on the same basis as the white students” and that “very little difficulty has arisen.”⁵⁰ St. John insisted that racial tolerance had been a viable solution to the race question in the Department of Physical Education.

But St. John’s observations did not sway Rightmire. Instead, Rightmire listened to John Cunningham, Dean of the School of Agriculture, who boldly stated his approval “without

qualification” of “the policy of the School of Home Economics which discourages the intermingling of races in the family house.” In fact, he insisted that there only be a “policy of admitting girls of the negro race to either of the Home Management Houses provided enough girls of the same race are available to complete the group.”⁵¹

Rightmire’s next queried Faith Lanman on the status of the Home Management House to determine whether it could accommodate colored students. Rightmire would inquire, “Could the occupancy of the House be so managed that any colored students could use one of the apartments for a particular period of experience in the year, saving white girls for the remaining period? Is this merely a matter of scheduling or are there too many white girls to permit of operating under this plan?”⁵² Rightmire then offered a proposition of his own that would let up to six black girls be housed and also allow sixty-six white women to be accommodated in a year’s time. Lanman reluctantly agreed with Rightmire’s plan after first claiming that the need for lodging by white students was far greater than could be accommodated: “it seems possible that we may be able to arrange for residence for colored students during half of one quarter, preferably the Autumn Quarter.”⁵³

Even as Rightmire earnestly sought a feasible solution to OSU’s race problem, he adamantly resisted implementing these policies. In separate letters sent to state Congressmen Hugh E. Addison, Frank Agnew and Perry Graham, Rightmire stated similar versions of the racial dilemmas that would arise if Weaver were allowed to live in the Grace Graham Walker House. Rightmire opined, “In the Weaver case the distinct question is raised whether...colored and white girls should be intermingled and made to occupy the same dining table, the same social room where guests of both colors may be simultaneously entertained, and the same bedroom for sleeping and study purposes.”⁵⁴ Rightmire was fervidly opposed to racial

intermingling and expressed quantitatively what furnishing Weaver with a room inside the Home Management House alongside white female students would portend: “There are 309,000 colored people in Ohio and 6,400,000 white and to do what Miss Weaver is asking might win the approbation of some of the colored people yet it would clearly win the disapprobation of most white people.”⁵⁵ Some other arrangement would have to be pursued.

The compromise that Rightmire, Lanman, and Lindquist proposed was to let Weaver stay in the home economics dorm but separate from the white students in the residence. The Grace Graham Walker House was equipped with an apartment, divided from the main part of the home where most of the girls would be residing together. This segregated space was offered to Weaver during the autumn quarter but Weaver declined. First, as Weaver avowed in her letter to Miss Osborn, a departmental liaison, she “had not requested admission until the winter quarter” and found “it impossible to be entered the first half of the autumn quarter.”⁵⁶ Second, living in the dormitory away from the other girls in the program would defeat the purpose of taking the course since the intended goal of the curriculum was to have the young ladies live together as one social unit where they could together learn to solve pressing family and home problems.

Rightmire wasted no time pointing out that providing Weaver with a room at the Grace Graham Walker House was unprecedented. He claimed that OSU could not be charged with discrimination since it was offering to provide black students with identical opportunities and privileges as white ones, even though the accommodations were separated. Rightmire pitifully reasoned, “Ordering the University to admit a colored student into the group of white students for this training is exactly the same as ordering a white student to live with colored students. In my judgment the race pride of each will be grossly offended if this is done.”⁵⁷ Convinced that his assessment of and solution to the situation was fair, Rightmire refused to offer any other

compromises to Weaver. Once again, the university conveyed the message that the ‘time was not ripe’ for black and white students to live intimately together. Rather than accepting this decree, however, Styles and Weaver, with the support of concerned citizens throughout Ohio and the rest of the country, protested the OSU’s decision to Jim Crow them.

Black Community Resistance and Political Mobilization

OSU’s decision to deny both Styles and Weaver a right to live in the Grace Graham Walker House was met with fierce opposition and protest. Styles and Weaver each objected to OSU’s segregationist policies and defied the administration’s choice to keep the home management house a white-only dormitory. It did not take long for other concerned citizens as well as local and national civil rights organizations to become interested in the Styles and Weaver cases.

The NAACP spearheaded the attack against the school’s “separate-but-equal” policy. Styles and Weaver were both from Cleveland, and the Cleveland Chapter of the NAACP was the first arm of the organization to learn of the incidents involving these young women. During the 1920s, the NAACP became particularly interested in cases that could both be used to pursue litigation and to develop strategies to legally assail racial injustice. C.E. Dickinson, President of the State of Ohio NAACP, knew well the association’s history of using the law as a weapon against racial discrimination. Dickinson was active in the NAACP during the organization’s successful legal defense of Ossian Sweet, a black medical doctor who, along other members of his family and friends, had been charged with first degree murder in Detroit.⁵⁸ Thus, once news of the Jim Crowing of Wilhelmina Styles began to spread, Dickinson and other local NAACP officials likely communicated to the national office the potential of this case for continuing the group’s assault on the “separate-but-equal” doctrine.

However, because lawsuits and legal defense were expensive, the NAACP only desired to utilize court action as a last resort.⁵⁹ This approach of delaying the use of litigation meant that the NAACP had to be selective about which cases it would take to confront racial inequality. Before turning to legal action local chapters of the NAACP had to quickly develop other methods to challenge OSU's version of Jim Crow. Dickinson and local NAACP officials chose to flood Ohio's tax-paying citizens with letters calling on them to inveigh vigorously OSU's discriminatory acts. Dickinson wrote, "If you are opposed to these high-handed tactics and jim-crowding of our Negro youth in a citizen-taxed Institution, I am asking that you send in a strong protest immediately, to President Rightmire, Miss Ruth Lindquist, and Miss Faith Lanman."⁶⁰ Dickinson's campaign included involving white Ohioans to join the campaign against OSU. To do so, he touted the participation of whites in the remonstrance against the University. He remarked, "It is surprising to know how thoroughly wrought up and disgusted our white friends are becoming at the jingo tactics in our State Institution and some of the most prominent citizens of the commonwealth of Ohio are volunteering to protest."⁶¹ Dickinson knew that his petition would appeal to northern whites who detested charges of being linked to the radical racism of the South. Northern whites, even those individuals fervently devoted to racial segregation, resented being cast as Jim Crow sympathizers. Dickinson's strategy, then, was to enlist those whites who embraced racial justice and understood the unfairness of a public, tax-funded institution that would create separatist policies delineating between black and white students. Dickinson implored every protestor to forward their complaints at once, and to "retain a duplicate" so that he could "have a copy of such."⁶² The latter tactic was part of the NAACP's National Offices' objective to maintain records of protest that could be integral to potential lawsuits and civil rights litigation.⁶³

The plea for protests by Dickinson worked. Letters decrying the racial discrimination against Styles and later Weaver were generated from former alumni, student groups, Ohio citizens, local and national NAACP branches, civic-minded individuals across the country, and other civil rights organizations. OSU was besieged with correspondence demanding that they change the school's "separate-but-equal" policy almost immediately after Styles was first notified of her rejection from the Grace Walker House. One of the first such letters was sent to President Rightmire by L.M. Shaw, a prominent local businessman. Shaw expressed his displeasure with the racist tactics that the University was sanctioning: "As a citizen of Columbus and Ohio, I wish to...register my disapproval of this effort to Jim Crow Miss Styles for no other reason than that she is a Negro."⁶⁴

The messages typically attempted to make the strong case that a tax-based institution should not continue to accommodate racial discrimination. One letter sent to President Rightmire from the city of Youngstown stated, "As citizens of the State of Ohio, and some of us graduates and former students of Ohio State University, we are emphatically opposed to such discriminatory practices at this state-supported institution and hope that you will not tolerate these tactics in our citizen-taxed university."⁶⁵ A letter from the Hilltop Civic League echoed this sentiments: "As members of the Hilltop Civic League of Columbus, and as tax-paying citizens of the State of Ohio, we herewith protest this act of discrimination against the member of our race, in question, who, as you know, is entitled to every facility provided by the State of Ohio, at Ohio State University, for the pursuance of her course."⁶⁶ NAACP correspondences from Cincinnati and Styles' hometown of Cleveland carried forth similar urgings. They also implied that the University's segregationist practices might be a violation of federal and state laws with regard to the Fourteen Amendment, if not of the University's own anti-discrimination policy.⁶⁷ Theodore

M. Berry, writing on behalf of the Cincinnati Branch of the NAACP wrote, "I trust that you will use your good offices to see that...no student shall be denied the opportunity of the training afforded by Ohio State University because of their race, color or creed."⁶⁸ Gordon Simpson, Executive Secretary of the Cleveland Branch of the NAACP, followed Berry's line of argument stating emphatically, "we wish to invite your attention to the fact that a State supported Institution cannot by law maintain such discriminatory practice against any of its students."⁶⁹ In addition, Simpson, in recalling Herbert Miller's untimely dismissal, tried to arouse Rightmire's emotion by pointing to OSU's moribund reputation across the country: "Reactionary practice such as this case and the case of Prof. Miller last year, tends to make Ohio State University the laughing stock of the country, and certainly reflect upon the types of mind, and certainly are a reflection on the judgment of those responsible for its administration."⁷⁰

Blacks Ohioans were well aware of Miller's dismissal, and glimpsed the protest on behalf of Styles as an ideal moment to signal their frustration with OSU's pernicious handling of past racial problems. F.W. Rucker and Grace A. Rossin of the Licking Branch of the NAACP reminded Lindquist that OSU's insidious and invidious track record on racial issues could only damage its name: "Such a policy, if continued, cannot but weaken the standard and tradition of the University."⁷¹ The belief that the Miller case had tainted the school's standing was shared by alumni as well. Dr. Raymond Keesecker, a white OSU alumnus, reiterated to President Rightmire the anger that many alumni quietly felt when Miller was released from his teaching duties. In addition, Keesecker predicted the negative impact discriminating against Styles would have. He stated, "There were many of us among the alumni who kept silent but who were greatly perturbed [sic] when the university officials saw fit to dismiss Professor Miller. Such an incident as this, doomed to settlement without such publicity as attended the Miller case, deepens our

disappointment and quickens our fear that we may no longer look to the University for liberal leadership.”⁷²

Contrary to Keesecker’s estimation, the continued assault on OSU’s reputation did, indeed, attract the widespread publicity that the University did not want.⁷³ So damaged was the school’s image in the wake of these racial incidents that Harry E. Davis, in a letter to the editor of *Crisis Magazine*, poignantly professed, “Today, Ohio State has very little academic reputation; it does not rate favorably in comparison with a half dozen smaller institutions in Ohio; it is practically black-listed by college professor’s associations; it is famed in athletics but not in culture.”⁷⁴ Thus, neither Rightmire nor other officials at OSU desired to see news of Styles’ Jim Crowing broadcasted at time when the school was desperately in need of a positive image. Dickinson and others could then incite fear in OSU administrators who wanted to keep the news of the racial controversy involving Styles suppressed. Dickinson pressed Rightmire, “Please give this matter your immediate consideration as I am refusing the request for details made by our publicity committee who furnish news for Script-Howard and the Negro Press of America. News of unfair treatment by instructors of students because of their racial identity, in these times of unrest, would be detrimental to O.S.U.”⁷⁵ It is subsequently of no surprise that Lindquist tried to allay the University’s fears of bad press by insisting to Keesecker that Styles had not been Jim Crowed: “I am sure that if you were to talk to Wilhelmina Styles she would tell you that she was not forced into a private home for training by the threat of credit refusal.”⁷⁶ Lindquist continued, “Not all of our white students live in our home management laboratories on the campus. One of several plans which we use for our student, quite regardless of race, is that of residence as an ‘older daughter’ with a successful family which has been selected by us and with which cooperative relationships are established.”⁷⁷ Such misleading methods by Lindquist and

others to furtively deal with the Styles' controversy could not stymie the threats by protestors to make public the OSU's treatment of Negroes.

Not every letter threatened to go public with the news of racial prejudice at OSU. Some merely recapitulated the ongoing belief by critics of the University that the racism against Styles was "case of rank injustice" while other correspondences stated how the Styles' racial debacle caused them "to wonder what educational viewpoint was being promulgated at Ohio State."⁷⁸ Rightmire, Lindquist, and Lanman were accused of having an "attitude" that was "undemocratic and unfair and unworthy of the name of Ohio State University."⁷⁹ Perhaps, foreshadowing the Supreme Court case between Weaver and OSU, Mary Funk of the Interracial Council at OSU implored Lanman to correct the racial injustice against Styles, "realizing that there will be similar cases in the future."⁸⁰

Funk's warning did not simply have future implications for OSU. Funk regarded OSU's treatment of black students as part of a long history of struggle by African Americans for emancipation and equality. Other protestors of the University's racial prejudice concurred. They felt the denial of an educational opportunity to Styles was tantamount to invalidating the true cause for which the Civil War had been fought. Styles' rejection served as a repudiation of all blacks who sought educational training. Ernest Lyons expressed this very sentiment when he sent a letter to President Rightmire chastising him for the University's racial castigation of Styles: "I am intensely interested as...one who is not unmindful of the cause fought for during the time of civil rebellion." Lyons added, "I am interested in the advancement of colored people and their full emancipation, not only protected by so called constitutional rights, but by citizens who are willing to uphold justice and equal distribution of privileges. The advancement of the colored race depends entirely upon their future education and certainly such cannot be assured when

discrimination exist in our public endowed institutions.”⁸¹ Lyons’ entreaty evinced the significance blacks placed on achieving both equality and a sense of equanimity between themselves and whites.

Similar letters were sent to OSU on behalf of Doris Weaver condemning the University’s bigoted acts. Some of the letters were succinctly written, and merely called for Weaver to be permitted to train in the Home Management House.⁸² The tenor of other letters, however, reflected an evolution in the protest rhetoric employed by critics of the OSU’s segregationist policies. Whereas the debate had centered on the University’s reputation and standing as a tax-based institution, now the letters were more vigorous in indicting school officials for their role in the social exclusion of blacks. This may have been due to the lack of response by OSU to previous letters sent. A letter drawn up at a mass student meeting—referencing the refusal by OSU to grant both Styles and Weaver the “proper and customary use” of the home management house “in pursuit of their regular course of study”—was unflinching in its harsh criticism OSU’s officials. It read, “We denounce the head of the Home Economics Department, the Dean of the College of Agriculture, President Rightmire, and the Board of Trustees for allowing such a policy...We condemn this policy as part of the propaganda of white superiority by means of which conservative interests are protected from a union of black and white in building a society free of class and race discrimination and inequality.”⁸³

The letters of dissent sent in Weaver’s defense revealed the geographic as well as cross-racial and religious reach of the NAACP’s protest operation. Dispatches were sent from places like Baltimore, Detroit, and New York. Further, these correspondences had been sent by social clubs like Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and OSU’s Interracial Council; by religious-oriented associations like YMCA and the Killel Foundation, a Jewish society; by civil rights alliances like

the National Urban League and Scottsboro United Front Conference; by union groups like the Shoe and Leather Industrial Union; and even by communist-affiliated organizations like the League for Industrial Democracy. These letters teemed with indignation over OSU's racial callousness. They not only demanded the immediate reinstatement of educational privileges to Weaver but also denounced the logic in Rightmire's assertions that the arbitrary separation of young women along racial lines constituted equality.

Collectively, these letters were compelling, but not convincing to the University's administration. The NAACP had proven effective in its grassroots efforts and demonstrated the capacity of the group to consolidate extensive support by a multiracial, political network. Acting as more than a top-down legal organization, the NAACP compelled Rightmire and other officials to agonize about OSU's fading reputation. However, the staunch criticism that OSU received locally and nationally from blacks and whites did not hinder the school's staunch pledge to preserve its commitment to racial separation. Rightmire, whom most of the letters had been addressed to, would only perfunctorily scribble a message on a piece of unmarked paper to Lindquist for her to "keep protest letters about young colored woman and Home Economics Demonstration Home in a separate pad out of the files, for a little while."⁸⁴ Thus, by the time Charles Gillespie, an African-American attorney and state representative, intervened on Styles' behalf, her case had all but been decided. OSU, even under heavy protest, refused to alter its policy. Styles gave a written decision saying that she would take her work in a private, colored family's home but only under protest.⁸⁵ Eventually, Styles dropped her grievance against OSU and graduated from the University in 1932. The only hope remaining was that Doris Weaver would somehow find a way to integrate the Grace Graham Walker House.

Gillespie, who had been hired by NAACP initially to defend Styles and later Weaver, submitted a resolution to the Ohio House of Representatives calling the OSU's actions against Weaver a flagrant violation of Ohio laws and demanding that as a state-run institution, the school be investigated. Gillespie's intent was to threaten OSU with the "loss of funds" if equal opportunity was not afforded to Weaver.⁸⁶ But Rightmire had already sent letters to various state officials pleading to them the need to honor OSU's "separate-but-equal" policy as the best thing for the races. The state representatives acquiesced to Rightmire's appeal and Gillespie's house resolution went unobserved.

Bloodied by the NAACP's protestations but unbowed, OSU reaffirmed its dedication to upholding "separate-but-equal" doctrine and would remain committed "until," as Rightmire put it, "some higher authority commands that white girls and colored girls be forced to live together in the same room and participate in the same social engagements."⁸⁷ The higher authority would become the Ohio Supreme Court. After a robust but ultimately unsuccessful political and protest-letter movement, the NAACP finally felt no other recourse than to turn to court action.

"Separate but Equal" Endures

The NAACP's decision to pursue litigation against OSU was unavoidable given the school's tepid response to the grassroots demonstration in opposition to its racial policies. Weaver's attorneys, hired by the NAACP to defend her, believed their case was rock-solid. The backing of citizens throughout the state of Ohio as well as supporters all over the country elevated the NAACP's feeling that the *Plessy* decision would be overturned. As Pamela Pritchard states, "There seemed to be more of a feeling among interested Negroes that the Weaver case had greater promise as a test case for full integration at OSU."⁸⁸

But the reasons for this sense of optimism on the part of the NAACP and other blacks had little to do with the statutory law that Weaver's lawyers consulted to condemn OSU's ignoble policies. Instead, their sense of sanguinity was due to the faith they placed in Weaver's complexion. Rather than represent both Styles and Weaver for a robust case against the University, they chose only to represent Weaver. Revealing the racism and color politics of the time, the NAACP felt that Weaver's nearly white skin might make it easier for her to win a case against OSU than the darker-skinned Styles. As Pritchard explains, "Negroes felt that since Weaver looked white, she would be better accepted or would blend more easily with whites rather than the dark-skinned Styles."⁸⁹ Even Weaver recognized the color differences between her and Styles. When asked about Styles, Weaver said that Styles "looked like an Indian," insouciantly racializing Styles. Weaver then intimated that whites at OSU were envious of her because of her skin tone.⁹⁰

The NAACP's decision to defend Weaver based upon the credence they gave to her skin color recapitulated the strategy adopted by Homer Plessy's attorneys in their desegregation case against John Howard Ferguson. In contesting Louisiana's Separate Car Act, Plessy's lawyers assigned most of their attention to his complexion, which they deemed exhibited the arbitrariness and unconstitutionality of the segregation law. The Supreme Court did not agree and "separate but equal"—though not expressly written in the court's opinion on the case—became the law of the land. Likewise, the Ohio Supreme Court did not place any weight in Weaver's appearance. To the judges on the court, just as with OSU's administration, Weaver "was a Negro."⁹¹

Because Weaver was a "Negro" to Ohio Supreme Court's white justices, her case never stood a chance of winning despite the persuasive, legal arguments put forth by her attorneys. Aside from the advantages they saw in color, Weaver's lawyers relied on statutory reasoning to

underscore the extent of OSU's violation of state laws concerning racial equality. The basic premise argued by Weaver's attorneys was that OSU's refusal to permit her to reside in the home management house was based solely on the account of her race and color—an allegation that was not ever denied by the respondents.⁹² Weaver's attorneys felt strongly that OSU's failure to deny that racism played a factor in its decision to prohibit Weaver from living in the home management house only bolstered their case because of the existing state laws outlawing racial discrimination.

To convince the Supreme Court that “the system of public education in Ohio is the creature of the constitution and statutory laws of the state,” therefore making OSU guilty of infringing on Weaver's civil rights, the plaintiffs' put forth three arguments.⁹³ First, the plaintiffs contended that no statute authority existed for a classification or exclusion of students on the basis of color or race. Plaintiffs cited the Court's reversal of the precedent established by *Van Camp v. Board of Education, etc.*, 9 O.S. 407 (1859) that had been the foundation to a series of laws providing for the separation of children on the basis of color in the common schools.⁹⁴ Second, the plaintiffs sought to demonstrate that the entire administrative authority had been derived from the legislature, and that the legislature had not sanctioned discrimination based on race or color. The plaintiffs, referencing *Board of Education, etc. v The State, Ex. Rel. Reese*, 114 O.S. 188 (1926), argued, “In the case of common schools, this Court has recently held that boards of education, in the absence of legislative authority, have no right to provide separate accommodations for colored and white youth even though they be equal.”⁹⁵

Finally, Weaver's lawyers attempted to appeal to the recent liberal tilt of the Court. The plaintiffs traced the evolution of race law in Ohio from the establishment of the Northwest Territory to the state's deletion of the word “white” from the law relating to elective franchise.

“Since the Civil War,” Weaver’s attorneys averred, “legislation in Ohio has been uniformly in protection of its citizens against discrimination because of race, color, or previous conditions of servitude.”⁹⁶ In submitting its brief on Weaver’s behalf, plaintiffs confidently asserted, “It would indeed be an anomaly without parallel, were this Court to hold that the respondents can legally do at the university what officials of the common schools throughout the state cannot legally do, both being integral parts of a whole educational system.”⁹⁷

But anomalies existed in an era where both Wilhelmina Styles and Doris Weaver could each be Jim Crowed by a northern institution. Thus, on 15 March 1933, the Mandamus Writ submitted on behalf of Weaver was denied by the Supreme Court of Ohio. Justice Florence Allen wrote an opinion for the majority stating that “no statutory law had been violated.”⁹⁸ OSU’s defense essentially amounted to presenting its separate-but-equal plan that would alleviate the need for hastening social equality between the races. The school avowed it would provide Weaver with separate living quarters where she could perform her work for the course. OSU felt such an arrangement was fair, especially since Weaver’s application had been deemed invalid because she forgot to list a potential roommate on it. Though these arguments were at best flimsy, the Court concurred with OSU. They ruled that Weaver had been neither denied any educational advantages that are not similarly enjoyed by other students nor had she been denied the privilege of taking her degree, should she consent to occupy the available but separate space in the Home Economics house. The Court also determined that the relief Weaver sought “was such as to compel OSU to grant her, not equal school advantages, but the same social intercourse.” In response, the Court contended that the “purely social relations of our citizens cannot be enforced by law...or regulated by state and Federal Constitutions.” Finally, the Court cited *Plessy* and concluded that the assumption that “social prejudices...and equal rights cannot

be secured to negro except by enforced commingling of the two races” was not an acceptable theory.⁹⁹ Separate-but-equal was upheld. In the end, Weaver was only left to substitute the Home Economics 627 course with Home Economics 701, and take her degree, which she did in March 1933.¹⁰⁰

Conclusion

The racial prohibition confronted by Wilhelmina Styles and Doris Weaver during the early 1930s was emblematic of a period in American history when Jim Crow held national significance. OSU did not possess the “white-only” signs and symbols of Jim Crow characteristic of the de jure segregation in the South. But the school, like other northern institutions, was committed to a de facto version of racial separation that rivaled the South’s intransigent brand. Thus, even though they could be admitted to OSU, Styles and Weaver could not take full advantage of their matriculation. They experienced the same racial isolation that blacks countenanced throughout the country. In effect, Styles and Weaver were in the University, but not of the University.

Styles and Weaver, like other blacks disgusted by the pace with which racial and social equality had been pursued, directed their efforts toward gaining economic independence as a way to achieve the full benefits of citizenship and political participation they had been denied. Styles and Weaver envisioned the fulfillment of a Home Economics degree to be crucial to their acquisition of a professional status. They sought opportunities to be trained as teachers—a career that would provide them with middle-class respectability and resources capable of enlarging their political access. But middle-class white women—influential to the field of Home Economics—held opinions that ran contrary to Styles and Weaver’s perceptions for what earning a degree could represent. These middle-class white women reinforced the Progressive mindset that Home

Economics training function as a gendered domain entrusted to preparing women for domestic roles and marriage. The staunch commitment to Home Economics as a gendered sphere inhibited Styles and Weaver from convincing OSU officials that the refusal to permit them to live in the Grace Graham Walker House had economic as opposed to social implications. Whereas OSU regarded the possibility of Styles and Weaver living in the home management dormitory as hastening racial intermingling, Styles and Weaver visualized the Laboratory in Home Management course as the capstone to satisfying degree requirements. When Styles and Weaver were deprived of living in the Grace Graham Walker House, and impelled to substitute a separate course, they neither could get jobs teaching nor reap the wage benefits that were assured them under the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917.

This quest for economic citizenship not only ran contrary to the objectives middle-class white women posited for the Home Economics program; it also was antithetical to the view held by white men that the “wage labor of free women...was not expected to lead to independence and self-sufficiency.”¹⁰¹ To some extent, the potential wage-earning of black women provided an isomorphic threat to white men, stoking their fears just as the thought of black men intermingling with white women had evoked. Economic freedom was more threatening than political participation as it caused status anxiety for middle-class white men, fearful that conceding economic access to middle-class black women would become a model for educated black men to adopt similar goals of attaining professional status. Ordinarily, and especially during the Depression years, black men were very unlikely to be hired over white men especially for professional positions. On the other hand, middle-class black women, with the proper training in home economics, could potentially take away jobs from middle-class white women, particularly those who saw their education as a path to marriage and had no intentions of working long-term.

Incidentally, educated, wage-earning black women could influence capable black men to directly vie for the economic opportunities and wages of white men, and simultaneously undermine their [white men] racial monopoly on citizenship. As Kessler-Harris has argued, white men measured their manhood by contingent calculations of self-sufficiency and independence and closely guarded their employment prerogatives.¹⁰² Middle-class white women, who protected these white patriarchal-dominated convictions, ironically overlooked how the wage-earning of black women could expand their [white women] own right-to-work claims. Thus, middle-class black women's wage earning power, which could potentially create economic possibilities for middle-class black men and white women, was devalued. In its place, racial exclusion and male-gendered privilege were employed in maintaining white solidarity and sustaining white men's proto-right to work.¹⁰³

But Styles and Weaver did not simply yield to OSU's racial policies. Instead, both women rejected the University's claim that the "time was not ripe" for the races to be intermingled and helped launch a vigorous protest campaign that revealed the enormity of black women's political and social activism during the 1930s. It also evinced the grassroots work of the NAACP, which coordinated cross-racial alliances that could forcefully resist OSU's Jim Crowism. The NAACP organized a movement that damaged OSU's standing and led to a case before the Ohio Supreme Court that was significant if only because it threatened the reversal of the "separate but equal" doctrine established by the *Plessy* decision. Pamela Pritchard describes the historic impact of the case: "The Ohio Supreme Court's decision was monumental because if Weaver had won, there would have been changes on campuses across the country...most importantly, other states would have to follow the example of Ohio."¹⁰⁴

Unfortunately, Weaver did not win her case. The Ohio Supreme Court, in accordance with the segregationist impulse of the period, chose to nationalize Jim Crow. The Court did so in

spite of the fact that Weaver's lawyers had put together a credible case that encompassed existing statutory laws and judicial precedents in Ohio. Charles W. White, an attorney for Weaver, stated that "the decision practically nullified legislation, court decisions, and constitutional provisions for protection of citizenship rights of Negroes in Ohio."¹⁰⁵ Ultimately, it may not have been an absolute shock to Weaver's lawyers or to the NAACP that the Ohio Supreme Court would rule in favor of preserving the Jim Crow order of the day even though the organization had been optimistic that they had an infallible case. But it had to have been appallingly ironic to the NAACP that Florence Allen authored the Court's majority opinion.

Allen was a lifelong suffragist and peace activist who repeatedly asserted that "the most important work I did...was for women."¹⁰⁶ Allen became the first woman to sit on the Ohio Supreme Court in 1922 and was considered throughout her career for the United States Supreme Court.¹⁰⁷ But persistent sexism and the inability to imagine a woman justice kept her from sexually integrating the nation's highest court. Allen was not warmly received by men in the profession and her liberal views caused some critics to accuse her of being a "red" during the 1920s. In fact, the Daughters of the Revolution put her on their infamous "black list"—peculiar given Allen's unfaltering anti-communist position.¹⁰⁸

At worst, Allen had only been guilty of voting for a number of progressive causes, including workers' rights, proportional voting, and peaceful picketing. But these actions stirred tensions and bitterness amongst other judges and with men outside her profession who spent more time discussing her hair and personal grooming than her superb legal ability. Her legal skills and ostensible fairness did endear her to the NAACP. Allen's decision allowing a school board to prohibit the showing of D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* impressed NAACP officials who later endorsed her reelection bid in 1928. Allen won with a majority of over 350,000 voters,

capturing a significant slice of the black vote. Thus, the NAACP had to have been caught off guard when Allen, a Democrat and activist committed specifically to women rights, quoted from the *Plessy* case in airing her verdict supporting OSU's decision to Jim Crow Doris Weaver. When Allen was selected in 1934 to be a Federal Judge on the Sixth Circuit, the NAACP opposed her nomination.

Allen's indifference to Weaver's plight accentuates the treatment that black women—and African Americans in general—received received from even the most liberal-minded whites during this bigoted era. However, the NAACP's reaction to what it perceived to be a backstabbing by Allen evinces the resolve by African Americans to abolish racial inequality. It is that fervor that allowed the NAACP to sustain its protest sortie against OSU even after both Styles and Weaver had graduated.

This offensive by the NAACP would at last prove pivotal. Though the NAACP's efforts to invalidate OSU's "separate but equal" stance—in part due to the group's miscalculation that Weaver's skin complexion could persuade the University to eradicate its racially-separatist guidelines—it did eventually accomplish the task of enabling Styles and Weaver to pursue careers in teaching. Because of a tarnished reputation, OSU could not tolerate any further scrutiny over its racial attitudes. Styles and Weaver were both allowed to return to OSU, Weaver on a special university scholarship.¹⁰⁹ Weaver attained a Master of Science degree in Chemistry in June 1936 while Styles earned a Master of Arts in Home Economics in September of the same year. After completing their masters degrees, which finally provided them with the instructional credentials they needed, Styles and Weaver taught in the Home Economics Department at Wilberforce University, a historically-black institution.

It may have been a small victory for a throng of African Americans and broadminded whites who yearned for a greater display of racial progress. Such longing for justice was evident in the statement made by Weaver's attorneys on the eve of the Court's decision: "The hope stands high in the breast of every Negro in Ohio and indeed of every white person not a slave to race and color prejudice, that this Court will grant this writ to the end that another blow shall have been struck at one of the most relentless and implacable foes of humanity everywhere, namely intolerance; and to the end, too, that Ohio State University may be freer to pursue the ideal of truth unblended by intolerance."¹¹⁰ OSU and the Ohio Supreme Court did not deliver that blow but stood alongside civilization's enemy—intolerance. But the efforts of Weaver and Styles, and their countless supporters, did *chip* away at this callous adversary, advancing further the cause of civil rights.

¹ Doris Weaver Application for Reservation in Home Management Laboratory, OSU Archives, George W. Rightmire Papers (RG 3/f/44/9, "Race Discrimination Case: Styles, Wilhelmina and Weaver, Doris: Home Management House: 1932-1934 [to be further abbreviated G_W_R Papers]; for more information regarding the requirements for residing inside the Home Economics dormitory, please see Information for Students Regarding Residence in the Grace Graham Walker House, G_W_R Papers.

² By black feminist framework, I am intending to incorporate Patricia Hill-Collins' notion that "African-American women have created independent, oppositional yet subjugated knowledges [sic]" concerning their subordination and "are engaged in the struggle to reconceptualize all dimensions of the dialectic oppression and activism, as it applies to African-American women." Please see Patricia Hill-Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (New York, 2000), 13.

³ Alice Kessler-Harris, *In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men, and the Quest for Economic Citizenship in 20th-Century America* (New York, 2001), 5.

⁴ "Domestic science" was the preferred term of Ellen Richards who helped lead the home economics movement. Proponents of home economics had a difficult time defining the field and coming up with a name that could describe the discipline. Household arts, domestic economy, domestic science, and home economics were the suggested names, and each entailed different goals and emphasis. For instance, "domestic economy" hearkened back to Catherine Beecher's *Treatise on Domestic Economy* (1842) and focused on the wife and her problems, particularly

the “servant problem.” As immigration patterns changed during the last two decades of the 19th Century, middle- and upper-class women found it ever more challenging to find paid help. Thus, much of the training under the rubric of domestic economy addressed the servant problem as activities were pursued to upgrade domestic work, provide quality training to immigrant girls, and put employers in touch with employees. With Richards’s “domestic science,” the kitchen was attached to sanitation, stressing nutrition and sanitation. Richards envisioned domestic science as a way for women trained in science into academic and industrial employment. After serious debate, “home economics” was selected as the term for the new field though these other ideas would influence and even complicate the home economics domain. For a fuller discussion on the development of home economics, please see Sarah Stage, “Introduction: Home Economics: What’s in a Name?” in *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession*, ed. Sarah Stage and Virginia B. Vincenti (Ithaca, NY, 2007), pp.1-14.

⁵ Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America* (Oxford, 2003), 50.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁷ William Chafe, *American Woman: Her Changing Social, Economic, and Political Roles, 1920-1970* (New York, 1972), 15.

⁸ Reformers envisioned a relationship between the home and national life. One of the key purposes of the home in the establishment and maintenance of America’s national life was through lowering the infant death rate. Women were charged with insuring that children received the proper nutrition and were trained to become efficient and contented citizens. Thus, home economics education for women was deemed a moral imperative as the consequences for an untrained mother could be severe. As the Federal Board for Vocational Education concluded, “The Nation can not afford to let children die because of the ignorance of their mothers.” Annual Report to Congress for the Federal Board of Vocational Education, *Federal Board of Vocational Education, United States* (US Print Office, 1917), 34.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁰ Stage, “What’s in a Name,”9.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² The “politics of respectability” is a term coined by Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham that asserts that African Americans who exhibit the proper behavior, dress, etiquette, and moral compass are capable of persuading whites to redress the most vicious and vulgar forms of racial intolerance. The central framework of this ideology posits that immorality and misconduct on the part of blacks is the true cause for white racism and prejudice. Thus, if blacks fervently engage in a “politics of respectability” and capitulate to a strict, moral code, then they can gain the favor of whites and overturn racial injustice. “Uplift” ideology is nearly identical to the “politics of respectability” and describes beliefs held primarily by middle-class African Americans during the early 20th Century that maintained that material and moral progress would curtail white racism. “Uplift” ideology also suggests that the social progress of African Americans is tied to the educational advancement and self-help strategies of the black elite, who are the most accurate representatives of the race’s promise. “New Negro” is a term popularized by Alain Locke during the Harlem Renaissance to describe a shift in the response African Americans would have to the racial bigotry of the era. The “New Negro” would be more outspoken and vigorous in rejecting America’s racist practices. “New woman” terminology first emerged during the late 19th Century when a segment of women, feeling less restricted by Victorian norms and transformed by modernity, began to challenge traditional gender roles, take on more public personas, display more independence and individuality, and became more comfortable with expressing their sexuality. During the 20th Century, particularly the 1920s, the “New Woman” increased her presence in public spaces and sought to venture into cultural, economic, and political spheres that superseded previous roles attached to a domestic realm.” For a fuller discussion of the “politics of respectability,” please see Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women’s Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge, MA, 1993), 185-230; for more on “uplift” ideology, please see Kevin K. Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996).

¹³ Thomas Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York: Random House, 2008), 27.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁵ Lizabeth Cohen, *Making of A New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*, 2nd Edition (New York, 2008), 246.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 247.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ According to Cohen, it was common for women to express increased resistance to the appeals by their spouses for sexual intercourse. For instance, one woman was emphatic in her conviction she was no longer obligated to have sex with her husband: “When her husband was working and supporting her, she supposed it was his right to have sexual relations and she therefore acquiesced. Now she avoids it.” For quote, please see *Ibid*, 248; also see Eli Ginzberg, *The Unemployed* (New York, 1943), pp. 76-9.

¹⁹ Kessler-Harris, *In Pursuit of Equity*, 27.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 146.

²¹ *Ibid*.

²² This statistic comes from Albion Hartwell, “The Need of Social and Unemployment Insurance for Negroes,” *Journal of Negro Education* 5 (January 1936), 79-87; also see Kessler-Harris, *In Pursuit of Equity*, 146.

²³ Stephanie J. Shaw, *What a Woman Ought to Be and Do: Black Professional Women Workers during the Jim Crow Era* (Chicago, IL, 1996).

²⁴ *Ibid*.

²⁵ Ruth Lindquist, *The Family in the Present Social Order: A Study of Needs of American Families* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1931), vii.

²⁶ Susan M. Hartmann, *The Home Front and Beyond: American Woman in the 1940s* (Boston, MA, 1982), 114-15.

²⁷ See Jeanne L. Noble, *The Negro Woman's College Education* (New York, 1956), 46-47, 116-17. Black women expressed skepticism about the efficacy of marriage for support. This uncertainty toward marriage had first emerged in the wake of the Great Migration when “many black women,” as Darlene Clark Hine asserts, “quit the South out of a desire to achieve personal autonomy and to escape from sexual exploitation both within and outside their families and from sexual abuse at the hands of southern white as well as black men.” This cynicism toward marriage was likely sustained by black women’s encounter with black men who increasingly neglected the need to address the major concerns of black women while wishing to gain control of their homes much the way white men had over their households. Black men adopted a rhetoric of masculinity analogous to white patriarchal society and shared the belief of white men that women should not work outside the home. Occupational segregation regulated these ambitions on the part of black men but did not completely remove them. Beyond a skepticism regarding marriage, black women outpaced black men in educational achievement, which meant that middle-class black women often “married down.” Black women could not entertain above all other matters the idea of using education as a vehicle for marriage the way college-bred, middle-class white women who typically improved their lot through marriage could do. Instead, for Styles and Weaver, and other middle-class black women, ascertaining an education was crucial to realizing economic citizenship. For Hine quote, please see Darlene Clark Hine, “Black Migration to the Urban Midwest: The Gender Dimension, 1915-1945,” in *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective: New Dimensions of Race, Class, and Gender*, ed. Joe William Trotter, Jr., (Bloomington, IN, 1991), 130; for a more comprehensive description of black male perceptions of black women and the right-to-work, please see Alice Kessler-Harris, *In Pursuit of Equity*, 9.

²⁸ Interview, Pamela Pritchard with Doris Weaver, August 1981. Also see, Pamela Pritchard, “The Negro Experience at The Ohio State University in the First Sixty-Five Years, 1873-1938: With Special Emphasis on Negroes in the College of Education” (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 1982), 134.

²⁹ *Ibid*.

³⁰ Letter, Interracial Council to Chester Gillespie, 17 January 1933, G_W_R Papers. Ruth Lindquist, Chairman of the Home Management Division, all but admitted that the University had erred in sending an acceptance letter to Weaver, a colored student, who would otherwise not be allowed to live in the dorm alongside white students because of her race: “I note that by mistake you were sent an announcement regarding home management laboratory in the Autumn Quarter.” For Lindquist quote, see Letter, Ruth Lindquist to Doris Weaver, 29 September 1932, G_W_R Papers.

³¹ Letter, Wilhelmina Styles to Chester Gillespie, 8 September 1932, G_W_R Papers. The tradition of denying Negro women the opportunity to reside in the home economics dormitory had initially been a practice white female students at OSU had encountered. Though women were allowed to be a part of the first matriculating class at the University—Harriet and Alice Townshend were two of the twenty-five students admitted in the 1873 class—they were not permitted to stay in dormitories on campus. Instead, female students were forced to live in private homes. Please see Pritchard, “The Negro Experience,” 21.

³² *Ibid*.

³³ When Walter White, Secretary of the NAACP, sent a telegram to President Rightmire protesting the racial prejudice against Bell, Rightmire immediately sent a rejoinder suggesting to White that he had never heard of the NAACP and questioned the organization’s motives. Rightmire concluded, “The University is endeavoring to protect

him [Bell] from an unpleasant experience of probable race discrimination manifested in a southern city.” If the university, including Rightmire, felt strongly that Bell would be injured by southern teams due to racist motivations, it could have canceled those intersectional games. Instead, the school chose to broaden the South’s segregationist arrangements. Letter, L.W. St. John to Fielding Yost, 4 October 1934, box 9, *University of Michigan Athletic Papers* (These papers are housed in the Bentley Historical Collection at the University of Michigan).

³⁴ At Iowa, for example, Herbert Jenkins coordinated a study that revealed that as late as the 1932-1933 school-year, black students at this “Big Ten University” were not allowed to live in the dormitories and were inhibited from attending social affairs with whites. Similarly, at the University of Michigan housing was a persistent problem for black students. In addition, the virtual absence of black women did not deter the university from preventing any attempts at interracial dating by black men. Iowa and Michigan as well as other Big Ten institutions were similar to OSU in that black men were permitted to participate in some of the collegiate sports. However, it was not unusual to see black players benched if opposing teams (usually those from the South) objected to the presence of colored players; in some cases, gentlemen’s agreements were used by these northern institutions to rebuff requests by blacks to participate in certain team sports, such as basketball. Gentlemen’s agreements (also referred to as Jim Crow clauses) were unwritten agreements by coaches, athletic departments and schools to racially exclude Negro athletics from participation in certain sports or games in which northern institutions squared off against schools from the South. In some cases, schools began writing this Jim Crow clause of benching black players into contracts, which were sometimes signed years in advanced of a player’s exclusion from a sporting contest on the basis of race. For more information on Jenkins’ study, please see Herbert C. Jenkins, “Negro Students at a Big Ten University.” *Opportunity* XII (October 1934), 297; for an extensive discussion of the benching of black athletes as well as gentlemen’s agreements and the way that Big Ten institutions used them to exclude black men from participating in certain sports, please see Tyran K. Steward, “Jim Crow in the Big House: The Benching of Willis Ward and the Rise of Segregation in the North” (MA Thesis, Eastern Michigan University, 2009).

³⁵ See Notes on Professor Herbert A. Miller (4), OSU Archives, George W. Rightmire Papers (RG 3/f/34/9), “Miller, Professor Herbert A.: Case of: India: Correspondences and Clippings: 1930-31.”

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ To be certain, OSU officials were outraged with Miller’s trip to India, viewing it as a form of treason given Miller’s alleged condemnation of British oppression. It is possible that OSU’s opposition to Miller’s speech reflected the Board of Trustees and President Rightmire’s support of colonialist views. Though Miller’s speech was found not to have included some of baseless accusations that he incited India to violently oppose British tyranny, various publications continued to perpetuate the falsehood. “One of the charges against him,” states the *Charleston West Virginia Daily Mail*, “is that when in India, he advocated resistance to British Rule. Imagine how he would like it if a Professor of Oxford or Cambridge went to the Phillipines [sic] and advocated insurrection against the authority of the United States.” But it was truly Miller’s defense of Negroes and other oppressed classes that compelled his firing by OSU. As Miller contended, “I have taken the part of the Jew against anti-Semitism, of the Catholic against the bigotry of the K.K.K., of the immigrant against the intolerance of the super-patriot, of the negro against the prejudice which surrounds him and of Mexico against the aggressions of the United States. . . I do not flinch an inch but will continue to fight for freedom, one of the oldest battles of mankind.” It was Miller’s fight for freedom for oppressed classes that earned him racial contempt from OSU. For quote from *West Virginia Daily Mail*, please see Ibid, 8; For Miller quote, please see Ibid, 5-6.

³⁸ Please see Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors, October 1931, OSU Archives, George W. Rightmire Papers (RG 3/f/34/9), “Miller, Professor Herbert A.: Petitions Regarding Dismissal of: May-Oct 1931.”

³⁹ Letter, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Ohio State Conference of Branches, to Ohio Taxpayers, 25 April 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁴⁰ Letter, Wilhelmina J. Styles to Chester K. Gillespie, 8 September 1932, G_W_R Papers. Lindquist’s intense bigotry possibly reflected her beliefs regarding the purpose of Home Economics education and her resolve to protect her tenuous professional status in a field that had had been an early “Pink Ghetto” for women. Though the term “Pink Ghetto” is a contemporary expression, it fittingly describes the gendered home economics sphere. Home economics offered no real threat to the economic hegemony or social status of professional white men, specifically within academic circles. The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 caused home economics to be alienated from the rest of the academic domain, all but insuring that home economic educators—namely women—would have little room for any real career advancement. While Lindquist could become Chair of the Home Economics Department, she was placed under the authority of the John Cunningham, Dean of the School of Agriculture. Therefore, to permit women like

Styles and Weaver to gain the full benefits of their degree could potentially allow them to challenge for the “pink-collar” positions that women like Lindquist were endeavoring to maintain.

⁴¹ Letter, George W. Rightmire to Frank Agnew, 13 February 1933, G_W_R Papers.

⁴² Letter, John F. Cunningham to George W. Rightmire, 3 January 1933, G_W_R Papers.

⁴³ Letter, C.E. Dickinson to Ohio Tax Papers, 25 April 1932; also see Letter, L.M. Shaw to President Rightmire, 27 April 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁴⁴ Letter, Faith R. Lanman to C.E. Dickinson, 11 April 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Lindquist would repeat her claim to racial uplift in several different letters sent to members of the NAACP. For example, please see Letter, Ruth Lindquist to F.W. Rucker, 6 May 1932; see Letter Ruth Lindquist to Ross G. Garnes, 6 May 1932; see Letter, Ruth Lindquist to Bessie James, 6 May 1932; also see Letter, Ruth Lindquist to Theodore M. Berry, 6 May 1932 (all of these letters can be found in G_W_R Papers at OSU Archives). In a letter to a former alumnus, Dr. Raymond Keesecker, Lindquist attempted to be more convincing in conveying to Keesecker her commitment to ‘promoting appreciation and understanding between the races.’ She added to this claim, “...nor is this interest limited to that of colored and white, but of Mexican, Japanese, Southeastern European, and others as well. Any decision which I may help to make while I remain at Ohio State University will be made with this interest of the underlying factor.” For Lindquist quote, please see Letter, Ruth Lindquist to Dr. Raymond P. Keesecker, 6 May 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁴⁷ Letter, Wilhelmina J. Styles to Chester K. Gillespie, 8 September 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Pritchard, “The Negro Experience,” 128.

⁵⁰ Letter, L.W. St. John to G.W. Rightmire, 5 January 1933, G_W_R Papers.

⁵¹ Letter, John F. Cunningham to George W. Rightmire, 3 January 1933, G_W_R Papers. Cunningham’s call for a policy of admitting Negro women into the Home Management House provided enough girls of the same race were available to complete the group was disingenuous at best. It would require colored women to have a critical mass in order to have access to the Home Economics dormitory. Given that Styles and Weaver had been the only two young colored girls to advance to the senior-level of the program, Cunningham’s supposed goodwill was nothing more than a ruse meant to defy any accusations that OSU was racially intolerant. Indeed, Cunningham’s true feelings could be glimpsed in his own statements just two paragraphs later: “It is quite regrettable that these situations should arise and in order to prevent future misunderstandings, I wish that it might be laid down as a principle that in the Home Management Houses, there shall be no racial intermingling.”

⁵² Letter, George W. Rightmire to Faith Lanman, 13 January 1933, G_W_R Papers.

⁵³ Letter, Faith Lanman Gorrell to George W. Rightmire, 14 January 1933, G_W_R Papers. Gorrell’s response, like Cunningham’s rejoinder to Rightmire, was rife with insincerity. Only one half of the Grace Graham Walker House typically had occupancy during the Autumn Quarter. Most students preferred winter and spring enrollment in the 627 course in order to meet the financial requirements of staying in the dormitory. Thus, Lanman knew that offering an apartment to colored students during the Autumn Quarter would prevent most of these young ladies from ever residing in the Home Management House due to an inability to meet the basic obligations for living there.

⁵⁴ Letter, George W. Rightmire to Perry L. Graham, 3 February 1933; also see Letter, George W. Rightmire to Hugh E. Addison, 14 January 1933; also see, Letter, George W. Rightmire to Frank Agnew, 13 February 1933, G_W_R Papers.

⁵⁵ Letter, George W. Rightmire to Perry L. Graham, 3 February 1933, G_W_R Papers.

⁵⁶ Letter, Doris Weaver to Miss Osborn, 27 September 1932.

⁵⁷ Letter, George W. Rightmire to Perry L. Graham, 3 February 1933, G_W_R Papers.

⁵⁸ For a thorough account of the Ossian Sweet ordeal, please see Kevin Boyle, *Arc of Justice: A Sage of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age* (New York, 2004).

⁵⁹ Gilbert Jonas, *Freedom Sword: The NAACP and the Struggle Against Racism in America, 1909-1969* (New York, 2005), 33.

⁶⁰ Letter, C.E. Dickenson to Ohio Tax Payers, 25 April 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ For a recent analysis of the NAACP’s targeted litigation efforts, please see Patricia Sullivan, *Lift Every Voice: The NAACP and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York, 2009), 25-61.

⁶⁴ Letter, L.M. Shaw to President Rightmire, 27 April 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁶⁵ Letter, Citizens of Youngstown, OH, to Dr. George W. Rightmire, 27 April 1932, G_W_R Papers. A number of prominent attorneys, county commissioners, doctors, judges and politicians attached their name to this letter. A small sampling include as follow: William B. Spagnola (Youngstown City Prosecutor); J.M. Dickerson (Assistant Prosecutor); P.B. Mulholland (Presiding Judge of the Municipal Court); M. Estelle Stewart (Secretary of the Youngstown Traffic Commission); Berry M. Hill (Attorney); J. Eugene Roberts (lawyer and state senator); and D.R. Mellon (Health Department), amongst others.

⁶⁶ Letter, Hilltop Civic League to President Rightmire, 28 April 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁶⁷ Mary Ellen Funk attempted to remind Lanman and President Rightmire of OSU's own policy against racial discrimination as well as of the state laws that would be violated by the Jim Crowing of Styles: "The Laws of Ohio and the statements in the catalogues of the University indicate that no discriminations shall be made because of Race." For Funk quote, please see Letter, Mary Ellen Funk to Faith Lanman, 5 May 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁶⁸ Letter, Theodore M. Berry to President Rightmire, 29 April 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁶⁹ Letter, Gordon H. Simpson to Dr. Geo. W. Rightmire, 5 May 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Letter, F.W. Rucker and Grace A. Rossin to Ruth Lindquist, 28 April 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁷² Letter, Raymond Keesecker to Dr. Geo. W. Rightmire, 29 April 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁷³ Several years later, when two white students published scurrilous circulars calling for an anti-Negro guild, James L. Morrill, OSU Vice-President, was quick to advise President Rightmire that he needed to speak with the perpetrators, David Gaede and William Hendrix, Jr., or face a racial controversy led by infuriated Negro students. In Morrill's opinion, such attention was not needed by the University, which had already earned an awful reputation for its handling of various racial incidents. Morrill was well-versed on OSU's sordid history with the subject of color line on campus. In fact, it was Morrill who would respond to an inquiry sent by Butler President J.W. Putnam regarding the topic of "racial equality." Morrill admitted the tenuous nature of race relations on campus, responding, "I should like to ask that you regard what I say as confidential because, as you well understand, this is a somewhat delicate subject and the Ohio State University was made the center of some agitation and attention in this area upon several occasions in the fairly recent past. We came in for some publicity, you may recall, six or seven years ago when our very prominent colored tackle on the football team, a fine chap by the name of Bell, was not played in the game with Navy in Baltimore—and more recently when the University declined to house in its home economics practice house colored women who were home economics students in company with non-colored girls... The question of race equality does come to the fore from time to time in that the colored students as such are not represented on the Student Senate and in various social and semi-social student organizations. There is no is not the practice to elect them." For Morrill quote, please see Letter, James L. Morrill to J.W. Putnam, 16 November 1937, OSU Archives, James L. Morrill Papers (RG 3/f-2/3)," Correspondence: 1936-1937.

⁷⁴ Letter, Harry E. Davis to the Editor, *Crisis Magazine* (September 1935), 282. It is worth noting that the letter by Davis had come in response to an article first published by Gustavus Adolphus Steward a month earlier in the *Crisis Magazine*. Steward's article, "The Negro Student Prefers Prejudice" examined OSU's infamous and ignoble treatment of Negro students and race issues, and the apathy on the part of colored students to fight against it. Steward cited the Weaver case as an example of OSU's disreputable history of discrimination against black students.

⁷⁵ Letter, C.E. Dickinson to George W. Rightmire, 27 April 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁷⁶ Letter, Ruth Lindquist to Raymond P. Keesecker, 6 May 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁷⁷ Ibid. The argument by Lindquist, and other similar arguments posited by Faith Lanman, that there were white students also placed inside of private homes, just as was being done with Styles, amounted to racial subterfuge. By Lindquist's own admission, non-traditional students—a description that did not fit Styles—were amongst those placed in private homes as opposed to the Grace Graham Walker House Likewise, as Styles pointed out, "All students except those who are training for Institutional Management are required to live in the Home Management House at the end of four years college training in Home Economics." Thus, Lindquist and Lanman's contentions that there were white students who lived outside the home management house failed to account for those students who were not mandated to live inside the home by virtue of being on a separate academic track. None of the white students who were placed in private homes had similar experiences as Styles who was denied an opportunity to stay in the Grace Graham Walker House solely because of race, not age or academic concentration. For Styles quote, please see Letter, Wilhelmina J. Styles to Chester K. Gillespie, 8 September 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁷⁸ Letter, N.B. Allen, Columbus Urban League, to George W. Rightmire, 4 May 1932; also see Letter, Samuel T. Kelly to President Rightmire, Ruth Lindquist, and Faith Lanman, 28 April 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Letter, Mary Ellen Funk to Faith Lanman, 5 May 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁸¹ Letter, Ernest Lyons to President Rightmire, 30 April 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁸² For example, see Letter, Victor Obenhaus to George Rightmire, 18 January 1933, G_W_R Papers.

⁸³ Resolution from Liberal Club, 1 February 1933, G_W_R Papers. The Liberal Club took particular exception to the racial discrimination, which it not only thought of as provincial but also as ungrateful given the cultural contributions that Negroes had made to American society: "We sincerely believe this policy to be an outrageous invasion of the elementary principles of tolerance, justice, and open-mindedness upon which any sound educational philosophy must be based. We resent this policy as an insult to a race which in a brief period of civilization has already produced artists, musicians, poets, and writers of distinction, and has created America's only true folk music."

⁸⁴ Note, George W. Rightmire to Lindquist, n.d., G_W_R Papers.

⁸⁵ Letter, Jesse G. Dickinson to George W. Rightmire, 3 May 1932; also see Letter, Gordon H. Simpson to George W. Rightmire, 5 May 1932, G_W_R Papers.

⁸⁶ Pritchard, "The Negro Experience," 132.

⁸⁷ Letter, George W. Rightmire to Frank Agnew, 13 February 1933, G_W_R Papers.

⁸⁸ Pritchard, "The Negro Experience," 128-9.

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 129.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 129n.

⁹¹ *Ibid*.

⁹² The respondents are respectively the governing board, the president and the director of the School of Home Economics of the Ohio State University.

⁹³ Brief of Plaintiff (p. 3), Supreme Court of Ohio, 10 February 1933, G_W_R Papers.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 4. On 21 February 1887, the legislature passed an act repealing the last such discriminatory school statutes (84 O. L. 34). A year later the Court unequivocally held in *Board of Education etc. v. The State, Ex. Rel. Gibson*, 45 O.S. 555 (1888) (affirming 1 C.D. 640) that separate schools for colored children were effectively abolished and that although the legislature still conferred power on the boards of education to make such assignments of youth as would, in their opinion, best promote the interest of education in their districts, such power could not be exercised with reference to race and color.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 4-5. The *Reese* case, which had been decided upon the authority of the *Gibson* case, persuaded Weaver's attorneys that the law of Ohio could neither legally allow for separate schools for colored and white children nor lawfully maintain separation between the races in the same building on the basis of race and color.

⁹⁶ As the plaintiffs made known to the Court, examples of Ohio's commitment to equality could be found in the repeal of the Black Laws, positive enactments like the civil rights law (81 O.L. 90, s. 1: 91 O.L. 17, s. 2), the anti-lynching law (93 O.L. 411, s. 1), the mob law (93 O.L. 161, s. 2) and laws against discrimination by insurance companies (86 O.L. 163, s. 1 *et seq*). Further, it was the Ohio Courts, the plaintiffs insisted that had allow "blacks and mulattoes" as witnesses in actions where a white person was a party and was the only state known to have construed discriminatory legislation before the Civil War, that a person with less than one-half Negro blood should be considered white. Please see *Ibid*, 9-11.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 93.

⁹⁸ Mandamus Writ (p.295), 15 March 1933, G_W_R Papers; also see Brief of Plaintiff (p.4), Supreme Court of Ohio, 10 February 1933, G_W_R Papers.

⁹⁹ Mandamus Writ (p.297), 15 March 1933, G_W_R Papers.

¹⁰⁰ Letter, John F. Cunningham to George W. Rightmire, 3 January 1933, G_W_R Papers.

¹⁰¹ Kessler-Harris, *In Pursuit of Equity*, 23.

¹⁰² *Ibid*. To be certain, it should not be assumed that white men stood alone in conceptualizing a gendered view of black women's place in society. First, as Jeanne Noble once observed, given the discrepancy in educational achievement between black men and black women, black women had to make marital adjustments in a society where the expectation was for husbands, regardless of race, to surpass their wives in educational and occupational status. There was a feeling by some educators that black women felt pressure to curtail their own efforts to realize their full potential so as to not intimidate their husbands. Second, with respect to domestic life, men of both races desired middle-class respectability epitomized by the presence of a non-wage-earning wife. However, racism made the task of controlling their homes and household property a more daunting challenge for black men. Please see Noble, *The Negro Woman's College Education*, 51, 124-25; also see Kessler-Harris, *In Pursuit of Equity*, 9.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, 23.

¹⁰⁴ Pritchard, "The Negro Experience," 133.

¹⁰⁵ "Criticizes Faculty in Weaver Case," *Cleveland Plain-Dealer*, 27 March 1933.

¹⁰⁶ John A. Ross, IV, "Florence Ellinwood Allen," (Senior thesis, Stanford University, 1997), 5.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 1.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 6.

¹⁰⁹ Pritchard, "The Negro Experience," 134. There is no indication as to whether or not Styles also received a scholarship from OSU. Because the University had shown greater leniency in its racial policies toward Weaver and not Styles, it is not unlikely that Weaver was the only one of the two young ladies provided with university funds to pursue a masters degree. If anything, this disparate treatment of Styles and Weaver further highlights the error on the part of the NAACP to not champion Styles' case in the form of pursuing litigation because of the darker complexion of her skin.

¹¹⁰ Brief of Plaintiff (p.12), Supreme Court of Ohio, 10 February 1933, G_W_R Papers.