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Civil Rights and the Louisiana Library Association: Stumbling toward Integration

Steven R. Harris

The twentieth-century civil rights movement had a profound impact on the Louisiana Library Association (LLA). In the 1940s and 1950s, the association made halting attempts to end professional segregation and grant equal rights to African American librarians, but these ultimately failed. Pressure from the American Library Association in the 1960s could not achieve integration either, and the two organizations severed their ties from 1962 to 1965. Ultimately, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provided the greatest motivation to integrate by invalidating the cultural and legal institutions of Jim Crow.

Race and Professionalism

The civil rights movement had a profound impact on American institutions and professions, particularly in the South. Although professions normally strive to maintain a level of social autonomy, most had to undergo a period of adjustment to the forces of social change that swept the United States in the 1950s and 1960s. These forces also affected the Louisiana Library Association (LLA). Although the organization made no formal prohibitions against African American members, Jim Crow was the standard for most LLA functions until 1965. In the end, the greatest impulse to change came not from within the association or even from the parent organization, the American Library Association (ALA), but from forces outside the library profession.

The integration of the LLA was essentially a by-product of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the sweeping prohibitions it made on segregated public facilities and services. Although professional organizations were unaffected in a legal sense by the Civil Rights Act, as public employees most librarians served at the pleasure of their elected officials and, by extension, at the pleasure of public opinion. Thus, the greatest barrier to the integration of any organization, especially in the South, was the fear of personal retribution from either official or unofficial sources. After the *Brown* Supreme

Court decision in 1954, in what became known as “Massive Resistance,” advocates of maintaining segregation used every means of threat—legal, economic, and violent—to silence opposition. Only after substantial measures had been taken to eliminate the means of oppression and the cause of fear did the LLA “voluntarily” integrate its ranks.¹

Professions normally attempt to maintain internal unity through the application of standards, codes of ethics, and other controls on personal behavior. They also strive for a high degree of autonomy from or immunity to outside political influence. During periods of social activism, however, this cohesion can break down. The American Library Association has functioned historically as the greatest force for professional cohesion in the United States. During the civil rights movement, however, segregation became a point of contention within librarianship, and, for a period of time, the ALA was unable to maintain professional unity on the question of equal rights. Racism was a national phenomenon, yet at midcentury librarians throughout the South had to deal with this issue more directly than did their colleagues in other parts of the country. This was markedly true in the Deep South states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, where the state library organizations quarreled publicly with the ALA about the best means of attaining integration of both southern library organizations and southern libraries.²

The South had never really come to grips with the social and economic realities of maintaining separate, let alone equal, facilities, whether educational, governmental, or commercial. Library development in particular, Anders notes, was about fifty years behind that of other parts of the country.³ The markedly lower educational attainment in the southern states greatly hampered the public library movement. The South awaited a class of professional library zealots to bring books and reading to the public, much as they had in New England during the previous century. But they would be zealots constrained by the peculiar social institutions of the South. Wiegand observes of the founders of the ALA that they “marched forward with conviction” but that they were also “products, and in many ways captives, of a socioeconomic and cultural value system in which they had been raised and educated” that constrained the types of library service they were willing to provide. Wiegand goes on to note that this was not the kind of organization that would “correct social inequalities.” Although he is describing the ALA, a more apt description of the librarian in early-twentieth-century Louisiana would be difficult to compose.⁴

Origins of the Louisiana Library Association

The Louisiana Library Association came into being in 1909 (known then as the Louisiana State Library Association), but that embodiment of the organization withered away during World War I. The association was reborn, however, in 1925 and tied its fortunes to the newly established Louisiana Library Commission (later the Louisiana State Library) under the energetic management of Essae Martha Culver, a midwesterner with extensive library development experience in California. (Culver later served as president of both the LLA [1936–37] and the ALA [1940–41].) One of the first tasks of the commission and the association was the provision of library service in all of Louisiana’s parishes—the state’s political equivalent of counties.⁵

As had been the case in the foundation of public librarianship in other parts of the country, there was great interest in “uplifting” the masses among Louisiana librarians. In Louisiana “the masses” were composed of a substantial population of African Americans, and librarians there had a sincere interest in improving the lot of African Americans through reading and self-education. It was generally agreed in the South that library services to African Americans should be part of the mission of every public library. This would be a Herculean task, because in the early 1930s roughly 80 percent of blacks in the South were without any kind of library service. Almost half of school-age black children were not attending school regularly. But there was hope nonetheless; from the late 1920s to the mid-1930s library circulation in the South was increasing at a phenomenal rate for both races.⁶

Within this environment, in 1937 the LLA began publishing its own journal, the *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association*. It contained in its first issue a column entitled “Libraries for Negroes.” At the annual LLA convention, held earlier that year in Shreveport, Margaret Burke, the librarian at Xavier, a black university in New Orleans, had given a paper entitled “Negro Libraries.”⁷ Burke, a white librarian and graduate of Loyola and Louisiana State University (LSU), is credited in later editions as the editor of the “Libraries for Negroes” column, which would continue to run in the LLA bulletin for several years under the editorship of various librarians, all of them white.

The expression of interest and concern about services to African Americans did not, of course, mean that the white librarians could rise above the influence of southern attitudes about race. It did not take long for evidence of this attitude to creep into the “Libraries for Negroes” column. In 1938 a plea for more information about Negro

libraries was sent out. The tone of the plea revealed not only a frustration with the editorial process but also an undercurrent of ugly feelings: “News of libraries for Negroes in Louisiana is sparse this issue. It would seem that the librarians are either too occupied to send in even one small news item or too—say it we must—lazy to co-operate in putting Negro libraries on the map. In mid-January, about 15 letters were sent out over the State to librarians at Negro schools and colleges. There were three replies. Please, please remember that we cannot conjure news out of the air.” Implicit in the call was an assumption that African American librarians were actually reading the LLA bulletin, but it is doubtful that any African Americans actually belonged to the LLA at the time. The association had never explicitly excluded blacks from joining, but Louisiana’s Jim Crow laws and racist social milieu made “race mixing” the exception rather than the norm. Regardless of their membership in the LLA, it is unlikely that African American librarians would have read this article and responded in a positive manner.⁸

In the 1930s the LLA was also attempting to form a stronger bond with the ALA and establish itself as a permanent chapter of the national organization. LLA had been listed as a chapter in the *ALA Handbook* as early as 1925, but it was not clear if it had continued to pay dues. The chief of membership information at ALA wrote in 1938 to Debora Abramson, then LLA president, to clarify the situation. From that point on the LLA and the ALA maintained strong ties.⁹

In October 1939 Nathaniel Stewart, librarian at Dillard, a black university in New Orleans, took over the “Libraries for Negroes” column in the LLA bulletin. Burke had resigned from Xavier, the bulletin reported, to “travel in the West,” but her letter of resignation implies some tension with the university administration. Although Stewart was also white (he was a graduate of George Peabody College), under his editorship the column had a decidedly more academic tone. He was even elected chairman of the LLA College and Reference Section in 1941. The December 1939 issue of the bulletin features Stewart’s article “A Resume of the Status of Library Service for Negroes in the South,” which reiterated some of the information concerning library services for African Americans reported in books by Louis Round Wilson and Robert Downs.¹⁰

In March 1940 Stewart published “The Negro Librarian in Louisiana” in the bulletin. This article pointed out some of the problems of providing library service to African Americans in the state. One of the major obstacles was the lack of well-trained librarians. Only four black librarians in the state, he noted, had been trained at the Hampton University Library School. The number of black teacher-librarians in the public

schools was also low (about thirty-five in 1938–39). He estimated the state would need 126 Negro school librarians in the short term but recognized that academic barriers would make it difficult to attain that goal. Stewart left Louisiana to work for the federal government in 1942.¹¹

Sue Hefley and the Committee on Negro Participation

As war gripped the world in the 1940s, questions about the participation of African American librarians in LLA functions began to be raised by association officers. The first question to be addressed was whether Negroes should be listed in the directory of Louisiana librarians compiled by the LLA. Loma Knighten, LLA president in 1944, polled her executive board about this but noted that some people were afraid that including Negroes might “offend members of the association.” She felt a separate list, however, might be appropriate. Knighten’s first vice president, Sue Hefley, supported including Negro librarians in the directory under a separate listing but pointed out that if the directory was to include only members of the LLA, then no Negroes would be on the list. Eventually, the board decided to exclude African Americans from the directory altogether.¹²

Sue Hefley was, at the time, state superintendent of school libraries. She would later play a major role in the most concerted effort to desegregate the association before the 1960s. As first vice president/president-elect of the LLA during the 1946–47 term, she asked the executive board for permission to pursue two initiatives during her presidency: to work toward forming library groups among college students and to open up LLA membership to Negroes. The board gave its permission to let Hefley “use her discretion” in these matters. It must be remembered that African Americans were not explicitly excluded from membership in the LLA at the time, but neither were they recruited nor given full benefits of membership. Blacks could not attend public meetings of the organization and apparently could not hold office or vote. Very few deigned to join the organization under these circumstances. Hefley hoped to remedy this situation.¹³

Prior to Hefley’s presidency, Hodding Carter had spoken at the LLA conference in March 1946 on the topic of “race relations.” The minutes of the conference describe the talk as “interesting and thought-provoking.” Norma Durand, an LLA officer, wrote to Carter to thank him for his speech. It had been, she noted, “a level-handed treatment of this most controversial of all problems of the South.” Carter, of course, had long been an advocate for equal rights and would, soon after the LLA conference, win the Pulitzer for his editorial writing on “racial, religious, and economic intolerance.” He had

grown up in Hammond, Louisiana, but at the time was editor and publisher of the *Delta Democrat-Times* in Greenville, Mississippi. It is tempting to speculate that Carter's words may have inspired Hefley to work toward the goal of Negro participation in the LLA.¹⁴

In 1946 the question of Negro involvement again came up. Ella V. Aldrich, chair of the public relations committee, queried Hefley (now LLA president) about whether African Americans should receive publicity materials from the association. When Hefley put the question to her board, they responded with ambivalence. Kathryn Adams, second vice president, said it would be "much easier to start this than to terminate it at a later date." Only Loma Knighten and LLA Treasurer Patricia Catlett fully supported the idea. Catlett did, however, point out the difficulty of publicizing activities that blacks would not be permitted to attend: "I am in favor of their attending all meetings (yea, even the Book Dinner) but that involves the hotels, so _____!" She went on to say, "I might as well stick my chin out all the way and say that I think they should be members of L.L.A.!!!"¹⁵

In the end, Hefley's administration was not able to make any headway on the question of racial equality, despite the fact that the membership apparently endorsed such action. The difficulty of holding integrated public meetings and thus confronting the prevailing cultural mores was too much for the LLA to tackle. Ironically, a year later, when Carl Milam, the executive secretary of the ALA, sent letters to state organizations asking about the difficulties of holding integrated regional meetings in the South, LLA's secretary responded that discrimination would probably be no more of a problem in Louisiana than in other parts of the country. LLA President John Hall Jacobs, director of the New Orleans Public Library, suspected there would be no trouble, assuming, as he said, that "the national body would respect the wishes of the regional group as regards individual preferences for speakers as they have always done." Jacobs must have known that the ALA had resolved, after the Richmond conference in 1936, to never again have meetings where there could not be integrated participation, but that, in fact, the organization had been less than vigilant.¹⁶

As the 1940s waned, the transformation of African Americans from farmers to wage laborers had created a social problem on a scale similar to that of the displaced persons in Europe. With the return of African American soldiers from World War II and the growth of the postwar economy, expectations of better treatment at home rose. Some members of the LLA entertained similar thoughts. In 1949 Eugene Watson, then LLA president and librarian at Louisiana Normal School in Natchitoches, got up before the assembled membership and reported that after adjournment of the business meeting, those interested in Negro

participation could stay after to discuss “the problem.” Why it was necessary to discuss this topic *after* the meeting is unclear. Perhaps it was felt to be too volatile for general discussion.¹⁷

At the same conference in Lake Charles, an activities committee report had also stimulated conversation about integration. The consensus of discussion was that the problem required a “go slow” approach. The ALA’s goals, it was felt, would be obtained more quickly if its policies were not so drastic and gave “greater consideration . . . to local rules, regulations, and mores of the people of the Southern states.” During the meeting of the Public and Regional Library Section, integration also became the topic of discussion. Here the idea of a separate conference for black librarians was brought up. It was suggested that Southern University, a black college in Baton Rouge, could host such a meeting. Mary Harris, supervisor of outreach for the Louisiana State Library, moved that such a meeting be organized and sponsored by the library, but the motion was withdrawn in favor of John Hall Jacob’s suggestion that the matter be brought to the association membership as a whole.¹⁸

This pattern of defeat for initiatives supporting black librarians would repeat itself again and again. The executive board of the LLA would frequently claim interest in involving the entire membership but would then be fearful of bringing up controversial issues. Harris, it should be noted, went ahead without LLA support and organized an annual training meeting for black librarians and staff that ran for several years under the sponsorship of the Louisiana State Library.

After the LLA conference of 1949, Watson wrote to his executive board to propose appointing “a special committee to investigate the whole matter of negro [*sic*] membership in L.L.A.” He suggested the committee be made up of Essae Mae Culver, Mary W. Harris, Sue Hefley, W. D. Postell (librarian at the LSU Medical Center), and Camille Shade. He asked if any Negroes should be added. LLA Secretary Rubie M. Hanks suggested that Adele B. Martin, librarian of the Negro branch of the state library, be included, but other board members were dubious of inviting nonmembers (and therefore Negroes) to take part. Watson noted that there had been black members of the LLA in the past but that none had joined that year.¹⁹

The Committee on Negro Participation was plagued with difficulties from the very beginning. Watson initially asked Culver to chair the committee, but she refused the position or even participation on the committee at all. On Culver’s recommendation, Watson then asked Mary Harris to chair the committee. As supervisor of extension for the state library, she was responsible for providing leadership to the parish libraries and to the Negro branch of the state library at Southern

University. Harris also turned down the offer of the chairmanship. Watson then felt compelled to restate his intention to form such a committee to the executive board on 20 May. Finally, he informed the board that Sue Hefley had accepted the chair of the committee. It is strange that Watson did not ask Hefley to chair the committee from the beginning, given her stated interest in integrating the association, but he no doubt felt that Culver's power and position would have been more influential.²⁰

The membership and charge of the committee seem to have been unclear from the beginning. Watson had expected Hefley to report back to the executive board at its October meeting. However, she was not prepared to report and had not contacted any of the committee members. At the October board meeting, the secretary was instructed to officially invite the following people to serve on the committee: Mary W. Harris, Ruth Clark, John Hall Jacobs, and Rubie M. Hanks (W. D. Postell was added later). Discussion at the meeting returned to the idea of having Negroes serve on the committee, but again, it was rejected.²¹

Finally, in December 1949 the committee met and Hefley wrote a report, which she sent to members on 7 December. The essence of the report was to recommend opening LLA membership to Negroes: "RECOMMENDATION: The LLA Committee on Negro member participation recommends that the Association adopt the policy of holding its meetings only in locations where any member may attend and participate in all scheduled proceedings. The committee recommends that luncheon and dinner meetings be foregone if they preclude such participation." Hefley went on to suggest that a study of possible meeting places be made to facilitate implementation of the recommendation. The report states that "a principle is involved which is far reaching in its implication, and that policy is not truly evaluated in terms of a count of members primarily affected. In addition, it is felt that the majority group is as adversely affected as is the minority, by adherence [*sic*] to a policy which fails to give all members their full privileges."²²

The LLA executive board read the recommendation on 9 January 1950 and agreed to present it for approval by the membership at the spring conference. In the meantime, the search for possible meeting places that would admit Negroes was begun. Janet Riley, law librarian at Loyola University, sent letters to city attorneys in Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Lake Charles, Monroe, Natchitoches, and Shreveport and to the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce asking about the existence of local laws that might prohibit "mixed" gatherings. At the same time, Harriet Leman of the International House in New Orleans sent letters of inquiry to twelve universities and

colleges in the state to gauge their willingness to host an integrated conference. (It is unclear at whose bidding Leman undertook this task; she was neither an LLA officer nor a member of the participation committee at the time.)²³

The responses Leman received from schools were overwhelmingly negative. Of the twelve institutions polled, nine responded. Three of the responding administrators said no outright. Three said that they lacked the appropriate facilities. One gave an ambivalent maybe. Only two, Loyola University and Louisiana College in Pineville, gave positive responses. More typical were the responses from Louisiana Polytechnic, where Acting President R. L. Ropp said, "I, personally, do not wish to take the responsibility of setting a precedent," and from Northeast Junior College, whose dean, Rodney Cline, remarked, "It seems inadvisable at this time to bring an inter-racial group to the Northeast Junior College campus."²⁴

Riley had little better success in polling the opinions of city officials. But although the tone of responses was generally negative, it became clear that there were few, if any, city ordinances that would prohibit mixed-race gatherings. Responses were received from Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Monroe, Natchitoches, Shreveport, and the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce. No responses came from Alexandria or Lafayette. As Riley reported at the conference and in the LLA bulletin, state laws seemed to prohibit mixed-race habitation only within a hotel but not at conference meetings or even meal functions. The only other relevant ordinance seemed to be the requirement at "circuses, shows, and tent exhibitions" that separate entrances be offered for whites and Negroes. "But LLA," Riley joked, "is probably not planning to produce a circus, show, or tent exhibition." Her research revealed that the practice by hotels of prohibiting mixed gatherings had no basis in law, but it also demonstrated that no support could be expected from local government and law enforcement. "The decision we make is our own," she stated. "The law leaves us free to accept or refuse all our professional associates at our scheduled professional meetings."²⁵

At the conference of 1950, the committee presented its recommendation during the general membership meeting. While problems with public and school libraries were noted, the lack of legal barriers to integration was also emphasized. After the presentation, Florrinell Morton moved to accept the committee recommendations; Janet Riley seconded the motion. At that point, however, momentum in favor of accepting the proposal seemed to stall. Eugene Watson then moved that any decision on the topic be postponed for one year. This motion was passed by a vote of 95 to 28.²⁶

The Committee on Negro Participation then found itself in limbo. It had presented a way in which the association could continue its business, stay within the bounds of the law, and still grant African Americans a greater role. There was little more it could do to convince the membership of the wisdom of integration. Soon after the conference, however, LLA President W. D. Postell asked Hefley to continue chairing the committee. In his correspondence, he aptly summarized the general responses within the organization. Academic librarians, although inclined to a more liberal view, were indifferent to the situation. School admission policies and state law, in fact, dictated the pace of integration for higher education. Parish librarians were fearful that a stand on integration would have a detrimental effect on funding for public libraries. School librarians were simply stuck between a rock and a hard place. Public schools in the state were still strictly segregated, and the professional ranks of teachers were equally so. The LLA maintained a close-knit relationship with the white Louisiana Teachers Association (LTA) but not with the Louisiana Education Association (LEA), the black counterpart. Members of the Louisiana Association of School Librarians, an LLA division, could participate freely in LTA and maintain a sort of dual membership. Integration was not on the agenda for the LTA, however, and if the LLA were to allow Negro members, the question of dual membership for them would undoubtedly come up. In fact, it took nearly thirty years (1976) before the LTA and LEA would merge to form an integrated teachers organization.²⁷

Little activity or discussion was held among members of the Negro participation committee until December 1950. Then Hefley sent a summary of past activities to the committee along with an outline for a proposed report to membership at the next conference. She pointed out that the LLA executive board could have chosen to integrate the association on its own volition but had decided to place the matter before membership. Hefley also recommended that if the committee continued to function, some African Americans should be appointed to serve on it.²⁸

In her outline for the report to membership, Hefley expounded on four professional issues she thought were at stake. First, she observed that professional rights and privileges were more significant in this case than prevailing social mores: "The Association purports to be the agency of a profession: no group within a profession has the right to exclude any other fully qualified group from full membership and participation in its recognized agency." Second, she lamented the waste that such exclusion perpetuated: "When within a profession one group fails to utilize resources in vision, talent, and capability represented by another, the profession has been done a disservice." She next pointed

out the limits on progress that exclusion would foster: "The progress of a profession is largely conditioned upon the degree to which it is truly representative of the whole profession." Finally, she hypothesized that a decision to integrate would have significant positive effects on each individual and on society in general: "The decision involved is one which has implications not only for the affairs of our Association and the profession for which it is the agency, but for the individual who casts his vote, and for the general society which he represents."²⁹

In response, Eugene Watson felt compelled to justify his actions at the previous conference. "It seemed clear to me that if an immediate vote had been called for, Mrs. Morton's motion would have lost by a large majority. Since I favored the motion, I did not desire the Association to go on record as officially rejecting it; therefore, I moved that action on the motion be deferred until the next annual conference." Despite his assertions of a desire to see the motion pass, Watson went on to identify two major fears about integrating the association. What would integration do to the "entertainment" portions of the conference? Would their elimination result in the "virtual destruction of the fine professional organization" they had developed? And would a move to integrate result in a backlash by the public and the body politic against libraries, possibly sabotaging altogether the public library movement librarians had worked so hard to foster? These were, no doubt, widespread concerns among the LLA membership.³⁰

Again at its meeting prior to the annual conference, the executive board decided that the issue would be placed before the membership for a vote. The fears Watson voiced, however, must have swayed Hefley. By the time the conference took place, she had watered down the language presented to the membership, and the Committee on Negro Participation was itself backing down on its own proposal. "Your committee feels . . . that our first concern should be that a negative vote on this motion be avoided." The report to membership goes on to note that the committee perceived that the membership did not want the status quo disturbed and that the "psychology" of a negative vote would be bad for both blacks and whites. It recommended that no vote be taken and that the executive board simply be instructed to "work persistently and consistently toward making possible all-member participation" in the LLA. Florrinell Morton must have been taken aback by this proposal. She stated her unchanging feelings about the original proposal but decided "in the best interests of the Association" to withdraw her motion. No objections to withdrawal were voiced.³¹

The board did continue to work toward integration, although whether it did so "persistently and consistently" is difficult to say. Essae Culver,

although at the time not a member of the executive board, wrote letters to other southern library associations, asking what their situations were regarding African American membership: (1) if Negroes were admitted, (2) if so, how many belonged, (3) if they attended conventions, (4) where meetings were held, (5) if there were social functions and where they were held, and (6) what the reaction of trustees or the public had been. Of the other southern associations, the Deep South states of Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi seemed most similar to Louisiana: there seemed to be no formal barriers, but, facing restrictions on participation and socializing, most blacks chose not to join. Florida and North Carolina had separate black and white associations. South Carolina was similar, although the black organization in that state was actually a section of the Negro teachers association. Arkansas, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia seemed to be fairly open and eager to involve members of all races yet still had fairly limited African American membership (none had more than twenty-five black participants). Only Texas had any significant level of Negro membership (one hundred members), although relative to the size of that organization, it too was disappointingly low.³²

Hefley had cause to be sorely disappointed in the outcome of the Committee on Negro Participation. The association had clearly missed its best chance to integrate its membership. During the 1953 conference, Hefley made a statement urging the board to take some action on the issue. Integration, she said, was inevitable. But the board and the LLA were not convinced, and no action was taken.³³

***Brown* and the Rise of Massive Resistance**

Despite the experiences of the Louisiana Library Association, the 1940s and 1950s had been a time of marked progress on civil rights for African Americans. Even in Louisiana the “structure” of white supremacy had begun to crumble. In 1954, however, the *Brown* decision of the Supreme Court had two simultaneous and contradictory effects: the inspiration of race activists and the unification of segregationists into a more coherent body of reactionaries. Stimulated by *Brown*, segregationists spawned the movement that became known as “Massive Resistance,” a well-organized but informal phenomenon that would use any means necessary to oppose further progress on integration, particularly in the schools. Within days of the Court’s decision, the Louisiana Legislature formed the Joint Committee to Maintain Segregation. Under the leadership of State Senator Willie Rainaich, the committee worked closely with and almost indistinguishably from the many private citizens councils that sprang up around the

state to resist the federal government on this issue. The overall effect of Massive Resistance was to stifle public debate on the question of race. Racial moderates were usually frightened into silence or found that they had to defend segregation more vigorously than they believed simply to maintain a position in the public forum.³⁴

This proverbial best and worst of times was the climate in which the LLA operated throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s. Intellectual freedom had become a major issue within the library profession, yet a witch hunt mentality dominated the political realm. Staunch segregationists sought to smoke out integrationists and Communists with equal zeal, often, in fact, making no distinction between the two.

In 1953 the LLA had formed an Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC), but it did not have any members appointed until 1954. As the wheels of Massive Resistance got rolling, there was plenty for the committee to address, but its members became more and more fearful of taking any public stance. In 1956 several public schools in Shreveport began removing issues of *Life*, *Look*, and *Time* magazines from their library shelves because of the way segregation and the civil rights struggle had been depicted in these periodicals. Members of the IFC discussed the issue at length but were paralyzed from taking any action by fear and ignorance of how best to respond. Some members thought the IFC had no power to act and that any statement from the LLA would have to come from the executive board. Many even thought action could be taken only with a vote of the entire membership of the LLA. Others felt that the IFC itself could issue a statement and negotiate directly with the school boards. In the end, Inez Boone, chair of the IFC, and LLA President Ruth Clark Reedy decided to take no action at all. The consensus was that “feeling was too high” on the issue to risk making any public comments.³⁵

By then, the segregationist government of the state had even begun to require incorporated organizations to make a statement that they would never lobby for integration in any way. In 1957 the LLA adopted articles of incorporation that stated: “This Corporation shall never carry on propaganda or otherwise attempt to influence legislation except to secure the enactment of proper laws for the protection and regulation of library interests of the State of Louisiana.” The unnamed target of this restriction was, of course, integration.³⁶

By the beginning of the 1960s, Massive Resistance had gradually lost its influence as integration had made equally gradual gains. But there was one last explosive battle to be fought: the integration of the public schools in New Orleans. Louisianans and indeed many Americans had long held a belief in the “harmonious” nature of race relations in this melting pot (or perhaps gumbo) of a city. Where

school integration was concerned, however, it proved to be a mythical harmony. Lack of leadership by political and social leaders had caused the city to resist any preparation at all for what most public figures must have realized was the inevitability of integration. On 14 November 1960, after federal judges had ordered the integration of the schools, four African American girls entered two public schools in New Orleans. The following day, a violent, hateful mob swept through the city, attacking public buildings, property, and any unfortunate African Americans who happened to be caught in its path. In the following months, mobs made up of men, women, and children would gather outside the “integrated” schools and hurl insult and invective at anyone who entered. The television networks were on hand to capture this ugly display for the entire nation (and librarians across the state) to see. Although the public libraries and, indeed, the buses and streetcars of New Orleans had been quietly integrated at different times in the past ten years, the fear of coming out in favor of further desegregation must have seemed palpable.³⁷

The American Library Association and Its Southern Chapters

At this same time, however, some members of the American Library Association began to express a desire that the organization live up to its own ideals regarding intellectual freedom: how could the ALA make public statements about freedoms like expression and association when some of its state chapters did not even adhere to these principles? In 1954 the ALA had mandated that only one chapter exist in each state and had asked each chapter to recertify itself by 1956. This was an attempt to dismantle the “separate but equal” chapters that existed in some southern states; what the effort did not do was guarantee that African Americans would have full freedom to participate in the southern chapters. The chapters of Georgia and Alabama did not recertify at all in 1956 and lost their chapter status.³⁸

In the minds of the leadership of most southern chapters, however, they were open to “anyone interested in libraries,” even if they prohibited African Americans from attending conferences, voting, or holding an elective office. To them, these things were legislative and political issues, not organizational issues. They could not be held accountable for what their state governments did. Yet there was no true legal restraint on the participation of African American librarians, as demonstrated by Janet Riley’s investigation of the laws in Louisiana. Furthermore, the restrictions maintained by the hotels were local custom and, in most cases, had no basis in law.³⁹

Pit the southern view of the legal situation against the growing activism of northern and western professionals, and conflict was inevitable. In May 1960 the ALA formed a Special Committee on Civil Rights. The committee was largely concerned with restrictions on library patrons rather than on the status of librarians, but the report of the committee stimulated a great deal of thinking about the rights of individuals to participate in library organizations. The report also resulted in the editing of the *Library Bill of Rights* to add an article that included the statement: "The rights of the individual to use the library should not be denied or abridged because of his race, religion, national origins, or political views." It became clear to many ALA members that libraries could not be made to be open and free if the profession of librarianship was not open and free itself.⁴⁰

In 1961, while New Orleans smoldered under its school desegregation order, members of the ALA became increasingly vocal about the need to integrate the southern chapters. The most outspoken of the activists were Eric Moon, editor of *Library Journal*, Lawrence Clark Powell of the UCLC library school, and Eli Obeler, librarian at the University of Idaho.

In Louisiana, Ernest C. Wagner, librarian at Dillard University, was inspired to write to Elizabeth H. Welker, executive secretary of the LLA, to ask what the policy of the LLA was regarding Negro membership. Welker responded that "[w]e accept, and have, Negro members. For our meetings we are bound by the acts of the Louisiana Legislature." This last statement is surprising in light of Riley's well-publicized demonstration that it was untrue. Wagner also wrote to Florrinnell Morton, knowing that she would soon be assuming her duties as president of the ALA, to ask that she exert some influence on the LLA to integrate. "As President-elect of the American Library Association," he wrote, "I am sure favorable action on your part would be helpful in getting the Association to act." He also noted that the LLA's acceptance of Negroes, as Welker had claimed, was a surprise to him and the many black librarians he surveyed. If the LLA did, in fact, accept Negroes, he wrote, then perhaps a public statement of that fact should be made. A public statement would go against the "slow and quiet" approach so much favored by white moderates. Remembering the failure of the Committee on Negro Participation, Morton responded that if the issue were presented to membership immediately, "a great deal of heat, rather than light, would be generated." Kate Wallach, LLA president, also wrote to Wagner to backpedal on Welker's earlier statement, saying it was overly broad about the LLA's admission of blacks. Wagner's original letter to Welker was the subject of discussion at

the executive board meeting. Board members voted to “take it under advisement.”⁴¹

It appears that Wagner, dissatisfied with the responses he had gotten from LLA officers, discussed the issue with Rice Estes at the ALA conference. He then wrote to Everett T. Moore of UCLA and the Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC). He called the assertion that the LLA was effectively open to Negroes “pure fiction” and noted that the claim of restrictions placed on the organization by state law was also fallacious. Moore forwarded Wagner’s letter to Archie McNeal, IFC chair. This and other correspondence, Moore said, appeared to indicate a lack of compliance with ALA standards by some of the southern chapters.⁴²

The ALA executive board too was beginning to become sensitive to the issue. A report at the board meeting of 3 June 1961 reiterated the conditions of chapter membership. In July Lawrence Clark Powell, who obviously had been in contact with Everett Moore, his colleague at UCLC, wrote to then past president of the ALA, Frances Lander Spain, to say that many southern chapters were not living up to ALA standards. At the 9–12 July executive board meeting, provisions for chapter withdrawal were discussed. Florrinnell Morton, presiding over the meeting, said that the ALA policy only required openness but that state laws bound the activities of many chapters. A certification process for chapters was proposed, but a bylaw amendment to apply force to chapters was deemed unwise, although the board did vote to add language about a withdrawal process.

Discussion at the ALA council that summer was a little livelier. Councilor at large Robert C. Vosper mentioned that an “insidious rumor” was circulating that the ALA was not ready to take “immediate and forceful action” against segregation. “Certainly,” he said, “this group [the ALA council] does not wish itself to have the action come after public embarrassment but before.” Archie McNeal also summarized the actions of the IFC: that chapters would be asked to review their policies, that the executive board consider disbaring segregated institutional members, and that a “freedom of access” study be undertaken by the ALA. At its 15 July meeting, the executive board overturned its actions of 9–12 July and instead voted that the executive director and the chair of the IFC prepare a report for the board presenting the “points at issue and suggesting appropriate action.”⁴³

At its 23 September meeting the executive board of the LLA discussed this possible “new code” of the ALA and what effect it would have on the LLA. In the end, however, no action was taken. Kate Wallach wrote to William D. Murphy, a law librarian in Chicago, soon afterward to complain about the ALA’s actions and wonder if

Murphy could “persuade ALA to leave the pressure to the federal government and to politicians rather than to the library profession.”

In her correspondence with Murphy, Wallach also mentioned a letter from the assistant attorney general of Louisiana to the school superintendent of Vermillion Parish that had been copied and forwarded to the LLA. The letter advised Louisiana teachers not to join the National Education Association because that organization had come out in favor of integration and was, therefore, illegal under Louisiana state law. Knowledge of the contents of the letter seemed to be widespread among librarians in Louisiana. Robert Talmadge, library director at Tulane University, mentioned the threat against teachers in correspondence with ALA Executive Director David Clift in October, although he later acknowledged that the threat was not explicit in the law but had only been an administrative ruling. The peril, nonetheless, was very conspicuous for librarians in Louisiana. “The greatest problem I see for the person of intelligence and integrity in the South these days,” Talmadge wrote to Clift, “is that there is no room for the moderate; he will be damned as an extremist by both sides.”⁴⁴

The LLA faced another problem in the fall of 1961. Florrinnell Morton had just assumed her duties as president of the ALA; it would not do very well for the LLA to make trouble for its parent organization when one of its own had just taken over its top post. Maud Bentrup, incoming LLA president, mentioned the “embarrassment” of Morton and the “threat” from the assistant attorney general when she wrote to Archie McNeal to ask about the advisability of the LLA withdrawing its chapter membership altogether. McNeal advised against taking any precipitate action, since the policy changes were in the formative stages. Morton also advised against taking immediate steps. Other members of the LLA board, however, were not so concerned with Morton’s pride. Eugene Watson felt they should avoid doing any “crawling” or “begging for mercy.” He was, on the other hand, greatly concerned about the reputation of the LLA and did not want the “newspapers involved.” Keeping any word of trouble out of the public realm was, apparently, of utmost concern to the board also. The minutes of the board that appeared in the fall 1961 issue of the bulletin record the reading of the “letter from Mr. Wagner” and the actions of the board without once mentioning that the topic in question was racial integration.⁴⁵

By November 1961 Archie McNeal and the IFC had finally gotten around to asking the state chapters point-blank if they had any Negro members in their organizations. Maud Bentrup had to refer the question to Elizabeth Welker, LLA executive secretary. Welker, however, had no real means of determining the race of individual

members. She responded that none of the current members' addresses was readily identifiable as a Negro institution. Bentrup notified McNeal that no Negroes were currently members of the LLA and repeated the lament that the association was, of course, bound by state law.⁴⁶

The ALA executive board report on chapter status and institutional members was presented to the ALA council at the midwinter conference in January 1962. It recommended a cautious and deliberate approach to the problem. The council response was swift and vociferously negative. A typical reaction was Lawrence Powell's, who called the report "monstrously cynical," saying its adoption would be a sign of "moral bankruptcy." There were, however, a few southern supporters for the cautious approach. Jerome Cushman of the New Orleans Public Library said that the ALA's goal should be librarianship and not "social legislation." In Civil War-like tones, he warned that a too stringent policy could result in the secession of chapters and the formation of a "Southern Library Association." John Hall Jacobs, formerly the librarian of the New Orleans Public Library and now director of libraries in Atlanta, urged patience, saying that the report was a first step and not the final ALA position. The council was not swayed by these southern voices. It voted to have the report "recommitted" to the executive board for further work to be presented again at the next annual conference.⁴⁷

In the intervening months, while ALA executives wrung their hands about whether a bold statement in favor of integration would result in the loss of members, African American librarians applauded the council's rejection of the irresolute statement from the executive board. E. J. Josey, then at Savannah State College in Georgia, writing to Virginia Lacy Jones, dean of the library school at Atlanta University, said that the ALA "must not wait for the legal barriers to be eradicated in the Southern states, before action of a positive nature is taken to ensure the professional association of all librarians in their local and state organization." Annie W. McPheeters thought that members of segregated state chapters should not be permitted to hold ALA offices. William W. Bennett thought the executive board report portrayed the ALA as a "very, very weak organization of anemic individuals." Wallace Van Jackson remarked that worrying about loss of membership was like selling one's soul. Carrie Robinson, school library consultant in Alabama and formerly the librarian of the Negro branch of the Louisiana State Library, was appalled that the executive board was not better informed about the attitudes of African American librarians in the South. "Can the Board think that we are entirely incapable of detecting major injustices?" she asked.⁴⁸

The idea of having the LLA withdraw straightaway from the ALA resurfaced that spring. Roger McDonough of the ALA IFC first suggested the move to Sallie Farrell, Culver's successor as state librarian of Louisiana. "I hinted at the possibility of this solution," he said, "in Executive Board closed session and got only hurt feelings but no adequate answers from Florrinell [Morton]." Farrell was surprised at this response from Morton. In their conversations together, Farrell had thought that Morton was not entirely opposed to the withdrawal of the LLA. Still, the thought of her own state chapter withdrawing from the ALA while she was president must have disturbed Morton. Jerome Cushman, as his secessionist statements at midwinter suggested, also favored LLA withdrawal. Farrell, although she was not an officer at the time, offered to steer the idea of withdrawal through the LLA administration. She asked McDonough to find out what kind of statement would be necessary to effect the separation from the ALA. He responded that a simple declaration of intent to dissolve the partnership was all that would be required. "I think it would take pressure off the Association," he said, "and I confess to you that the prospect of another public debate in, of all places, Miami Beach, scares the dickens out of me."⁴⁹

A public debate in Miami Beach was exactly what McDonough got. The recommitted report submitted by the executive board was still relatively tame. The ALA council, however, put some real teeth into the strictures placed on state chapters. There was some discussion of whether these requirements were not a new condition of membership and would thus require a constitutional amendment. Florrinell Morton and Howard Rovelstad, chair of the constitution and bylaws committee, responded that chapter requirements had nothing to do with the conditions of individual membership and that chapter status was granted at the discretion of the council.⁵⁰

The ALA council's final document, the "Statement on Chapters and Institutional Members," required that all individual members be granted the rights to do the following: (1) receive notices, (2) attend meetings, (3) speak, (4) vote, (5) make motions, (6) nominate, (7) run for office, (8) resign from office, (9) have a hearing before expulsion, (10) inspect organizational records, (11) insist on enforcement of rules, and (12) exercise any other constitutional right. Clearly, many of the southern chapters, including the LLA, did not grant these rights.⁵¹

Soon after the conference in Miami Beach, ALA Executive Secretary David Clift made an official request of Mrs. Max (Tillie) Schenker, LLA president, for certification of compliance with the new statement. At the LLA executive board meeting of 15 September 1962, the new ALA requirements were discussed. A motion to request an indefinite

delay from the ALA was passed. This was clearly a misreading of the statement, which specified a grace period of no more than three years. The ALA executive board brought up this misunderstanding at its November meeting. In attendance were Morton, now past president of ALA, and Jerome Cushman, who had just been elected to the ALA board. These two officers had to help formulate a motion to instruct their own state chapter to clarify its request for postponement. Later that month, when the LLA board revisited the issue, Schenker suggested reconsideration of the previous request on advice from Morton and Essae Culver. Kenneth Toombs, who had made the original motion, agreed to withdraw it in favor of dropping ALA chapter status outright. The board did not seek input from sections or the general membership for this action. President Schenker notified David Clift of the LLA decision on 3 December 1962. The winter issue of the LLA bulletin reported that the "Board voted not to continue chapter status in view of the recent actions taken by the American Library Association Council." Again (as though there was a fear of having it seen in print), no mention is made that racial integration was the cause of the withdrawal. At the midwinter conference, both the ALA executive board and the council accepted the withdrawal of the LLA; the council added the phrase "with regret" to its acceptance notice. Clift informed Schenker of the outcome on 5 March.⁵²

Although it was now an independent organization with no official ties to the American Library Association, in many ways the separation had very little effect on the Louisiana Library Association. There was a slight decline in LLA membership over the course of the next year, but by the end of 1963 the numbers were up over what they had been in 1962. The executive board also voted to pay for the LLA president's attendance at the ALA conference each year. The manual of the organization was edited to reflect the separation from the ALA, although it took until 1964 to get this accomplished. Aside from the lack of council representation, things were operating pretty much as usual for the LLA and other disbarred southern chapters.⁵³

In 1964 the Mississippi Library Association (MLA) won an award for its National Library Week program. This was too much for some of the activists in the ALA who had fought for stricter controls on chapter ethics. E. J. Josey was appalled about the MLA winning a national award when it was not even affiliated with the ALA any longer. He was also shocked to discover that ALA officers had attended the conference of the Georgia Library Association (GLA), a conference Josey himself could not attend because of the race restriction it observed. The ALA council quickly fashioned a resolution prohibiting ALA officers from taking part in the activities of segregated chapters.⁵⁴

Josey later wrote that this resolution was responsible for the desegregation of the southern associations. Presidents of southern associations, however, were still defying the order to desegregate in the fall of 1964. Walter T. Johnston of the GLA wrote to other presidents bemoaning the ALA's actions. He also noted that the board of the GLA had been given the power to integrate but had not chosen to do so up to that point. Shirley Stephenson, president of the LLA, replied to Johnston that she deplored actions such as those of the ALA that divided the profession. Officers of southern chapters rarely seemed to view segregation as a "divisive" tactic. In the end, it seemed the 1964 ALA resolution regarding officers' attendance at segregated meetings had little more effect on the integration of southern associations than the 1962 resolution.⁵⁵

The Civil Rights Act of 1964

Throughout 1963 and 1964, a civil rights bill had been making its way through the U.S. Congress. Although the ALA's Washington office had noted publicly how the attachment of civil rights issues to other legislation always resulted in the defeat of the bill, ALA President James E. Bryan came out in favor of the pending legislation. He noted that while the ALA could be proud of its civil rights accomplishments, there was "much to be done." On 2 July 1964 Congress finally overcame southern opposition and passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and President Lyndon Johnson signed the bill into law.⁵⁶

The ALA resolution of 1964 concerning officers was still being discussed by the ALA executive board in November because legal interpretation had indicated that the restriction on all officers was vaguely worded and ill-defined. David Clift, however, in a memo to the board hoped that the "new civil rights legislation will soon remove one of the principal obstacles to the integration of the state library associations to which the resolution applies." ALA President Edwin Castagna had already written to Shirley Stephenson to observe that the legal obstacles to the integration of the Louisiana Library Association seemed to have been removed. He hoped that other obstacles would be removed too. Castagna's letter was reproduced in the fall issue of the LLA bulletin. Stephenson personally replied to Castagna that regaining chapter status was of utmost importance to the LLA.⁵⁷

Yet the matter did not come up during the fall 1964 meetings of the executive board. Not until a letter from J. Norman Heard, acquisitions librarian at LSU, came to Stephenson the following January did the board begin to discuss reinstatement of ALA chapter status.

Heard commented that the “legal structure” had changed greatly, but perhaps the board still viewed the issue as “too explosive.” Readmission, he suggested, could be conducted the same way withdrawal had been: without a vote of membership.⁵⁸

On 17 March 1965, during the board meeting at the annual conference, Cushman moved that the LLA apply for reinstatement as an ALA chapter. The motion passed. Membership was notified at the third general session of the conference that reapplication had been approved by the board; no endorsement had been sought from the membership. On 31 March 1965 Stephenson wrote to Castagna to officially apply for chapter status. The LLA, she noted, had met all the ALA requirements (although no change whatsoever in LLA policy had taken place). David Clift informed Stephenson that the ALA council would require a statement of compliance. Council approval of the LLA constitution would also be necessary, along with a vote of ALA members in the state to affirm the desire to become an ALA chapter. Stephenson began to prepare for conducting such a vote, but the ALA board then determined that any chapter that departed under the 1962 resolution was entitled to return without polling the membership. The ALA board notified Stephenson that it would recommend to the council a positive response to the application. At the 1965 conference the council approved the application, and the LLA was back in the fold.⁵⁹

Before the Civil Rights Act of 1964, integration had not been very widespread in Louisiana. The passage of the act greatly increased the rate of desegregation. Librarians were quick to recognize that the new law had tremendous impact on all kinds of public institutions. Many libraries sought financial support from the federal government, but the new law would cut off funding to any facility that discriminated on the basis of race.⁶⁰

There was still widespread foot-dragging, but most librarians sought to get on board as quickly as possible. In 1966 E. J. Scheerer, LLA president, informed Richard Harwell of the ALA that progress was being made slowly in Louisiana. About sixty of sixty-five parishes had taken some action, although a few segregated library branches still existed. The LLA itself began to show greater interest in African American issues in the bulletin. Photos of black librarians began to appear in its pages; books on racial topics were reviewed; a bibliography on school desegregation was even published. In general, however, the issue of race was still sensitive. In 1967 Sue Hefley was given the Essae M. Culver Distinguished Service Award. The article in the bulletin describing her contributions to the LLA and the library profession did not mention her efforts to desegregate

the association or her service on the Committee on Negro Participation. It was not until 1998 that the first African American, Idella Washington, was elected president of the LLA.⁶¹

As many social scientists have noted, the development of racial attitudes is complex, and there is seldom an exact correspondence between attitudes and behavior. Nonetheless, there is considerable evidence to suggest that the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 had a profound impact on American social attitudes. It has been observed that public support for the act grew considerably between 1963 and 1964. In fact, survey data also showed a remarkable spike in public opinion in 1964 about the importance of civil rights to the nation, a much greater opinion spike than had occurred after the *Brown* decision. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 signaled many changes in American society, not the least of which was a shake-up of the racial and geographic boundaries that had constrained political behavior in the United States since the Civil War. While the Democratic Party (previously the party of the Old South) became the party for African Americans, the Republicans (the party of Lincoln and of radical Reconstruction) became a viable and much later the dominant political affiliation of southern white males. Significantly, in the presidential election of 1964, immediately following the passage of the Civil Rights Act, the four states that had been the most recalcitrant about desegregating their state library associations (Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia) were also the only states to support Barry Goldwater, a candidate who had made a point of opposing the Civil Rights Act in the Senate. Those four southern states, plus South Carolina and Goldwater's own state, Arizona, were the only states won by Goldwater, as Lyndon Johnson held onto the office of president in a landslide victory.⁶²

Conclusion

In wondering why librarians in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia did not act more strongly to integrate their professional organizations, one should simply note the unremarkable nature of their behavior. They did not do anything that was out of the ordinary for the states in which they lived; in fact, they went to some effort to avoid anything out of the ordinary. Documentation from Alabama and Mississippi suggests a pattern similar to that found in Louisiana. Early concern for and discussion of civil rights eventually encountered the stumbling blocks of fear and indifference. Only legislative action was able to break through those barriers. It must also be observed that the actions of the ALA in 1956, 1962, and 1964, although cause for much

discussion and hand-wringing, were largely ineffective in motivating the state chapters of the Deep South to integrate their memberships. Since Louisiana was without the kind of political leadership that led to progress in race relations in the border states, librarians there had no safety net over which they might operate.⁶³

In the end, it must be said that although individual members of the LLA at various points in the association's history had expressed concern for the rights of African Americans to participate, all of these early efforts came to naught because there was little widespread support for integration prior to 1964; professional ethics and unity were trumped by southern mores and customs. Whatever personal support librarians may have felt for civil rights, outwardly they shied away from the cause until the federal government more forcefully dismantled the mechanisms, both legal and cultural, of Jim Crow. Because no actual institutional change had taken place within the LLA, there was little sense of accomplishment when the association finally certified its open status in 1965. The occasion of stepping from the ranks of "segregated" to those of "integrated" was marked with a sigh rather than a cheer.

Notes

1. Despite the attention that race in librarianship has received of late, the impact of the civil rights movement on the profession of librarianship has not been well documented, and the relationship between regional and national professional organizations during this time even less so. A fine recent collection is John Mark Tucker and Edward G. Holley, eds., *Untold Stories: Civil Rights, Libraries, and Black Librarianship* (Champaign, Ill.: Publications Office, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, 1998). A few other works also address the topic. Creswell examines some of the instances of protest that took place in libraries during the sixties: Stephen Creswell, "The Last Days of Jim Crow in Southern Libraries," *Libraries & Culture* 31, nos. 3-4 (1996): 557-73. Josey, Robbins, and Thomison give summaries of the relationship between the ALA and its state chapters during this time: E. J. Josey, "The Civil Rights Movement and American Librarianship: The Opening Round," in Mary Lee Bundy and Frederick J. Steilow, eds., *Activism in American Librarianship, 1962-1973* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 13-20; Louise S. Robbins, *Censorship and the American Library: The American Library Association's Response to Threats to Intellectual Freedom, 1939-1969* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996), 107-21; Dennis Thomison, *A History of the American Library Association, 1876-1972* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1978), 216-23. Du Mont examines some of the attitudes librarians have had and continue to have about race: Rosemary Ruhig Du Mont, "Race in American Librarianship: Attitudes of the Library Profession," *Journal of Library History, Philosophy and Comparative Librarianship* 21 (1986): 488-509, but otherwise little has been done to historically document the roles of or perhaps the conflict between professionalism and social activism in bringing about a racially integrated librarianship.

2. Dale E. Shaffer, *The Maturity of Librarianship as a Profession* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1968).
3. Mary Edna Anders, *Libraries and Library Services in the Southeast: A Report of the Southeastern States Cooperative Library Survey, 1972–1974* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1976), 1.
4. Wayne A. Wiegand, *The Politics of an Emerging Profession: The American Library Association, 1876–1917* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 12.
5. Debora Abramson, “The Louisiana Library Association: Its History,” *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 15 (1952): 66–74.
6. Michael H. Harris, “The Purpose of the American Public Library: A Revisionist Interpretation of History,” *Library Journal* 98 (1973): 2511; “Library Service to Negroes,” ALA Committee on Extension, 1929, box 1, Record Group 29/3/3, American Library Association Archives, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Archives (hereafter cited as ALA Archives); Betty Porter, “The History of Negro Education in Louisiana,” *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (1942): 801; “Books for the South,” ALA Public Library Association, 1935, box 1, Record Group 29/3/3, ALA Archives.
7. “Libraries for Negroes,” *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 1, no. 1 (1937): 16–17; “LLA Conference Schedule,” 22–24 April 1937, box 1, Louisiana Library Association Archives, Louisiana State University Libraries, Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library, Baton Rouge (hereafter cited as LLA Archives).
8. Margaret Burke, “Libraries for Negroes,” *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 1, no. 3 (1938): 14; “Record Sheet: Margaret Gibbons Burke,” Records of the President, University Archives, Xavier University, New Orleans (hereafter cited as Records of the President).
9. Cora M. Beatty to Ruth Reagan Baird, 11 July 1939, and Beatty to Debora Abramson, 17 August 1938, both box 26, LLA Archives.
10. “Libraries for Negroes,” *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 2, no. 4 (1939): 14; Burke to Sister M. Madeleine Sophie, dean, Xavier University, 29 January 1939, Records of the President; C. C. Williamson and Alice L. Jewett, *Who’s Who in Library Service*, 2nd ed. (New York: H. W. Wilson, 1943), 524; Nathaniel Stewart, “A Resume of the Status of Library Service for Negroes in the South,” *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 3, no. 2 (1939): 18–21; Louis Round Wilson, *The Geography of Reading: A Study of the Distribution and Status of Libraries in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938); Robert Bingham Downs, *Resources of Southern Libraries: A Survey of Facilities for Research* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1938). Although the evidence for the ethnicity of Burke and Stewart is circumstantial, the fact that they are both graduates of universities that were not integrated until the 1950s is incontrovertible. They are, nonetheless, incorrectly identified as African American (likely because of their affiliations with historically black colleges) by Alma Dawson, “Celebrating African-American Librarians and Librarianship,” *Library Trends* 49, no. 1 (2000): 73.
11. Nathaniel Stewart, “The Negro Librarian in Louisiana,” *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 3, no. 3 (1940): 18–20.
12. Knighten to LLA executive board, 21 May 1944, and Hefley to Knighten, 26 May 1944, both box 26, LLA Archives.
13. “LLA Executive Board Minutes, 28 March 1946,” box 26, LLA Archives.
14. Durand to Carter, 6 April 1946, box 26, LLA Archives; Ann Waldron, *Hodding Carter: The Reconstruction of a Racist* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1993).

15. Hefley to Aldrich, 8 November 1946, John Hall Jacobs to Hefley, 25 October 1946, Adams to Hefley, 28 October 1946, Knighten to Hefley, November 1946, Catlett to Hefley, 31 October 1946, all box 26, LLA Archives.

16. Several sources mention the 1947 “decision” of the association to admit Negroes, although there was, even then, no real restriction on them joining. See Vivian Cazayoux to Sybil Baird, 31 March 1953, referred to in Kayla Barrett and Barbara A. Bishop, “Integration and the Alabama Library Association: Not So Black and White,” *Libraries & Culture* 33, no. 2 (1998): 157, and Janet Riley, “The Effect of Segregation Laws on Louisiana Library Association Activities,” *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 13, no. 3 (1950): 71. However, I can find no evidence of a vote on the subject. It is not recorded in the minutes of any meeting or conference of 1946–48. Perhaps it is simply the endorsement of Hefley’s goals that is remembered as a “vote.” See Milam to state and regional associations, 14 August 1947, Jean E. Mason to Milam, August 1947, Jacobs to Milam, 18 August 1947, all box 18, LLA Archives; Thomison, *A History of the American Library Association, 1876–1972*, 130–33.

17. Business meeting, 23rd annual conference minutes, 4 April 1949, box 18, LLA Archives.

18. 23rd annual conference minutes, 2–4 April 1949, box 19, LLA Archives; “LLA Public and Regional Section Report,” 3 April 1949, box 26, LLA Archives.

19. Watson to LLA executive board members, 26 April 1949, Hanks to Watson, 28 April 1949, Culver to Watson, 10 May 1949, Watson to Culver, 13 May 1949, all box 18, LLA Archives.

20. Watson to Culver, 4 May 1949, Culver to Watson, 10 May 1949, Watson to Culver, 13 May 1949, Watson to executive board members, 20 May 1949, Watson to executive board, 30 May 1949, all box 18, LLA Archives.

21. LLA executive board minutes, 13 October 1949, box 18, LLA Archives.

22. “Report of the Committee on Participation of Negro Members,” to Eugene P. Watson, LLA president, 22 December 1949, box 34, LLA Archives.

23. LLA executive board minutes, 9 January 1950, box 9, LLA Archives; Riley to W. D. Postell, 5 June 1950 (summarizes the results of her survey) and Lemann to college presidents, March 1950, both box 34, LLA Archives.

24. Thomas J. Shields to Harriet Lemann, 17 March 1950, Edgar Godbold to Lemann, 23 March 1950, Ropp to Lemann, 17 March 1950, Cline to Lemann, 20 March 1950, all box 34, LLA Archives.

25. Riley to W. D. Postell, 5 June 1950, Henry Bernstein to Riley, 7 February 1950, Arthur C. Watson, 7 February 1950, J. N. Marcantel to Riley, 8 February 1950, J. B. Holloman to Riley, 9 February 1950, R. Gordon Kean Jr. to Riley, 8 March 1950, L. C. Grosjean to Riley, 9 March 1950, all box 34, LLA Archives; Riley, “The Effect of Segregation Laws,” 72, 74.

26. 24th annual conference minutes, 30–31 March, 1 April 1950, box 9, LLA Archives.

27. Postell to Hefley, 8 May 1950, box 34, LLA Archives. Variant histories of the professional integration of teachers are found in William C. Baker, *Pride and Progress: The Story of the Louisiana Teachers Association* (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1989) and Ernest J. Middleton, “The Louisiana Education Association, 1901–1970,” *Journal of Negro Education* 47, no. 4 (1978): 363–78.

28. Hefley to committee members, 30 December 1950, box 17, LLA Archives.

29. *Ibid.*

30. Watson to Hefley, 13 January 1951, box 17, LLA Archives.

31. Executive board minutes, 13 January 1951, box 9, LLA Archives. It would seem that Hefley had this change of heart fairly late: an undated draft of these comments written on Bentley Hotel stationery (where the conference was held) appears in box 17, LLA Archives. The full report can be found in "Twenty-Fifth Annual Conference," *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 14, no. 3 (1951): 82.

32. Culver to Southern Library Association presidents: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia (no letter was sent to North Carolina because Culver already knew they had separate organizations), March and April 1951, box 18, LLA Archives; "Summary Report of Replies to Questionnaires Regarding Negro Membership Sent to the Presidents of Library Associations in Southern States," box 18, LLA Archives.

33. 27th annual conference minutes, 7–9 May 1953, box 33, LLA Archives.

34. Adam Fairclough, *Race and Democracy: The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1915–1972* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 106; Robert D. Loevy, *The Civil Rights Act of 1964: The Passage of the Law That Ended Racial Segregation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 19. See Numan V. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance: Race and Politics in the South during the 1950's* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), on the coining of the term (110–11), on the formation of the Joint Committee to Maintain Segregation (74, 90), and on the effects of Massive Resistance on public debate (141). See also Kim Lacey Rogers, *Righteous Lives: Narratives of the New Orleans Civil Rights Movement* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 35.

35. Executive board minutes, 16 January 1954, box 31, LLA Archives; "Reports from Committees," *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 20, no. 3 (1957): 136. Committee comments can be found in a series of letters from 1956, all in box 31, LLA Archives: Reedy to Boone, 21 May, Betty Skau to Boone, 22 May, Dorothy M. McFatter to Boone, 23 May, Kate Wallach to Reedy, 24 May, Reedy to Boone, 26 May, Garland F. Taylor to Boone, n.d., Boone to Reedy, 4 June, Boone to Reedy, 20 November.

36. "Articles of Incorporation (Nonprofit)," Article 3, box 26, LLA Archives.

37. Morton Inger, *Politics and Reality in an American City: The New Orleans School Crisis of 1960* (New York: Center for Urban Education, 1969), 5–16, 50–51, and passim; Fairclough, *Race and Democracy*, 166; and Rogers, *Righteous Lives*, 41–44.

38. Joseph H. Reason, "Library and Segregation," in Allen Kent, Harold Lancour, and Jay E. Daily, eds., *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, vol. 16 (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1975), 25.

39. Riley, "The Effect of Segregation Laws."

40. Executive board minutes, 27 March 1960, box 14, Record Group 2/1/1; council minutes, 2 February 1961, box 15, Record Group 1/1/1, ALA Archives.

41. Wagner to Welker, 16 February 1961, box 17, LLA Archives; Welker to Wagner, 21 February 1961, Wagner to Morton, 14 March 1961, Morton to Wagner, 27 March 1961, Wallach to Wagner, 3 May 1961, executive board minutes, 27 May 1961, all in box 33, LLA Archives.

42. Wagner to Moore, 29 June 1961, and Moore to McNeal, 3 July 1961, both box 2, Record Group 69/2/6, ALA Archives.

43. Executive board minutes, exhibit 9, 3 June 1961, box 14, Record Group 2/1/1; Powell to Spain, 5 July 1961, box 2, Record Group 69/2/6; executive board minutes, 9–12 July 1961, box 14, Record Group 2/1/1; council transcript, 9–15 July 1961, box 15, Record Group 1/1/1; executive board minutes, 15 July 1961, box 14, Record Group 2/1/1, all in ALA Archives.

44. Executive board minutes, 23 September 1961, and Wallach to Murphy, 27 September 1961, both box 33, LLA Archives; Scallon E. Walsh, assistant attorney general of Louisiana, to G. J. LeDet, superintendent of Vermilion Parish School, 24 August 1961, Talmadge to Clift, 26 October 1961, Talmadge to Clift, 2 November 1961, all box 2, Record Group 69/2/6, ALA Archives.

45. Bentrup to McNeal, 29 September 1961, box 2, Record Group 69/2/6, ALA Archives; McNeal to Bentrup, 5 October 1961, Bentrup to John P. Iche, LLA secretary, 2 October 1961, Watson to Bentrup, 9 October 1961, all box 17, LLA Archives; "Minutes of Louisiana Library Association," *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 24, no. 3 (1961): 108.

46. McNeal to Bentrup, 30 November 1961, Bentrup to Welker, 4 December 1961, Welker to Bentrup, 5 December 1961, Bentrup to McNeal, 8 December 1961, all box 17, LLA Archives.

47. Council minutes, 31 January 1962, box 16, Record Group 1/1/1, ALA Archives.

48. For "hand-wringing," see Roger McDonough to David Clift, 9 February 1962, Miriam Hornback to McDonough, 12 February 1962, and Clift to McDonough, 22 February 1962, all box 2, Record Group 69/2/6, ALA Archives. Following the midwinter conference, Virginia Lacy Jones had written to African American librarians around the country to ask for their input. She forwarded the responses to Clift. The letters referred to here are a small sampling of the many responses: Josey to Jones, 16 February 1962, McPheeters to Clift, 22 March 1962, Bennett to Jones, 4 April 1962, Jackson to ALA executive board, 13 April 1962, and Robinson to Jones, 8 May 1962, all box 2, Record Group 69/2/6, ALA Archives.

49. McDonough to Farrell, 15 April 1962, Farrell to McDonough, 23 April 1962, McDonough to Farrell, 25 April 1962, Farrell to McDonough, 26 April 1962, Cushman to McDonough, 9 May 1962, McDonough to Cushman, 14 May 1962, and McDonough to Farrell, 15 May 1962, all box 1, Record Group 2/1/21, ALA Archives.

50. Council transcript, 18–22 June 1962, box 16, Record Group 1/1/1, ALA Archives.

51. *Ibid.*

52. Clift to Schenker, 3 August 1962, box 17, LLA Archives; executive board minutes, 15 September 1962, box 9, LLA Archives; executive board minutes, exhibit 14, 9–11 November 1962, box 14, Record Group 2/1/1, ALA Archives; executive board minutes, 30 November 1962, box 31, and Schenker to Clift, 3 December 1962, box 17, both LLA Archives; Mrs. Max Schenker, "The President's Page," *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 24, no. 4 (1962): 142; executive board minutes, 28 January, 1 February 1963, box 14, Record Group 2/1/1, council minutes, 30–31 January 1963, box 17, Record Group 1/1/1, Clift to Schenker, 5 March 1963, box 2, Record Group 69/2/6, all ALA Archives.

53. Edmee Elliott, "The President's Page," *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 26, no. 3 (1963): 88; executive board minutes, 23 June 1964, box 31, and executive board minutes, 18 March 1964, box 9, both LLA Archives.

54. Council minutes, 3 July 1964, box 17, Record Group 1/1/1, and executive board minutes, exhibit 6, 5 August 1964, box 15, Record Group 2/1/1, both ALA Archives.

55. E. J. Josey, "A Dreamer—With a Tiny Spark," in E. J. Josey, ed., *Black Librarian in America* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1970), 297–323; Walter T. Johnston to Shirley Stephenson, n.d. (fall of 1964), and Stephenson to Johnston, 1 October 1964, both box 17, LLA Archives.

56. Germaine Krettek and Howard Hubbard, "ALA Washington Notes," *Wilson Library Bulletin* 38, no. 1 (1963): 82–83; James E. Bryan, "The American Library Association and Civil Rights," *ALA Bulletin* (September 1963): 747.

57. Executive board minutes, docket, p. 4, box 15, Record Group 2/1/1, ALA Archives; Castagna to Stephenson, 10 August 1964, and Stephenson to Castagna, 28 August 1964, both box 17, LLA Archives; "News Notes," *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 27, no. 3 (1964): 127.

58. Heard to Stephenson, 18 January 1965, box 17, LLA Archives; executive board minutes, 23 January 1965, box 33, LLA Archives.

59. "Proceedings," *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 28, no. 2 (1965): 65–71; business meeting, 3rd general session, 20 March 1965, box 26, LLA Archives; Stephenson to Castagna, 31 March 1965, Clift to Stephenson, 27 April 1965, Stephenson to LLA board, 30 April 1965, Stephenson to LLA board, 10 May 1965, all box 17, LLA Archives; executive board minutes, 3–4 May 1965, box 15, Record Group 2/1/1, and council minutes, 6–9 July 1965, box 18, Record Group 1/1/1, both ALA Archives.

60. Fairclough, *Race and Democracy*, 340; "Council Committee on Institutional Membership Report to the Executive Board," 29 October 1965, box 18, Record Group 1/1/1, ALA Archives.

61. Scheerer to Harwell, 23 May 1966, box 17, LLA Archives; "NDEA Institute at LSU," *LLA Bulletin* 30, no. 1 (1967): 16–17; Olga Hines Hayward, review of *Forgotten Voices: Dissenting Southerners in an Age of Conformity*, ed. Charles E. Wynes, *LLA Bulletin* 30, no. 2 (1967): 94–96; Gladys Marie Sturgis, "School Desegregation: A Selected Bibliography," *LLA Bulletin* 30, no. 3 (1967): 122–23, passim; Eleanor C. Joseph, "Presentation of Essae M. Culver Distinguished Service Award," *LLA Bulletin* 30, no. 1 (1967): 22–23; Dawson, "Celebrating African-American Librarians and Librarianship," 73.

62. For a discussion of the complexity of racial attitudes, see Howard Schuman, Charlotte Steeh, Lawrence Bobo, and Maria Krysan, *Racial Attitudes in America: Trends and Interpretations*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 311–27. See the same work for data about public opinion (27–28). Gary Orfield, "The 1964 Civil Rights Act and American Education," and Katherine Tate and Gloria J. Hampton, "Changing Hearts and Minds: Racial Attitudes and Civil Rights," both in Bernard Grofman, ed., *Legacies of the 1964 Civil Rights Act* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2000), 89–128, 167–89, discuss the social impact of the Civil Rights Act and the role that political leadership played in developing a civil rights consciousness.

63. The story of civil rights and the Georgia Library Association is yet to be written. See Patterson Toby Graham, *A Right to Read: Segregation and Civil Rights in Alabama's Public Libraries, 1900–1965* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002), 99–130. Barrett and Bishop, "Integration and the Alabama Library Association," also present a well-documented account of events in Alabama. Clarence W. Hunter gives only a basic outline of the story in Mississippi ("The Integration of the Mississippi Library Association," *Mississippi Libraries* 56, no. 3 [1992]: 68–71). Further documentation in that state is warranted. Reinette F. Jones, *Library Service to African Americans in Kentucky, from the Reconstruction Era to the 1960s* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2002) demonstrates the kind of moderation that was prevalent in the border South, which made the transition for both libraries and librarians an easier process.