

## Abstract

This paper examines the Atlanta Student Movement's effect on the traditional leadership style within the black community in 1960. During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, black leaders espoused racial uplift ideology, which argued that as African-Americans continued to make economic and moral progress, white racism would diminish. The emergence of the Atlanta Student Movement resulted in the shift to democratic leadership. By creating a grassroots movement that promoted direct action, student participants of the Atlanta Student Movement confronted the dominant leadership within the black community, which was manifested through the traditional uplift utilized by older African-American leaders.

Principle for Peace: Atlanta Student Movement and the Shift From Racial Uplift Ideology  
to Democratic Leadership

“Dr. Mays, let me take you back to a speech you made in Chapel some years ago,” Morehouse student Lonnie King recalled on March 17, 1960. “The title of your speech was ‘Never Sacrifice a Principle for Peace.’” The occasion for this reminiscence was an emergency meeting Morehouse President Benjamin E. Mays had arranged. Mays was concerned about King’s plans to march to the Capitol building in Atlanta. King continued, “what you are asking us to do is to sacrifice the principle of segregation that we’re trying to fight for so that we can have peace. There will be no peace as long as there is segregation.”<sup>1</sup> Since early February King had set out to produce a protest movement in Atlanta with other students to break the eerie peace produced by segregated Atlanta. The first sit-in had occurred two days prior to the emergency meeting, on March 15. King was determined to march to the capitol and not let the effects of the Atlanta’s first sit-in grow stale. Mays relied on the fact that King had taken his advice not to protest the past month and a half save the March 15 protest. He had attempted to deter King’s plans again. What had resulted from King’s and the students’ determination to protest and Mays and the old guard’s attempts to deter protests was a general shift in the black leadership that was clear during the emergency meeting. King represented the emerging student movement and democratic leadership. Mays represented the old guard, the older leaders of Atlanta who noticed the emerging student leadership. King finished speaking. President Mays was speechless. The Morehouse president simply responded by saying, “See you at Wheat Street.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Winston A. Grady-Willis, *Challenging U.S. Apartheid: Atlanta and Black Struggles for Human Rights, 1960-1977* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 12.

<sup>2</sup> King and the students planned to march to Wheat Street Baptist Church. Their plan was to march from campus, past the state capitol, ending at Wheat Street Baptist Church Ibid. 12.

In the spring of 1960, the formation of the Atlanta Student Movement began the shift from racial uplift ideology to democratic leadership within the black community in Atlanta. Racial uplift ideology was the self-help ideology of educated African-Americans during the early and mid-20th century.<sup>3</sup> It argued that as African-Americans continued to make economic and moral progress, white racism would continue to diminish. Morehouse President Benjamin E. Mays noted in his autobiography, “I saw our role as one of helping Negroes build respect and pride in themselves despite the strangling chains of segregation”.<sup>4</sup> By 1960, representatives of the racial uplift ideology dominated African-American political life and were considered the established Negro leadership. Ultimately, uplift ideology created a middle class whose duty it was to speak for the entire community. As a result, other groups including college students, women, and the working class had fewer opportunities to advocate for themselves. By creating a grass roots movement, student participants of the Atlanta Student Movement confronted the dominant leadership within the black community, which was manifested through the traditional uplift ideology utilized by older African American leaders.

Uplift ideology not only fractured the black community, but also perpetuated paternalism and racism. Paternalism within the black community revolved around generational and class tensions, while racism revolved around racial tensions in segregated Atlanta. By confronting the very system that contributed to uplift ideology, the first generation of Atlanta Student Movement participants ushered in a new method for uniting the black community and challenging segregation. The effort to grapple with class and generational tensions within the black community was manifested both intellectually and practically in terms of creating a movement

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<sup>3</sup> For a more thorough understanding of racial uplift ideology, see Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Benjamin E. Mays, *Born to Rebel: An Autobiography* (Athens: University of Georgia Press), 120.

that placed an emphasis on democratic methods for selecting leaders. In other words, the shift from uplift ideology to democratic leadership was largely a changing ideology within the black middle class. For example, Julian Bond, a prominent member of the Atlanta Student Movement, had largely been raised in an academic and black environment.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, whereas the University of Chicago scholar Mays and the established leadership held conventional uplift views of building respect and pride, Bond and his generations' shift to democratic leadership was largely affected by larger mass movements like the Montgomery Bus boycotts. Bond declared, "Here I am a college student, I'm going to be...in the elite. Here's this illiterate uneducated woman and she's making this sacrifice. Why in the hell can't I?"<sup>6</sup> Through the creation of a more democratic movement, the students not only empowered themselves, but also began on the road to removing the old guard's paternal grasp and empowering the larger black masses.

This paper examines the Atlanta Student Movement's effect on the traditional leadership style within the black community. The "black community" will be the Atlanta University Center, the "six institutions of learning for the black community: Atlanta University, Clark College, Morris Brown College, Morehouse College, Spelman College, and the Inter-denominational Theological Center."<sup>7</sup> From the formation of the Atlanta Student Movement within the Atlanta University Center in February, the old guard attempted to contain the burgeoning leadership. By the time of Lonnie King's plan to march to Wheat Baptist Church six weeks later, the old guard had begun acknowledging the student's leadership.

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<sup>5</sup> William Rogers, *The Bonds: An American Family* (New York: Atheneum, 1971), 148-150, 181.

<sup>6</sup> Vincent D. Fort, "The Atlanta Sit-In Movement, 1960-1961, An Oral Study," in *Atlanta, Georgia, 1960-1961 Sit-Ins and Student Activism*, ed. David J. Garrow (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing Inc. 1989), 123.

<sup>7</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 89.

## Atlanta Old Guard and Racial Uplift Ideology

Before the formation of the Atlanta Student Movement the old guard, proponents of racial uplift ideology, were the black community's established leaders. The old guard consisted of men in the forties and fifties who usually engaged in interracial partnerships with the white establishment. They also formed the core of the black upper class in Atlanta and included the presidents of the six institutions of higher education, the leading businessmen, distinguished physicians, a few professors who played strategic roles in the affairs of the Negro community, and a handful of other professional men.<sup>8</sup> Their political outlook was generally conservative, favoring a kind of accommodationism that allowed their communities, so they imagined, to coexist peacefully in segregated Atlanta. They were usually homeowners who made significant economic, social, and political advancements since the turn of the century.<sup>9</sup>

In segregated Atlanta, the old guard felt they had a special responsibility to speak for the masses and to act in the best interests of the community. This paternalism reflected the uplift ideology that dictated that the African-Americans who could help themselves should uplift their communities. Uplifting the black community largely resulted from the debilitating existence of segregation in southern cities like Atlanta. Indeed, racial uplift ideology needs to be placed in relation to segregated Atlanta to make sense of why the old guard felt they had a special responsibility to speak for the black masses and act in the best interests of the community.

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<sup>8</sup>August Meier and David Lewis, "History of the Negro Upper Class in Atlanta, Georgia," 1890-1950," *Journal of Negro Education* 28 (Spring 1959), 133.

<sup>9</sup>E. Franklin Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie: The Rise of a New Middle Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1957), 43, 48, 50, 93-94; Virginia H. Hein, "The Image of a 'City Too Busy to Hate,'" *Phylon* 33 no. 3 (3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, 1972): 211-212.

Despite the old guard's use of its own form of paternalism, there continued to be two Atlantas, one black and one white, and a fractured black Atlanta.<sup>10</sup> Born in the South, schooled in the North, Mays returned to the South in 1921 to teach at Morehouse College. Going to Atlanta meant "entering a new world in Negro-white relations...it was in Atlanta that I [Mays] was to find that the cruel tentacles of race prejudice reached out to invade and distort every aspect of Southern life."<sup>11</sup> Mays outlook of Atlanta was limited to the black community. In fact the vast majority of whites during the first half of the twentieth century were mostly unaware and unaffected by the existence of a progressive black community that contained men like Mays, as well as the deplorable conditions in which most of the black masses lived. When people spoke of the city of Atlanta, both nationally and locally, unless otherwise specified, they always meant "white Atlanta." Nonetheless, Mays and the old guard formed relationships and coalitions with the white leadership in Atlanta.<sup>12</sup>

The national press used the relationships between the old guard and the white leadership as an example of the city's forward thinking, but in reality, the relationship was simply examples of old-fashioned brokerage politics. The white elite and black Atlanta's old guard each exercised some leverage over the other, resulting in an arrangement that proved mutually beneficial. For the white community, paternalism towards the entire black community provided a self-congratulatory sense of generosity and superiority. For the old guard, paternalism toward the black working-class provided a few material goods and limited political power. Moreover, old guard and white elite paternalism served to strengthen the system of white supremacy by

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<sup>10</sup> Hein, "The Image of the City Too Bust to Hate, 212; Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie*, 90 and 105; Aldon Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities for Change* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 4; David Harmon, *Beneath the Image of the Civil Rights Movement and Race Relations: Atlanta, Georgia, 1946-1981* (New York: Garland, 1996), 59.

<sup>11</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 67.

<sup>12</sup> Hein, "The Image of the City Too Busy to Hate," 209, 211 and 215.

masking racial injustices with a false sense of interracial friendship and cooperation. The Hartsfield interracial coalition in the late 1950's and 1960's was a prime example. The interracial coalition did not address issues that fractured the black community, nor did it promote any real opportunities for the black masses to achieve political and economic equality.<sup>13</sup> These older men “had a marriage with William B. Hartsfield and the white folk in this town. The old guard would sit at the table and negotiate with him,” recalled student protestor Ben Brown.<sup>14</sup>

Black Atlanta's old guard stressed the importance of black unity in the struggle against racial oppression, but only the kind of unity which kept the elder leaders firmly in charge of the decision making process. Under an alliance of “mutual respect,” the white business community retained political power and continued to pursue a program of economic growth and downtown redevelopment that largely excluded the black. Decisions were made in private with little consideration for what the larger community wanted. Frequently held mass meetings, at the black churches and the Butler Street YMCA, were used by old guard leaders to generate support and enthusiasm for decisions already made.<sup>15</sup>

Through racial uplift ideology, elite blacks sought the cooperation of white political and business elites in the pursuit of race progress. In Atlanta, attempts to diminish the racial caste largely centered on the old guard's attempts to regain political power. Blacks in Georgia were robbed of the ballot in 1908 and it was not until 1946 when a federal court, in the Primus King case, declared the white primary Georgia unconstitutional that blacks regained the right to vote.

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<sup>13</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 221-233.

<sup>14</sup> Benjamin Brown, interview by Cliff Kuhn, October 15, 1996, folder 2, transcript, “Georgia Government Documentation Project,” Special Collections and Archives, Georgia state University Library, Atlanta, 17-18.

<sup>15</sup> Hein, “The Image of the City Too Busy to Hate, 212; Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie*, 90 and 105; Aldon Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities for Change* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 4.

Even with the ensuing student protest movements, the maintenance of political power, no matter how small, became one of the old guard's main concerns.<sup>16</sup>

While racial uplift ideology assumed economic and moral progress would diminish the most brutal manifestations of white racism, the effects of racial uplift ideology are best seen through class stratification and status in the black community. Within the black community, members of the Atlanta old guard oftentimes gained status and political power through their membership in black clubs. A core of the black upper class in Atlanta formed the leading men's clubs, the local "Boule" of the Sigma Pi Phi, a national business and professional fraternity. Indeed, many of black Atlanta's male elite, including at least three of the six AUC Presidents, civic and political leader John Wesley Dobbs, and attorney Austin T. Walden, were each members of this organization.<sup>17</sup> The AUC also exuded status within the black community. Many of the faculty and administrators served on boards, held political appointments, and started business in Atlanta. This overlap between black Atlanta's business and academic elite ensured that education and social class defined who in the black community were considered acceptable participants in Atlanta's interracial dialogue.<sup>18</sup>

Membership in black clubs and the AUC did not alter the reality that was segregated Atlanta. Benjamin E. Mays on arriving in segregated Atlanta for the first time in 1921 notes, "protesting to the train and bus companies evoked no response. Status made no difference. Black doctors, professors, businessmen, ministers – all felt the scourge of discrimination and segregation in travel just as did the black butler, maid, cook, and janitor. All Negroes were equal

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<sup>16</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 84.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* 134.

<sup>18</sup> John V. Moeser, *The Separate City: Black Communities in the Urban South, 1940-1968* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995), 54-55, 108; Jack L. Walker, "The Functions of Disunity: Negro Leadership in a Southern City," *The Journal of Negro Education* 32, no. 3 (Summer 1963): 231.

and equally inferior.”<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless, a sustained reflection on the old guard’s positions as both an aspiring class and a racially subordinate caste denied all political rights and protection left the old guard claiming class distinctions, indeed, the very existence of a “better class” of blacks, as evidence of what they called race progress.<sup>20</sup> Uplift ideology was the instrument used to attempt to diminish the racial caste, at the mercy of heightening class distinctions.

The old guard, to whom many jobs were closed during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, saw educational achievement as the primary indicator of status.<sup>21</sup> In Mays’s and much of the Old Guard’s views, education became the greatest tool for gaining status and eliminating the racial caste. Mays recounts two of the most prominent problems he wrestled with during his childhood and youth. The first, how to get an education and the more fundamental problem, how to become and remain a man of pride, dignity, and integrity in a society determined to rob him of all these qualities.<sup>22</sup> The desire to make economic and moral progress rings loudly for Mays. Desiring to go to New England primarily to dismiss the notion that Negroes were inferior people, Mays declares that “Bates College did not emancipate him; it did the far greater service of making it possible for him to emancipate himself; to accept with dignity his own worth as a free man.”<sup>23</sup>

Through educational achievement, the old guard elites like Mays made uplift the basis for a racialized elite identity claiming Negro improvement through class stratification as a race progress, which entailed an attenuated conception of bourgeois qualifications for rights and citizenships.<sup>24</sup> Mays believed that ameliorating the racial problem by even the slightest degree and changing the Southern pattern of society required education. Instilling in many a Morehouse

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<sup>19</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 80.

<sup>20</sup> Gaines, *Racial Uplift*, 3.

<sup>21</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, xv.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* 45.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* 60.

<sup>24</sup> Gaines, *Racial Uplift*, 3.

student a sense of his own worth and a pride that thereafter enabled him to walk the earth with dignity was the goal.<sup>25</sup> Raised in the worst period of the Jim Crow South, Mays found looking inward and maintaining self-respect and integrity as the only option within the segregated South. “In this perilous world, if a black boy wanted to live a halfway normal life and die a natural death he had to learn early the art of how to get along with white folks,” Mays recollected.<sup>26</sup>

Mays never outgrew this philosophy. On countless Tuesday mornings he pointed out to the Morehouse students that the “only way they could be free in a rigidly segregated society was by consistent refusal ever to accept subservience and segregation in their own minds. As long as a man registers some form of protest against that which is obviously wrong, he has not surrendered his freedom, and his soul is still his own.”<sup>27</sup> Indeed, Mays declares, long before the current emphasis on pride in being black, the Morehouse student had already found his identity.<sup>28</sup> Mays and the old guard’s concern was ultimately not with the larger black masses, but with moral and economic progress within an elite community that entailed a tempered conception of bourgeois values. Mays believed that though he could make little impact on the larger society, he did what he could in the small area over which he presided for more than a quarter of a century. There was a time when he believed that black students generally shared this philosophy.<sup>29</sup> The year 1960 proved otherwise.

### **The Formation of the Atlanta Student Movement**

While in the Navy, Lonnie King had informed a shipmate, Everett Render that he was going to return to Atlanta because “there’s going to be a revolution in the South and I want to be

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<sup>25</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 190.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* 22.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* 196.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* 190.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* 310.

there, be a part of it.” A few years later Lonnie King, now a Navy veteran, was completing his junior year at Morehouse College when he, along with his classmates, heard of the Greensboro sit-ins on February 1, 1960.<sup>30</sup> Four African-American freshman from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College, a historically black institution, had walked into a local Woolworth’s Drugstore, purchased toiletries, and then sat down at the “white only” lunch counter and demanded service. When they were refused, instead of leaving, they remained. The next day, they returned with several other students from the college, each of them demanding service at the “white-only” lunch counter. Their actions inspired the student phase of the civil rights movement that would spread throughout the South within a matter of two months. Comprised of mostly students from historically black colleges and universities, the sit-in movement spread to fifty-four cities in nine southern cities.<sup>31</sup> Inspired by the sit-ins in Greensboro, Lonnie King entered Yates and Milton’s Drugstore, a local hangout for Atlanta University Center students. King was a native Atlantan who had grown up in a poor African American neighborhood in the West End of the city. During his childhood, he faced the combined rigors of segregation and poverty. In the late 1950s, King had served in the navy largely to escape Atlanta and his poverty.<sup>32</sup> While hanging out at the Yates and Milton Drugstore, nicknamed “the corner” by the mostly male college students who hung out there, King discussed with Clark College student Ben Brown, also a junior and Atlanta native, the possibility of starting Atlanta’s own sit-in movement.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Grady-Willis, *Challenging U.S. Apartheid*, 4; Howell Raines, *My Souls is Rested: Movement Days in the Deep South Remembered* (New York: Putnam, 1977), 83.

<sup>31</sup> William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina and the Black Struggle for Freedom*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 71; Grady-Willis, *Challenging U.S. Apartheid*, 4; Harry G. Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight: Spelman College and the Civil Rights Movement, 1957-1967* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2005), 24; Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 287.

<sup>32</sup> Harmon, *Beneath the Image*, 127.

<sup>33</sup> Benjamin Brown, folder 1, pp. 3.

King later met with Morehouse sophomores Julian Bond and Joe Pierce, and began discussing the need for moving forward with their own protests.<sup>34</sup> At Yates and Milton drugstore King approached Julian Bond, a fellow student at Morehouse, and began an informal discussion on organizing. Bond, who was four years younger, came from a different social and economic background. “I had been slowly overcoming the fear of my geography – I had declined a downtown shopping trip when I first moved to Atlanta in 1957, because I had a Northern Negro newspaper view of the South, which meant that lynchings, beatings and other abuses became daily occurrences in downtown Atlanta in my mind. I envied my classmates who were born and raised in Atlanta; they had what then seemed to be a courage I lacked,” Bond recalled.<sup>35</sup> His father, Horace Mann Bond, was a prominent African American scholar who had served as the first black president of Lincoln University and later as Dean of Atlanta University’s School of Education. Although born in Nashville, Bond spent his childhood and teenage years on a black college campus in Pennsylvania.<sup>36</sup> Bond notes:

As I sat cutting chapel, a stocky, football-player-gone-soft type approached and thrust an ink smeared copy of the *Atlanta Daily World*, the oldest daily in America, in front of me. A right-hand headline read something like “Greensboro Students Sit-in For Third Day”... ‘Don’t you think something like that should happen here?’ he demanded. ‘It probably will,’ I said, hoping to dismiss him. ‘Don’t you think someone should make it happen here?’ ‘Someone probably will.’ ‘Let’s make it happen!’ He squeezed into the booth across from me. ‘You take this side (indicating a row of booths) and I’ll take the other. Invite everyone to a meeting at noon in Sale Hall Annex.’ I was disturbed. I imagined that the others in the drugstore were-like myself-interested in other things. I thought an appeal to meet about something that had happened in Greensboro (which at that time I thought was in Virginia) would

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<sup>34</sup> Grady-Willis, *Challenging U.S. Apartheid*, 4.

<sup>35</sup> Julian Bond, “Autobiography: Memoirs of a Southern Gentleman, *Ramparts* (January and February 1967); 21-22.

<sup>36</sup> Harmon, *Beneath the Image*, 127; Williams, *The Bonds*, 148-150, 181.

be like asking everyone to strip nude and march on the state Capitol.<sup>37</sup>

Because of Bond's reputation as a gifted writer, King wanted to involve him in the protest activities. Bond aspired to be a poet. While initially reluctant, Bond agreed to participate.<sup>38</sup> Now a team, the two young men set out to rally a new generation of social activists—a bold often fearless, collective of dissenters from the racial status quo.

The two began their task of inviting students to the first meeting that would form the Atlanta Student Movement. The same afternoon, thirty students from Clark and Morehouse met in Sale Hall on the Morehouse campus to discuss the racial situation in the city, the “revolution” in the South, and their role in the struggle.<sup>39</sup> Discussion revolved around how the students were going to respond to the various sit-ins throughout the South. “We talked,” Bond remembered, “about what to do. Send a telegram of support? Have a larger meeting? Sit-in ourselves?”<sup>40</sup> Whether or not the students understood the hurdles they would receive from the old guard, in hindsight, another good question would have been how the students would deal with the AUC presidents.

In the days following the Greensboro sit-in and the first meeting, the students then entertained various means towards forming a direct action movement in Atlanta. King, Bond, and a group of AUC students held a series of workshops and seminars on the meaning of nonviolence and the techniques of picketing and organizing sit-ins. On the subject of nonviolence in the Atlanta sit-in, there was no dispute in anyone's mind about the use of

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<sup>37</sup> Bond, “Autobiography,” 21-22.

<sup>38</sup> Grady-Willis, *Challenging U.S. Apartheid*, 4; Raines, *My Soul is Rested*, 84.

<sup>39</sup> Various scholarly works vary on the number of students that attended the first meeting. Bond states about 30 students met in Sale Hall annex. A number of scholarly works state 20 students. Bond, “Autobiography,” 21-22; Harmon, *Beneath the Image*, 128; Raines, *My Soul is Rested*, 84; Grady-Willis, *Challenging U.S. Apartheid*, 4.

<sup>40</sup> Bond, “Autobiography,” 21-22.

nonviolence. Bond recalls, “we planned first for sit-ins at all of Atlanta’s dime stores, and Lonnie King and myself were detailed to survey the scene. We stood at each row of white-only lunch counters, pad and pencil in hand counting seats. Salespersons bristled and solicitously asked if they could help us. Men who looked like store detectives followed us around.”<sup>41</sup> The students met for nearly two weeks, daily, the group steadily growing. Within two weeks, the group of committed students were representative of all the schools in the Atlanta University Center. Nonetheless, the group faced difficulty in launching its first protests. The students initially decided to launch their first sit-ins at downtown lunch counters on 12 February, President Lincoln’s birthday, but postponed them when they realized they did not have enough center-wide support.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, the Atlanta University, despite its leadership in producing black professionals was in many ways a fractured community of historically black institutions, which was more unified in name than in reality. As during the early twentieth century when the old guard’s power was not threatened, class-based historic tensions within the black community created a breeding ground for a genuine distrust between the students that threatened to dismantle the movement before it started.<sup>43</sup> As the first meeting had turned into other meetings, inter-school chauvinism forced the invitation of other schools – each student body afraid that the other was taking over.<sup>44</sup> Yet, when the old guard- President Brawley of Clark College and Rufus Clement of Atlanta University- told the students not to sit-in, the students disagreed in unison. Lonnie King recalled, “We fully realized that their goal was to stop everything if they could.”

During February and early March 1960, Atlanta’s old guard delayed the student’s effort to protest, attempting to funnel their energies into negotiations and statements. The students had

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid. 22.

<sup>42</sup> Fort, “The Atlanta Sit-In Movement,” 131; Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight*, 25.

<sup>43</sup> Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie*, 60.

<sup>44</sup> Bond, “Autobiography,” 21-22

not revealed their plans to the administrators of the University because they were suspicious of both the college presidents and the old guard in Atlanta. From the beginning of the movement, the students were determined to make their own policy.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, the presidents received word of the student's intentions and their desire to protest alerted the presidents. The students had been planning for their strategy for twelve days before a committee of them reservedly approached President Mays on February 17, 1960, to discuss their plans to begin the sit-ins in downtown Atlanta on February 19.<sup>46</sup> The purpose of the visit was to inform Mays of their plans rather than ask for his advice.<sup>47</sup> Mays writes, "what advice could I give to them. Actually, they did not come to me for advice but rather to inform me of their determination to strike a blow for freedom in downtown Atlanta to get my blessings."<sup>48</sup> By becoming the student protestors' mentor, Mays understood their determination. Mays mentorship also reflected the old guards loosening grip on the students. The students looked to the old guard for advice, not leadership.

Other members of the Old Guard like the presidents of the other five institutions in the Atlanta University Center were less supportive of the students' plans. At the time, the other five were Albert E. Manly (Spelman), James Brawley (Clark), James Cunningham (Morris Brown), Rufus Clement (Atlanta University), and Harry V. Richardson (Interdenominational Theological Center).<sup>49</sup> The six met together frequently in an organization known as the Council of Presidents of the Atlanta University Center to make decisions about issues that affected the center as a whole. Walker notes the presidents decided that they would try to maintain control over the

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<sup>45</sup> Walker, *Sit-Ins in Atlanta*, 64.

<sup>46</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 289. On February 17, 1960, the Georgia legislature responded to the growing movement by passing a special anti-trespass law.

<sup>47</sup> Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight*, 25;

<sup>48</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 289.

<sup>49</sup> Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight*, 25; Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 288.

developments, but that they would not try to stop the demonstrations altogether.<sup>50</sup> When the Council of Presidents learned of the students' plans for demonstrations, student leaders from each institution were immediately asked to come before the council and explain their intentions. Two students from each of the six campuses met with the council for the first time on 20 February.<sup>51</sup> At the conclusion of their first meeting, the students and the presidents agreed to continue meeting twice weekly.<sup>52</sup> Later, in retrospect, Lonnie King, one of the student representatives, declared that he was convinced that the reason the presidents were so anxious to meet with the students was because they were hopeful they could persuade the students to forgo their plans for demonstrations in downtown Atlanta.<sup>53</sup>

Lonnie King's suspicions proved sound. While Mays seemed the most supportive of the students intentions, he still represented Old Guard views. Shortly after the presidents and students started meeting, President Mays received a telephone call from Roy Wilkins, then head of the NAACP in New York. Mr. Wilkins had advice for Dr. Mays: "Please tell the students to stick with their studies and go back to class. We need to address these issues through litigation." The NAACP had a large membership in the Southern states, had handled thousands of legal cases there, and was a long established center for Negroes wanting to show dissatisfactions. But it had not carried on any widespread campaigns of direct protest in the South. Surprised by the southern student sit-ins, Wilkins was attempting to rein in the emerging Atlanta Student Movement through Dr. Mays. When Dr. Mays relayed the message, the students listened politely and then replied, "Thank you, that's interesting, but we believe we have to get involved in direct

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<sup>50</sup> Walker, *Sit-ins in Atlanta*, 64.

<sup>51</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 288.

<sup>52</sup> Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight*, 26; Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 288.

<sup>53</sup> Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight*, 26; Karen Vanlandingham, "In Pursuit of a Changing Dream: Spelman College Students and the Civil Rights Movement, 1955-1962," M.A. thesis, Emory University, 1985, 58.

action.<sup>54</sup> Realizing the students were determined, the council attempted to sway them through the tactic of fear. Mays recalled that, “I made my position clear to the Morehouse students. Each student should make up his own mind about participating in the sit-ins, should be coerced by no one, and once he had made up his mind to demonstrate, he should be prepared to take the consequences for violating the law, however unjust it surely was.”<sup>55</sup> King, speaking for the group responded that they were just as concerned about their safety and their future, but the time to join the fight to tear down the walls of segregation was now. The group believed it was their responsibility as human beings and were much less willing to pacify the old guard leadership. Moreover, when Mays invited King to his office Mays expressed the opinion that a legal strategy was preferable. King respectfully disagreed, asserting the students’ position that with action in the courts alone, “we’ll be doing this for another fifty years.”<sup>56</sup> The students, already committed to their cause, would not be swayed. Nonetheless, Mays suggested that King and the other students who had been gathering at Sale Hall come to a special meeting of the AUC Council of Presidents.<sup>57</sup>

At the special meeting of the Council, Mays and the other presidents continued with their attempts to contain the emerging Atlanta Student Movement.<sup>58</sup> When the students arrived at the special meeting, they quickly realized that the AUC presidents had done some organizing of their own. The AUC educators had extended invitations to the student government presidents of each college, thereby bringing to the meeting the subtle disagreements and tensions that were

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<sup>54</sup> Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight*, 26; Herschelle Challenor, “Rewriting the Movement: Lessons from the Past for the Present and Future,” panel presentation, Clark Atlanta University, 28 February 2000.

<sup>55</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 288.

<sup>56</sup> Grady-Willis, *Challenging U.S. Apartheid*, 4.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* 4.

<sup>58</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 288.

beginning to occur within the student ranks.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, the presidents wanted to filter the emerging student movement through a hierarchy, thereby watering down the emerging democratic leadership begun by the students. It became clear to King that the presidents of the affiliated schools were largely supportive of possible protest action as a matter of principle.<sup>60</sup> James P. Brawley of Clark College, who argued that protest activity “would just embarrass” him, was the lone exception. Indeed, most of the presidents found themselves in a difficult position; the very institutions the students intended to demonstrate against were also the financial supporters of the AUC. Their financial security was dependent upon the administrations’ demonstration that their respective institutions were not put in place to challenge the status quo, but rather to assist exceptional black students in establishing themselves as leaders within their communities.

Led by Atlanta University President Rufus Clement, the educators contended that the students would be better served if they presented their concerns in writing before organizing lunch-counter protests. “We advised them to begin by telling everyone what they were crying about,” Clement recalled.<sup>61</sup> Clement suggested that the students prepare a “bill of particulars” about their concerns and that the presidents would not tell the students what to do. However, he said, “let us give you some advice. Before you take action, picketing or demonstrating, you should draw up a bill of particulars as to what your grievances are. If you do a good job, we will see that it gets printed in the local newspapers.”<sup>62</sup> The students understood Clements attempts to filter their frustrations through old guard means. Marian Wright, a student from Spelman, wrote

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<sup>59</sup> Fort, “The Atlanta Sit-In Movement,” 132.

<sup>60</sup> Grady-Willis, *Challenging U.S. Apartheid*, 4.

<sup>61</sup> Grady-Willis, *Challenging U.S. Apartheid*, 4. In his Autobiography, Mays indicates that Albert Manley suggested the students draw up a statement. However, there are also a number of scholarly works indicating Rufus Clements making suggestions to the students.

<sup>62</sup> Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight*, 27.

in her diary, “Clements and his damn conservatism.”<sup>63</sup> Later, in retrospect Julian Bond interpreted Clements’s suggestion as a “delaying move.”<sup>64</sup> Other student tempers flared, aware of the presidents’ obstructive measures. “I am damned sick and tired of our inactivity. The college presidents have been a big hindrance. Now as never before is the chance offered to do something. This is a history-making epoch where we-me-the-young-can be major characters. We are all in the air about sit-down protests now,” Marian Wright wrote in her diary on March 4.<sup>65</sup>

### **Atlanta Student Movement: Drafting “An Appeal For Human Rights”**

Selected by the students to formulate the manifesto (as it became known), students placed Julian Bond and Lonnie King from Morehouse, James Felder from Clark, Willie Mays from Atlanta University, Mary Ann Smith from Morris Brown, and Roslyn Pope, and Marian Wright from Spelman.<sup>66</sup> The students found a source of facts concerning the scope of discrimination in the city in a pamphlet entitled *Atlanta: A Second Look: The Negro Citizen in Atlanta*, a compilation of statistical data recovered from several surveys conducted by the Atlanta Committee for Cooperative Action, which had been published only two months before.<sup>67</sup> Borrowing from the seventeen-page pamphlet the students prepared a document that they titled “An Appeal for Human Rights.” The manifesto was largely written by students, not by presidents, and not by faculty.<sup>68</sup> Roslyn Pope wrote much of the first draft of the appeal.

On March 8, the students of the AUC adopted the final draft of “An Appeal.” According to Mary Ann Smith and Julian Bond, the AUC community did not unanimously accept the

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<sup>63</sup> Marian Wright Edelman, *Lanterns: A Memoir of Mentors* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999) 60.

<sup>64</sup> Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight*, 27; Raines, *My Soul is Rested*, 85.

<sup>65</sup> Edelman, *Lanterns: A Memoir*, 60

<sup>66</sup> Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight*, 27; Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 289.

<sup>67</sup> Walker, *Sit-Ins in Atlanta*, 65.

<sup>68</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 289.

document. Many students felt that the time taken to draft “An Appeal” detracted from the time that could have been spent organizing and engaging in direct action. It was only out of respect for the presidents of the AUC that the students agreed to accept the manifesto. By this time, signs of tensions between old guard leaders and the students had surfaced.<sup>69</sup> The manifesto subtly revealed some of the signs. The manifesto appeared as a full-page advertisement in the *Atlanta Constitution*, the *Atlanta Journal*, and the old guard newspaper, *Atlanta Daily World* on March 9, 1960.<sup>70</sup> “Roz [Roslyn Pope] did a good job,” Marian writes in her diary.<sup>71</sup> “They [the presidents] are not issuing the Manifesto as a final or last gesture and assure us that they are not trying to hinder us from whatever else we want to do do-sit-downs, boycotts, talking to Governor Vandiver, or whatever.”<sup>72</sup>

The writers of “An Appeal For Humans Rights” subtly revealed tensions between the old guard and the students. The document also revealed the separate goals of the old guard and the students. The first section of the manifesto announced that the six AUC institutions were united in “hearts, minds and bodies” in the fight for their inherent rights as citizens of the United States, but also as members of the human race.<sup>73</sup> The students had expanded the discourse to “humanship,” or the realm of human rights. The old guard’s appeal to rights of citizenship and inclusion had been expanded. Moreover, the students pledged their “unqualified support to those

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<sup>69</sup> Raines, *My Soul is Rested*, 85.

<sup>70</sup> Who paid for the ad is not entirely clear. Atlanta University president Rufus Clement said he paid for it with a personal check. The institutions [then] refunded it from student fees. However according to Julian Bond, Southern author Lillian Smith paid for the ad. Much of the scholarship gives payment of the ad to Rufus Clement; *AJC Magazine*, 15 August 1965, 38; Julian Bond, “The Politics of Civil Rights History,” in *New Directions in Civil Rights Studies*, ed. Armstead L. Robinson and Patricia Sullivan (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991) 12; Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight*, 28.

<sup>71</sup> Marian Wright Edelman, *Lanterns: A Memoir of Mentors* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999), 60.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* 60.

<sup>73</sup> “An Appeal for Human Rights,” *Atlanta Constitution*, *Atlanta Daily World* and *Atlanta Journal*, March 9, 1960, article, box 1, folder 2, Atlanta Student Movement Collection, Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center, Archives/Special Collections, Atlanta [later cited as “An Appeal for Human Rights,” *Atlanta Constitution*, *Atlanta Daily World*, *Atlanta Journal*].

students in this nation who had recently been engaged in the significance movement to secure certain long-awaited rights and privileges.” The students clearly understood that the issues they faced were inherently linked to both national and international struggles for civil and human rights.<sup>74</sup> Indeed, Spelman students Roslyn Pope, Marian Wright, and Herschelle Sullivan had studied abroad through the Merrill Scholarship Program.

The students continued to express dissatisfaction with the old guard’s methods. [They] were dissatisfied, not only with the existing conditions, but with the snail-like speed at which [racial injustices] were being ameliorated. The students warned that they did not intend to “wait placidly for those rights which are already and morally ours to be meted out to us one at a time.” Additionally, they listed the “discriminatory conditions” faced by African Americans in Atlanta, “supposedly one of the most progressive cities in the South.”<sup>75</sup>

[The students’ further marked separation from the Old Guard when they connected themselves to the protest movements occurring throughout the South. “An Appeal” asserts, “We pledge our unqualified support to those students in this nation who have recently been engaged in the significant movement to secure certain long-awaited rights and privileges.”<sup>76</sup> The students then connected the protest movements to the black masses. “This protest, like the bus boycott in Montgomery, has shocked many people throughout the world. Why? Because they had not quite realized the unanimity of spirit and purpose which motivated the thinking and action of the great majority of the Negro people.”<sup>77</sup> The students’ had begun speaking for the masses.

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<sup>74</sup> Spelman students Roslyn Pope, Marian Wright, and Herschelle Sullivan had studied abroad through the Merrill Scholarship Program before partaking in the student movements in Atlanta; Grady-Willis, *Challenging U.S. Apartheid*, 6.

<sup>75</sup> “An Appeal For Human Rights.”

<sup>76</sup> “An Appeal For Human Rights.”

<sup>77</sup> “An Appeal For Human Rights.”

The signees revealed the slight success of the old guard's attempts to filter the democratic movement through the Atlanta University Center. The manifesto was signed by a representative from each of the six institutions in the Atlanta University Center: Willie Mays (president of the Dormitory Council at Atlanta University), James Felder (president of the Student Government Association at Clark College), Marion D. Bennett (president of the Student Association at the Interdenominational Theological Center), Don Clarke (president of the Student Body at Morehouse), Mary Ann Smith (secretary of the Student Government at Morris Brown), and Roslyn Pope (president of the Student Government Association at Spelman).<sup>78</sup> Five of the six signees were members of their school's respective student government.

The meetings with Mays, the President's Council, and the formation of "An Appeal for Human Rights" had begun to reveal the growing divide between the students and the old guard. Now, its publication precipitated urgent efforts by the old guard and the white elite to prevent or prevent spontaneous direct action in Atlanta and, at all events, control the students. On the very day that the statement appeared, Mayor Hartsfield held a meeting at Rufus Clement's AU office with Lonnie King and the other student leaders. The mayor offered to facilitate meeting with the Chamber of Commerce for discussion of the students' concerns about segregation in restaurants and employment discrimination. He urged the students to meet with the city's business leaders before beginning protests. Hartsfield was trying his best to head off the protests with the trusted tool of biracial tools. The students also entertained pleas to postpone the demonstrations from a group of white ministers. The presidents of the black colleges persisted with advice against demonstrations. The editorial page of the *Atlanta Daily World* weighed in against direct action as well. The paper called for continued "communication," a "letter-writing campaign," in race

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<sup>78</sup> "An Appeal For Human Rights," *Atlanta Constitution, Atlanta Daily World, Atlanta Journal*.

relations, rather than the “breakdown in law and order” that surely would accompany demonstrations. “An Appeal” proved a dramatic, dynamic vehicle for giving vivid expression to complaints, which the white community was perhaps unaware [of]...The plea was an intelligent and effective tool to make a large part of our citizenry pause, ponder and to open channels for implementation and remedial action towards many of the problems, exposed in the appeal.”<sup>79</sup> The conservative *Atlanta Daily World* had applauded the student effort, especially since it represented a departure from protests.

Chorus of voices importuned the AU students to spurn sit-ins. The students shook their heads. The meeting with Mayor Hartsfield proved ineffective to the students. “Mayor Hartsfield met with students leaders. Nothing was accomplished,” Marian wrote in her diary.<sup>80</sup> The next day, March 10, Marian discussed protest tactics and surveyed City Hall.<sup>81</sup>

The time had come. The students had made a statement. [They] were in the midst of a history-making epoch.<sup>82</sup> The student’s Appeal for Human Rights was also in the midst of immediate reactions and critiques from the larger Atlanta community. Swift reactions to the student’s statement included Governor Vandiver, who declared “I have read the ‘paid advertisement’ purporting to come from the students of the six affiliated institutions forming the Atlanta University Center. Obviously, it was not written by students. It did not sound like it was prepared in any Georgia school or college.”<sup>83</sup> Mayor William Hartsfield, having failed to

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<sup>79</sup> *Atlanta Daily World*, 10 March 1960, 5.

<sup>80</sup> Edelman, *Lanterns: A Memoir*, 61.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* 61.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* 61.

<sup>83</sup> *Atlanta Constitution*, 10 March 1960, 15.

diminish the student's determination, cautiously declared that the manifesto expressed "the legitimate aspirations of young people throughout the nation and the entire world."<sup>84</sup>

### **The Atlanta Student Sit-Ins: Defining the New Leadership**

The initial sit-in demonstrations took place largely without the prior knowledge of the old guard.<sup>85</sup> As long as there had been no action in connection with the advertised Appeal for Human Rights, there was generally praise for what the students had done. When demonstrations started, it was a different story.<sup>86</sup> Inspired by the favorable attention "An Appeal" received, the students planned their first sit-in for March 15, 1960. The scheduled sit in was six days after the appeal had been published and six weeks after the Greensboro sit-ins had begun. Marian and the students selected city and county eating facilities located in federal buildings, and cafeterias with bus terminals, for conducting their first sit-ins. The students chose ten locations: the state capitol, Fulton County Courthouse, City Hall, Trailways and Greyhound bus stations, Union and Terminal railway stations, S.H. Kress 10-cent store, and two cafeterias-the S&S and Sprayberry-located in federal buildings.<sup>87</sup>

At precisely 11:30 A.M. on that cold mid-March day, two hundred African-American students from the AUC fanned out across the city. [They] congregated in Dena sage Hall [at Atlanta University] for final instructions and pep talks. Otis Moss, co-pastor with Dr. Martin Luther King, Sr. of Ebenezer Baptist Church, got up and talked of all the things [the students] should be prepared for-abuse, hurt, and even death.<sup>88</sup> Dividing themselves into small groups, the

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<sup>84</sup> *Atlanta Constitution*, 10 March 1960, 14.

<sup>85</sup> Jack Walker, "Protest and Negotiation: A Case Study of Negro Leadership in Atlanta, Georgia," *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 7 (May 1963): 104.

<sup>86</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 273.

<sup>87</sup> Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight*, 33.

<sup>88</sup> Edelman, *Lanterns: A Memoir*, 61.

students, all dressed in their Sunday best under their white coats, simultaneously targeted facilities that Jim Crow laws forbade them to enter, despite their fancy dress and good manners. The students entered the State Capitol, City Hall, the Fulton County Courthouse, the train stations and bus terminals, and two office buildings patronized by federal employees. They sat down and in a courteous manner asked for service. Once refused, the students remained until they were arrested. Seventy-seven demonstrators, including Marian Wright, were arrested and charged with violating the anti-sit down law, passed by the Georgia Legislature on February 17, 1960, in anticipation of the sit-in movement. The sit-in movement had come to Atlanta.<sup>89</sup> SOMETHING WORTH LIVING AND DYING FOR! Marian Wright's diary spoke.<sup>90</sup>

The students' decision to conduct their first sit-in demonstrations on March 1 inspired a harsh reaction from the old guard newspaper, *Atlanta Daily World*. In an editorial titled "The Sit-Downs Hit Here," the newspaper questioned the "necessity here in Atlanta to continue the demonstrations," since the students had already "so intelligently and impressively presented their position [on segregation in Atlanta] through the press."<sup>91</sup> Understanding the "impatience of youth" the article called for the adult community to help direct the energies of the students. They argued that the "students must be impressed with the facts and realities of life. We must all understand the political implications in the unsolved problems. There are many problems to be resolved, but certainly some are more important than others."<sup>92</sup> The article highlighted old guard's primary concerns. Issues included voting and political influences, improved economic opportunities, and desegregation in education.

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<sup>89</sup> AC, 19 March 1960, 1; *Atlanta Daily World*, 16 March 1960, 1; *New York Times*, 16 March 1960, 27; *Atlanta Constitution*, 16 March 1960; Walker, "Sit-Ins in Atlanta," 67; Walker, "Protest and Negotiation," 104; 102; Fort, "Atlanta Sit-in Movement," 132-134.

<sup>90</sup> Edelman, *Lanterns: A Memoir*, 61.

<sup>91</sup> "The Sit-Downs Hit Here," *Atlanta Daily World*, March 16, 1960.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

The students, having highlighted these very issues in their manifesto, did not disagree with the old guard leaders on their importance. They differed significantly on how best to achieve these goals. The dispute between the old guard and the student leaders revolved primarily around the use of protest demonstrations and later, economic boycotts as a means for achieving desegregation. The old guard continued to prefer to engage in negotiations with influential whites rather than engaging in direct action. They feared that direct action would result in the withdrawal of financial support for black establishments, including the six institutions within the AUC.<sup>93</sup>

The students, understanding the stake old guard leaders had in maintaining the status quo, felt the adult leaders were as much their enemies as the segregationist whites. They were suspicious of all politicians, both white and black, at the local, state, and national levels.<sup>94</sup> Old guard leaders argued that political participation and negotiations were important for the advancement of blacks in Atlanta. The editorial in the *Atlanta Daily World* suggested that the students “might wisely direct their energies in getting passed a meaningful Civil Rights law. They could write the leaders in both the Senate and the House. And, as we have suggested in a previous editorial, the students could join in this campaign to get every eligible Negro registered to vote.”<sup>95</sup> The student leaders fed up with the slow progress that accompanied compromise, balked at the idea. One student argued, “voting is damned important of course ... but it’s over-rated by Negroes, I think. Even with the votes, you cannot just sit back as some people in this town think. You don’t get things without pushing and shoving.”<sup>96</sup> Their distaste for the very

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<sup>93</sup> Walker, “The Functions of Disunity, 231.

<sup>94</sup> Walker, “Protest and Negotiation,” 103-1-4.

<sup>95</sup> “The Sit Downs Here,” AW.

<sup>96</sup> Walker, “Protest and Negotiation,” 114.

system that kept the entire black community subjugated, and in which the old guard were participating, served as the catalyst for engaging in direct action.<sup>97</sup>

The following day, the AUC students, thrilled with the attention their first sit-in attracted, decided that they needed to formalize their efforts. They decided to form an organization to formalize the efforts and facilitate planning for further protest actions. Lonnie King was chosen as chair.<sup>98</sup> The next day at a student mass meeting on the Morehouse campus, King announced a march to Wheat Street Baptist Church. The students were going to pay their respect to Governor Vandiver at the State Capitol! Mays feeling the duty to relay to the Morehouse students the opinions of Mayor Hartsfield and Chief Jenkins told the students at nine o'clock chapel of the dangers surrounding their march. Mays advised the students to postpone their march. King and the student leaders made no promises. King called for a mass meeting at 1pm. There the decision to march to the Capitol that day would be made. Lonnie King presented a speech and Benjamin Mays was in the audience. Lonnie read the decision that the students would march to Wheat Street by way of the Capitol. Mays writes, "the students were poised and determined. I knew then that regardless of what might happen to the students of the Center, they had reached maturity. They were free. I could not stop them, and I did not want to stop them."<sup>99</sup> Emerging from detours by Mays and the old guard, King and the students had slowly begun carving a spot in black Atlanta's leadership.

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<sup>97</sup> Walker, "Sit-Ins in Atlanta," 63.

<sup>98</sup> Lefever, *Undaunted by the Fight*, 40-41; Walker, "Sit-Ins in Atlanta," 69.

<sup>99</sup> Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 296.

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*Atlanta Constitution*

*Atlanta Journal*

*Atlanta Daily World*



Jack Tarver Library proved indispensable for completing my Senior Research Paper in History. The various books, journals, newspapers, scholarly articles, and other sources retrieved for my research paper would not have been possible without Tarver Library's services. Moreover, one specific library service, the Interlibrary Loan Department, greatly aided the completion of the project.

When specifying my overall objective, many of the books I needed were in the Library. Three works that directed my research towards the student sit-ins in 1960 were available at the library: Clayborne Carson's *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s*, Tomiko Brown-Nagin's legal history of the civil rights movement, *Courage to Dissent: Atlanta and the Long History of the Civil Rights Movement*, and Winston A. Grady-Willis's *Challenging U.S. Apartheid: Atlanta and Black Struggles for Human Rights, 1960-1977*.

Moreover, the library made obtaining some of the prior research on the student protests in the 1960's easy. A number of essential works on the student sit-ins were on the bookshelves including but not limited to William H. Chafe's *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina and the Black Struggle for Freedom*, Howell Raines's *My Soul is Rested: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement in the Deep South*, and David Harmon's *Beneath the Image of Civil Rights Movement and Race Relations: Atlanta, Georgia, 1946-1981*. If not on the bookshelves, a number of scholarly articles and other manuscripts were acquired through the library's Interlibrary Loan Department. Indeed, a number of sources were acquired with Ms. Cecilia and the ILL department's help including Clarence Bacote's scholarly article, "The Negro in Atlanta Politics," one of many sources that provided a deeper understanding of black Atlanta. Punctual notifications by Cecilia were continually made to my school e-mail address, and thankfully I acquired the necessary secondary sources for the paper.

The research paper's thesis eventually emerged from another book I checked out from the library, Kevin Gaines *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century*. After having the thesis established, the search for primary sources proved daunting. Again, the ILL Department proved very important by helping me acquire Julian Bond's "Autobiography: Memoirs of a Southern Gentleman," Benjamin Mays *Born to Rebel: An Autobiography*, and the historically black newspaper, *Atlanta Daily World*. Another primary source on the library's bookshelves, Marian Wright Edelman's *Lanterns: A Memoir of Mentors* also helped strengthen the paper.

The library's circulation desk is especially appreciated. When integrating the various sources into a paper, I constantly had to come to the library to re-check books and receive sources from other libraries through ILL. The circulation librarians made such tasks easy. Also, Mr. Shuping is greatly appreciated for helping me understand certain library services (i.e. the loan form!). Moreover, towards the end of the semester Mr. Shuping and the other reference librarians helped me notice one of my research weaknesses. I never maximized their expertise. I could probably have saved some time asking for help on how to search for specific sources that took me days to find. For future research projects, I know to use the reference librarians more wisely.