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**AARON DOUGLAS AND HALE WOODRUFF: THE SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY AND EXPANDED PEDAGOGY
OF THE BLACK ARTIST**

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Art Education

by

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the expanded pedagogy and formal instruction of Aaron Douglas and Hale Woodruff, two African-American artists who came to prominence during the New Negro Movement, in the 1920s. The decades following the New Negro Movement marked a new era for the art education of African-American students when renowned African-American artists began to prepare future generations of artists and art educators. Douglas and Woodruff spent their tenures teaching the visual arts at historically Black universities in Nashville, Tennessee, and Atlanta, Georgia, respectively. They both had a profound influence on this new era of art education, in which they were situated in a Black experience in the segregated United States. I specifically explore to what extent and for what goals racial consciousness and Black content were a part of the instruction, artwork, and lives of Douglas and Woodruff.

The majority of the data examined for this study was discovered in special collections in the archives of the libraries at Fisk and Atlanta Universities. Artist statements, letters, curricular materials, class and lectures notes, exams, interviews, artwork, and testimony of their former students were all closely examined to understand the political, cultural, aesthetic, and pedagogical influence of these two teaching artists. The data convincingly conveys that Douglas and Woodruff were influential figures outside of the classroom. My findings indicate that various political factors and the limitations of classroom instruction within these institutions did not allow Douglas and Woodruff to teach content which affirmed the historical and cultural significance of African-Americans in the United States, but their lives and artwork served as pedagogy which instilled racial pride, tenacity, and perseverance that was absent in the curriculum.

I conclude the study with my speculation, as an art educator at a historically Black university, on the relevance of Douglas's and Woodruff's methods of educating African-American art students in the 1930s and 1940s to current students. Understanding how these two art educators effectively used their pedagogical, creative, and professional influence to earn the support of the Black community while navigating a White-male dominated field is critical to empowering and educating today's Black youth.

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PROLOGUE

VISUAL ARTS AND SOCIAL/POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY: FROM THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC TO BLACK AMERICA

In the fall of 1994, I was awarded an opportunity to study in the Slovak Republic as an exchange student. During the academic year I worked in the sculpture department at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava. While studying in Slovakia in the early 1990s my understanding of contemporary Slovak art was significantly impacted by an exhibition at the Slovak National Gallery in Bratislava. It was the most comprehensive exhibition of modern Slovak art ever displayed. The exhibition encompassed Slovak artwork from the past sixty years. Hundreds of people packed the galleries at the opening reception. The attendees brought such enthusiasm for the work.

As I spoke with those at the reception, I discovered that an exhibition of unofficial Slovak art of this magnitude had never been realized in Bratislava. These works were categorized as unofficial because the content, style, and material challenged what the communist government supported or permitted during the communist regime. As a result, works of this nature were forbidden during the communist regime. After August 1968 when the Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops occupied the country, a program referred to as “normalization,” the restoration of continuity with the pre-reform period, was initiated. “Normalization” had restrictive effects on the visual arts. Art had to adhere to rigid socialist realist standards. “Official artists,” who produced socialist realism, were supported by the system through prestigious public commissions and major exhibitions (Liptak, 2000). Those who produced works outside of what perpetuated communist

ideology were persecuted (D. Fischer, personal communication, November 3, 2003).

Unofficial artists were forbidden to teach or exhibit independently from the Slovak government's support. These artists were under the scrutiny of the Ministry of Culture as well as the secret police; they could not travel outside the country or hold teaching positions in higher education (D. Fischer, personal communication, October 26, 2003).

For more than twenty years they struggled to survive as artists and never compromised their aesthetic or ideological positions (Liptak, 2000). Unofficial artists found alternative ways of sustaining their income. They took jobs, which were regarded as less threatening by their government, such as teaching elementary or secondary art or illustrating children's books. Some unofficial artists even participated in underground networks where artists, writers, and performers shared information and provided a platform for artists to perform and exhibit their works (Mudroch & Toth, 1994).

During the communist regime, the climate for Slovak visual arts students was also restrictive. Many of the instructors at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava who were not members of the communist party conformed or focused primarily on formal and technical concerns (D. Carsky, personal communication, November 13, 2003). During what came to be known as the Velvet Revolution, in 1989 Slovak art students nonviolently demonstrated in the form of a "sit-in" at the academy. As a result those professors who were members of the communist party were fired and the academy was closed down for more than an entire semester (D. Carsky, personal communication, November 19, 2003). Following the fall of the Soviet Union, students conducted a national faculty search. Unofficial artists who spent their entire careers resisting the regime were appointed to professorships at the academy (Mudroch & Toth, 1994). After

decades of being part of the underground they were now at the helm of leadership and in prominent positions to impact the major institutions that shaped the arts and culture of the Slovak Republic. Historian Andrew Solomon (1991) comments on the transition of those artists of the Soviet Block:

The winds of change that are sweeping the Soviet Union have affected every individual, but perhaps none more than the brilliant and flamboyant artists of the vanguard, who have been abruptly catapulted out of forced obscurity and into the limelight of fame and prosperity. (p. xx)

After resurfacing, some of these artists were appointed to positions where they influenced educational policies and developed curriculum. Most of these zealous new professionals were already past retirement age. However, they brought a new political perspective stemming from the social economic hardship of past times (A. Carney, personal communication, April 29, 2004).

Responses to Oppression in Slovak and African-American Visual Art

I researched the history of Slovakia from Stalinism to the fall of the Soviet Union. From this familiarity with significant historical events, I inquired into individual artist's experiences during the regime. I asked about the Soviet occupation and the Slovak uprisings. Slovak professors eventually shared some of their stories of protest, struggle, and perseverance. These stories brought to mind the history of Black artists in the United States. I compared their testimony with the stories and knowledge I had about the Jim Crow Era, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Black Power Movement in the United States.

I suspected that African-American artists had similar support networks and exhibition support. I thought that I would understand both situations best through comparisons. When I returned to the United States, I conducted research about African-American artist networks in the 20th century. I learned about several groups of African-American artists from the 1920s to the late 1970s who met to discuss issues of aesthetics, racial/cultural identity, social responsibility, and political agency.

I began to identify with these notions of resistance, identity, and political agency as they pertained to my own teaching and studio production. Over the years I have incorporated a variety of influences from traditional and contemporary crafts, modern, and postmodern concepts as well as works that reference a number of ancient cultures. Yet, I continued to question my responsibility to the Black community and the social/political relevance of my work. After all of the training and exposure to the arts that I received, I expected to feel at liberty to pursue whichever creative influences interested me. However, I remained preoccupied with my hope for a positive reception from the Black community and feared cultural isolation. My cultural and political awareness continued to impact my identity and artistic production. I was confronted with the haunting dilemma of how to find a way to pay equal homage to my personal aesthetic as well as my political struggle, my ancestry, and my craft. I was certain that I was not the only African-American artist who experienced such an identity crisis. In 1992, I attended a small state university in rural Pennsylvania. There were no African-American art faculty and few African-American art students with whom a rapport could be established. However it was therapeutic to submerge myself in the literature of African-

American art and take refuge from these cultural pressures during my studies in the Slovak Republic.

Ten years after my first extended visit to the Slovak Republic, I was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to conduct comparative research on African-American art of the “Jim Crow era” and Slovak art of communist Europe. During the 2003-2004 school year I returned to the Slovak Republic to conduct research for a project entitled *Responses to Oppression in Slovak and African-American Visual Art*. I collected books, slides, exhibition catalogs, attended exhibitions, and conducted video taped interviews with hopes of eventually producing a documentary on art and oppression.

I found some exciting parallels after juxtaposing the history of African-American artists with the testimony I gathered in Slovakia. It was natural for African-American and Slovak artists to form alliances with artists who were interested in pursuing their ideas and resisting the restrictions their circumstances placed on their artistic potential. African-American artists of the 1960s and 1970s sought freedom through promoting styles and content that wavered from the U.S. White-American artistic norms. Some unofficial Slovak artists created using less conventional methods like performance, installation, and conceptual art. Both Slovak and African-American artists were forced to seek alternative exhibition spaces because of the social and political circumstance surrounding their work. African-American artists held exhibitions at their homes, non-profit organizations, Black Colleges, and public libraries (Patton, 1998). Slovak exhibitions were discreetly held after-hours in cinemas, banks, culture centers, and private residences. A select group attended these exhibits (R. Sikora, personal communication, January 26, 2004).

Both African-Americans and Slovaks discussed how they could establish a voice in the mainstream. Slovak artists were under-represented in Western Europe and African-American artists were under-represented in White-America. Soviets imposed their standards and content on Slovaks and rejected Slovak cultural roots as White-Americans initially subjugated African-Americans and rejected the content of their art (Rusnakova, 2000). As a result of not fully being able to part-take in the Modernist art exhibitions and being under such oppressive circumstances both groups formed “Modernist alternatives” to their artwork, which met formalist criteria, yet emerged from a unique cultural and historical context that differs from the cultural and aesthetic power held by White Modernist art in New York and Paris in the 20th century. I perceive that the social, political, and artistic struggle behind the work of these two groups extends far beyond formalism.

African-American and Slovak artists had remarkably contrasting relationships to Social Realism. The Slovaks were under the restrictions of Socialist Realism as defined by the Soviet Bloc. Its intention was to glorify the communist way of life by presenting the life of the common worker as admirable and heroic (Solomon, 1991). Not surprisingly, many of those Slovak artists who sought creative and political freedom detested it. They believed Western artistic movements like Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, Conceptual Art, and Minimalism were forms of artistic freedom (Rusnakova, 2000). For African-Americans, Social Realism was a clearer and more effective way to convey messages of positive Black life and revolutionary rigor. Many Black artists rejected all aspects of American art in their efforts to pursue an art that spoke to the plight of African-Americans and their need for political uprising (Fine, 1971). African-Americans

have used Social Realism as an effective vehicle of resistance since the New Negro Movement. Positive easily discernible portrayals of Black life combated stereotypical caricature and negative images in both the Black and White communities. The irony lies in the fact that the style of Social Realism was used to sustain the oppression of the Slovaks but used to liberate African-American consciousness. While Black artists took on their social role by producing works which spoke to the community and resisted the mainstream, Slovak artists did the opposite. They saw the West as freedom and were inspired by contemporary White-American art.

Most interesting as it pertains to the subject of art education is that both Slovaks and African-Americans experienced an ideological shift in educational institutions, which profoundly impacted art pedagogy. Unofficial artists, such as painters Daniel Fischer and Anton Carney, who spent their careers before the revolution teaching in the folk art school, a state sponsored after school art program for children, developed k-12 art education curriculum and methods courses for pre-service art teachers in Bratislava. After power changed hands, Fischer was hired by the academy to teach in the Painting and Multi-Media Department. Carney was employed to teach art education in the Art Theory and Pedagogy Department. The philosophies and pedagogical practices of these artists and others were beginning to take Slovak art and art education in a new direction in the early 1990s. In addition to the sudden dispersal of Soviet content in the arts, international travel, democracy, information science, and postmodern art of the West also had a considerable impact on this new direction (A. Carney, personal communication, April 22, 2004).

Following the New Negro Movement of the 1920s and early 1930s, African-American artists who were influenced by newfound political ideologies and embraced Black subject-matter were beginning to join art department faculties at historically Black colleges, universities, and community centers. Up to this point most African-American artists were educated by Whites or taught by African-American teachers who promoted European academic styles, which focused on White-American content (Lewis, 2003). Many African-American art students now had the advantage of studying under the tutelage of renowned African-American artists who had an interest in Black content and African art. Several old departments expanded and new ones emerged. James Porter, Lois Mailou Jones, James Wells, and Alonzo Aden joined James Herring at Howard University. Aaron Douglas founded the art department at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, and Hale Woodruff was recruited to build Atlanta University's art department (Dover, 1969). A Black Academy was formed where I suspected African and African-American subject matter was infused in the teaching of artists. This era made significant contributions to the development of future generations of young African-American art students. As I reflect on my own early art education I understand the additional significance of having a support system complete with mentors and teacher whom which one can share a cultural and political understanding.

Cultural, Political, and Personal Influences

As a high school student, I studied ceramics at the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild after school (MCG). MCG is a Pittsburgh-based arts and learning center dedicated to youth development through arts and life skills training. MCG is founded by MacArthur fellow William E. Strickland Jr. For four years I studied in this intensive program where I learned a variety of ceramic techniques, glaze calculation, and firing processes. Through their visiting artist program I worked collaboratively with some of the most renowned contemporary American ceramic artists in the country. Each summer I was also awarded scholarships to attend pre-college art programs at Bennington College in Vermont, Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Indiana University of Pennsylvania and Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania. By the time I enrolled in college I had the benefit of attending programs throughout the northeast. I had several enriching experiences outside of the conventional art classroom when we took field trips to galleries and museums. In addition to growing technically and artistically these programs compelled me to accept challenges outside of my inner-city comfort zone.

At MCG I pursued my goals independently yet also had the technical and moral support I needed. Many of the resident artists and mentors who surrounded me were in the early stages of their careers. They taught by example not only through their techniques and processes but through their professional pursuits and their social interactions. I witnessed them write artist's statements and grants, design exhibition announcements, build shipping crates, and network at gallery receptions. We spent a great deal of time together outside of the studio. I went to their homes for dinner where I discovered their libraries, art collections, and décor. I learned about their convictions,

tastes, interests, and values. Their lives served as a model of what the life of a professional artist involved. Even today I continue to reflect on the profound art educational experiences I had outside of the studio and classroom during my years at MCG.

Through MCG's sponsorship I additionally benefited from more than a dozen hands-on workshops conducted by renowned contemporary U.S. ceramic artists on site and at local area colleges and art centers. These artists not only shared their craft and techniques, but they also shared their life journeys. Typically White male artists conducted these lectures and weekend workshops. They often shared their formative experiences as students, educators, and professional artists. Their anecdotes informed us as to how their life decisions influenced their careers. These were invaluable learning experiences for me as one who was just embarking on a career in the arts.

Although I was overwhelmed by the work and vast experience of these major figures in the ceramic arts, from my experience, the world of contemporary ceramics appeared to be a White-male phenomenon. Not surprisingly, I had difficulty connecting with these artists. As a young African-American high school student who seldom left the city, I marveled at the worldly experiences of these acclaimed White male artists. Most of these artists were in their 60s. To me it was like they were from another planet. Their appearance, their language, and their stories were like nothing I had ever seen or heard in person.

Initially my African-American friends and classmates would come along but eventually I was unable to convince anyone to go along with me to MCG. Perhaps the culture shock was more than they could bear. It is likely that this generational and

cultural disconnect made it equally challenging for these artists to connect with us as it was for us to connect with them. Up to my attending MCG my interactions with White men were limited to school. Outside of White school teachers, store clerks, and police officers, White men had little presence in my community and these men were much older, therefore, I was especially reserved.

Although I gained valuable technical information and was moved by the extent of their experience, our dialogue was somewhat superficial. I did, however, recognize the value in these experiences and continued to attend. My technical interest and progression in clay contributed to my patience for their stories. They spoke of people and places I assumed I would never meet or see, therefore they were not always able to hold my interest. I oftentimes drifted off or waited patiently hoping to soon get back to my independent studio work.

It was not until I attended workshops and lectures conducted by David MacDonald, an African-American professor of art at Syracuse University, that the possibility of becoming an artist and educator became a more viable option. Since African-Americans were underrepresented in contemporary ceramics as they are in many fields, witnessing his knowledge of the subject instilled a sense of pride, hope, and possibility in me. In addition to the African-derived skills and techniques he employed, the content of his works referenced African themes as well as issues revolving around the African-American experience. I was much more receptive to this workshop that extended from a social and cultural experience. MacDonald's identity as an African-American was an integral component of his convictions, hurdles, and triumphs. He provided an element to the workshop experience that was seemingly missing from the others. Despite the fact

that MacDonald was nearly thirty years my elder, we seemed to have a social, economic, political, and cultural history in common. I identified with the challenges he faced. I was aware of what he endured and proud he represented African-American men in contemporary ceramics. MacDonald is a pioneer in the field. He was one of the first African-American contemporary ceramic artists recognized on the national level in desegregated America. He had been teaching and exhibiting professionally since the Civil Rights Movement.

Professor MacDonald inspired me to share my cultural and political voice as well as my love for the craft. My joy from producing ceramic art was transformed into a passion to communicate my relationship to the world. I produced works that celebrated the Black experience as well as work that offered social commentary. The people and places he spoke of now seemed attainable. My workshop experience with MacDonald helped me to access and find value in the earlier workshops I attended.

His presence as an African-American man in this field somehow validated my experience as a participant in the workshop. This, in turn, gave me new insights into earlier workshop experiences. The world in which the White visiting artists exposed me was now an accessible reality. I am sure the visiting artist program coordinator meant well, but I wondered what the impact this program would have had, if an African-American artist preceded the White males. It is likely that if students did not identify with those works produced by African-American artists aesthetically they would have connected to the socio-political climate in which they were created. Outside of the technical and formal information I gained from MacDonald he provided me with additional insights, which were specific to challenges resulting from issues of race. I was

college bound and very much interested in hearing of their transitioning into institutions and fields where there were few African-Americans. Professor MacDonald continue to serve as a role model and mentor throughout my life.

He was an invaluable resource to me as I began to design programs as an inexperienced educator and later as a young professor. Although I never received official instruction or critical feedback from him regarding my own ceramic work, I always regarded Professor MacDonald as my teacher. We visited each other's homes, studios, and classes. I conducted a workshop for his students in Syracuse University and he did the same for my students at Winston Salem State University. We shared meals and intellectual conversations regarding history, teaching, art, politics, aesthetics, and techniques. Because of a shared cultural/political identity in addition to our shared love for art and passion for teaching, his life served to be more influential than my closest mentors at MCG. Not only did I have an appreciation for his artistic accomplishments but I admired his place as an artist in the Civil Rights Movement.

From MacDonald's lecture and our discussions, I discovered that he entered college in the 1960s at Hampton University in Virginia. Although the inception of MacDonald's ceramic works emulated tradition, (as most early pots do), the spirit of the Civil Rights Movement and the poems of Leroy Jones demanded that he use his craft to share his feelings of protest. His teachers instilled in him an appreciation of craftsmanship, history, and the need for self-expression (D. MacDonald, personal communication, February 16, 2007).

As MacDonald completed his M.F.A., and joined the faculty at Syracuse in the early 1970s, his ceramic works continued to critique the predicament of the African-

American in the United States and bare the burden of anger and hostility. After a few years, MacDonald had a solo exhibition in Syracuse, which he described as a defining moment in his life. At the reception, a reluctant and distraught elderly White woman approached MacDonald. She complimented him on his craftsmanship and hesitantly asked “Is there anything positive about living in America as a Black man” (D. MacDonald, personal communication, February 16, 2007). This compelled MacDonald to consider his audience and his message to the world. While MacDonald used art as a vehicle to raise social consciousness or evoke reactions to the racial injustice in the United States as many African-American artists of that era did, he had neglected or had nearly forgotten another transformative power or art, the power to beautify, honor, and celebrate. He spent that next 35 years of his life studying and creating ceramic platters and vessels which celebrate various African traditions and cultural practices. From scarification and hairstyles to ornamentation and architectural drawing, MacDonald explored a wide range of visual sources and literature of which he created ceramic art. His work, his passion, his conviction, his integrity, and his life serve as a valuable pedagogy to future generations of artists to include myself, his students, and countless others whom he has come in contact with throughout his career. It is apparent in MacDonald’s influence that pedagogy can extend beyond the classroom or studio.

Another man’s pedagogy, Professor Richard Wukich, had a similarly profound impact on me, outside of the studio, although he was not African-American. As an undergraduate student I studied ceramics at Slippery Rock University in Northwestern Pennsylvania, with Wukich, an American born man of Serbian descent. Although Wukich was well trained in every aspect of ceramic art by renowned ceramists at the

New York State college of Ceramics at Alfred University, I did not learn what I thought were the essential aspects of becoming a professional ceramic artist or educator from him. I did not learn kiln building, glaze calculation, and studio maintenance. Although he had a reputation, at one point in his career, as a great ceramics teacher, he taught me very little about ceramics. He was not such a good ceramics teacher but he taught me many life lessons that continue to enrich my life. Through his efforts to organize international exchange programs, symposia, exhibitions, field trips, and conferences I learned a great deal regarding what is essential to being an art teacher and college professor. Although our department did not offer much, Wukich single-handedly organized international exchange programs and service learning projects through alliances with local area schools, organizations and community centers. Wukich was so busy in these endeavors that he was no longer a practicing artist but demonstrated the results of persuasion, perseverance, and tenacity.

As I entered my senior year in college I found that Professor Wukich was increasingly unloading his administrative responsibilities on me. I had no problem taking a leadership role in the studio but I felt like he was lazy and I did not appreciate this imposition. I depended on the programs he set forth and now I was compelled to keep them going. On behalf of our program, I wrote letters to the chair and the dean. I secured university vehicles and drove students to opening receptions and other art-related events. Not only did I gain professional maturity and social growth from these experiences, I gained a new found appreciation for Wukich's efforts to provide us with enriching educational opportunities.

I am fortunate to have many positive teachers and role models on which to reflect and model my own teaching but the direct influence of people like David MacDonald is one that is further informed by sharing connections through the African-American experience. When I am not provided with adequate resources to host influential African-America art educators like Professor MacDonald, I look to the written legacy of African-American art.

During my second semester teaching at Winston Salem State, a historically Black university, a young African-American female art student, from Charleston, South Carolina, with whom I had built a positive rapport, shared her recently printed edition of linocuts. I was quite familiar with her work. She often came to me for critiques and advice outside of class. She was skilled at drawing and was taking her first course in printmaking. Unfortunately she seemed to have difficulty transferring her ideas into this new medium.

Rather than illustrating effective uses of positive and negative space, mid-tones and light sources through random examples, I showed her a copy of Samella Lewis's book *The Art of Elizabeth Catlett* (1984) with a particular focus on Catlett's linocuts of Black women. Surely she was amazed by Catlett's ability to create the illusion of space through her placement of figure, various textures, and bold lines, but she was equally drawn to Catlett's subjects. The young southern African-American women shared that she identified with the honesty reflected in Catlett's depictions of elderly southern Black women like in *Sharecropper* (1968) and *Survivor* (1983). Catlett's images of Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Malcolm X evoked a refresher course in Black history.

The content of these works brought forth a rich dialogue that affirmed this young student's identity, as a Black woman, that traditional art historical models could not.

Seeing examples of Catlett's work in the form of this hard-bound book also affirmed the notion that African-American women have earned a well-deserved place in history. She borrowed the book and came by, on a few occasions, to discuss some of the events in Catlett's life. She had a particular interest in Catlett's political convictions and her experience as an activist. After responding favorably to Catlett's achievements and contributions, she began to read herself into these stories. Her exposure to Catlett's work and life journey has revealed the potential to profoundly impact her content, techniques, and possibly her life.

Examining how the lives of African-American artists—to include their politics, instruction, studio production, and efforts to sustain themselves as professional artists in a White male dominant society—serves as pedagogy is crucial to this study. This has led me to a study, which looks more critically at the artwork, teaching, and lives of Aaron Douglas and Hale Woodruff in search of a more expansive pedagogy for empowering and educating African-American youth.

CHAPTER ONE

AARON DOUGLAS’S AND HALE WOODRUFF’S EXPANDED PEDAGOGY: SITUATING THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of racial-consciousness and Black content on the instruction and pedagogy of Aaron Douglas and Hale Woodruff, two African-American artists who came to prominence during the New Negro Movement when discussions revolving around the aesthetical development and social progress of the African-American reached one of its historical heights. Since the focus of this study is on the impact of racial consciousness I clarify my use of the term. For the purpose of this study, I employ Murray DePillar’s (1976) definition. He states “... racial consciousness is defined as a positive statement about one’s race; it is recognition of the ethnic similarities or uniqueness of its people. ... its function is to affirm the normative values of the race” (p. 13). I explore how racial and political identity, was infused in Douglas’s and Woodruff’s teaching and how their lives as African-Americans who worked as artists and educators, in the racially segregated South, serves as pedagogy. In order to do this it is critical that one examines the broader educational influence and historical context of Douglas’s and Woodruff’s life. Both of these artists developed during the New Negro Movement also known as the Harlem Renaissance.

The term, Harlem Renaissance, coined by the renowned historian John Hope Franklin, typically describes a Black cultural phenomenon, which took place in New York City between the end of the First World War and the stock market crash in 1929 (Powell, 1997). Although the formative events and figures emerged during the first three

decades of the 20th century, the history of the term is also problematic because it implies that The Great Depression interrupted this period of cultural renewal and racial discourse (Powell, 1997). It is in order to dispel the notion that the major contributions of the movement steamed from Harlem-based artists therefore this study employs the earlier term New Negro Movement, which encompasses the influences of those artists who worked outside of New York in this time like William H. Johnson and Hale Woodruff who were in Europe, in the 1920s, as well as African-American artists who made their contributions from other metropolitan areas in the United States.

At the turn of the 20th century, following the *Great Migration*, when thousands of African-American families fled the hardships of the reconstruction south with hopes of pursuing job opportunities in the north, the cultural/political climate of Black America began to change rapidly. When white males returned from the war, they found themselves competing with African-Americans for jobs, in industry, therefore racial tensions escalated. In the summer of 1919, known as the *Red Summer*, several race riots took place in major northern cities. Unlike the terror African-Americans endured in the South in the 19th century, they were now beginning to fight back (Huggins, 1977). Douglas's and Woodruff's early education was situated in this time of change and resistance. African-Americans resisted the history of brutality and subjugation to which many 19th century African-Americans became accustomed (Reynolds & Wright, 1989).

Although the formative education of Douglas and Woodruff took place at U.S. universities and French academies, they emerged during a time when several forces contributed to the discourse on African-American culture, art, and social progress. Several influential African-American cultural, political, and intellectual leaders including

W. E. B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Alain Locke, Charles Johnson, Booker T. Washington, and Walter White along with organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), The National Urban League, and The Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) created a socio-political climate that was conducive to cultural and political change for African-Americans (Reynolds & Wright, 1989). These leaders and organizations all felt that the African-American artist could assist in this regard therefore they sought support for these artists through White patronage, fundraising, and creating opportunities for African-American artists (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). During the New Negro Movement African-American artists were also aligned with writers, actors, dancers, and musicians through networks, which extended from Harlem to Paris where African-Americans sometimes took refuge from the racial oppression they experienced in the United States (Powell, 1997). This created a fertile environment for discussions of race, identity, and politics across disciplines. Douglas and Woodruff built relationships with New Negro figures such as Josephine Baker, Countee Cullen, Duke Ellington, Langston Hughes, Zora Neal Hurston, Claude McKay, Paul Robeson, Bessie Smith, and Richard Wright (Kirschke, 1995; Powell, 1997; Stoelting, 1978). Although there is little evidence that these relationships had a direct impact of the classroom instructions of Douglas and Woodruff, they provided a support network and promoted a climate for artists to explore racial themes and discuss political matters (Powell, 1997).

In the 1930s and 1940s, both Douglas and Woodruff accepted positions at historically Black Universities. In addition to maintaining careers as professional artists and teachers, through their efforts to build art programs in Nashville and Atlanta

respectively, they served as curators, gallery directors, lecturers, and mentors. For many years both Douglas and Woodruff each single-handedly ran their art departments. Between the two of them they taught: painting, drawing, printmaking, stagecraft, commercial art, design, art appreciation, art education, and art history. Woodruff additionally supervised student teachers at the Laboratory High School (Kirschke, 1995; Stoelting, 1978).

Despite the fact that Douglas and Woodruff worked to equip their African-American students with the necessary skills, training, and knowledge to sustain themselves as professional artists and art educators in the United States, the political realities of the African-American experience and teaching in the segregated South had a profound impact on their positions.

Instruction and Expanded Pedagogy

My interest is in exploring the effects of race, social responsibility, and a more expansive notion of pedagogy to interpret the impact of Douglas's and Woodruff's experiences and artwork on students in the 1930s and 1940s. For the purpose of this study it is in order to distinguish classroom instruction from how I define pedagogy. Some scholars believe that when discussing African or African-American centered education the focus should be on pedagogy rather than curriculum (Shujaa, 1994). Shujaa's position raises an important question: in searching for the influence of these two prominent teachers, should we look primarily to their formal curricula and instructional plans or to their pedagogy—a pedagogy which could extend well beyond their classrooms? I use the term instruction to denote strategies set-forth by teachers who

intend to disseminate predetermined information and skills that students are expected to acquire in an orderly manner. This includes lectures, studio demonstrations, critiques, and classroom teaching (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence 1999).

In contrast to instruction, I wish to employ an expanded notion of the term pedagogy to include educational contexts in which initiatives relating to learning may emerge from the influence of any individual, as in the case of David MacDonald or Richard Wukich, and even with any text or artwork, or within a community, as in what I experienced at the Manchester Craftsmen's Guild (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence 1999).

Pedagogy, as conceptualized in this study, is a network of relationships. These relationships consist of teachers and students and their aesthetic, cultural, political, and social convictions, tastes, and interests (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence 1999). These influences and networks extend beyond the classroom. These relationships are also impacted by factors resulting from racism, cultural domination, and segregation as well as by Whites interested in supporting and sponsoring African-American artists (Shujaa, 1994).

By explicitly and implicitly guiding and supporting students to construct goals for themselves, Douglas and Woodruff could have presented themselves as role models and exemplified what it meant to be professional artists in the segregated South in the 1930s and 1940s. Is it possible that Douglas and Woodruff taught their students through their lives and their artworks? Could Douglas and Woodruff teach students, through their expansive pedagogies, how to create and sustain themselves through teaching and exhibiting? Did their expanded pedagogies demonstrate the hurdles of reconciling Black and White patrons (Leninger-Miller, 2001)? In doing so, how did Douglas and Woodruff

demonstrate how to have a presence in the Black community as well (Bearden & Henderson, 1993)? Douglas's and Woodruff's pedagogy extended far beyond their course outlines, and the formal curricular content that they presented in their classrooms and studios.

Dahlberg, Moss, and Pence (1999) tell us that: "... pedagogy is not generated by itself, it is only generated if one stands in a loving relationship and/or in confrontation with other expressions of the present" (1999, p. 130). What were the circumstances revolving around Douglas's and Woodruff's professional and teaching careers and what kind of learning environment did these circumstances create? Did their roles, as Black professionals, constantly compel them to confront a White male dominated society in order to later provide their students with a loving and nurturing educational experience (Kirschke, 1995; Leninger-Miller, 2001)? Power relations like racism, sexism, and class are inevitable and it is remissive to examine the impact of these artists outside of the context of racial segregation, cultural domination, and White patronage. It is possible that these factors had a significant influence on Douglas and Woodruff as they constructed their identities as artists, teachers, and as African-American men in the 1920s through the 1940s (Kirschke, 1995; Leninger-Miller, 2001). Shujaa (1995) explains:

Individual teachers' cultural identities and ideological commitments also have to be taken into account in any undertaking ... Teachers, like all individuals, are products of the societies in which they live. Thus, they assume multiple roles in society and correspondingly construct multiple identities (i.e., professional, cultural, racial, gender, religious) in relationship to those roles.... (p. 195)

Did the limitations of the institutions in which Douglas and Woodruff taught also have a significant impact on them as teachers and as artists? To what extent did these two artists' strive to expose their students to an art world beyond the segregated south? It is likely that the hurdles of teaching and learning as African-American in racially segregated community and being exposed to various degrees of racism had a tremendous impact on the direction of Douglas and Woodruff's teaching. Racial subjugation or racism as I use, it refers to Jones's (1972) definition. He defines racism as: "... the transformation of race prejudice ... through the exercise of power against a racial group defined as inferior by individuals or institutions with the intentional or unintentional support of the entire (race or) culture" (p. 172). To what extent did Douglas and Woodruff encourage students, through their expanded pedagogy, to strive beyond the limitations of poverty, segregation, and racism and operate in the mainstream public? Henry Giroux (1988) explains the importance of working with students in a larger educational context: "... the public sphere not only served as to produce the language of freedom, it also kept alive the hope that subordinate groups could one day produce their own intellectuals" (p. 159). Through their expanded pedagogy did Douglas and Woodruff actively engage students in educational experiences outside of their comfort zones and what cultural economic and political possibilities did this create?

My interpretation of Douglas's and Woodruff's pedagogy is further informed by Dahlberg, Moss, and Pence's (1999) observation of pedagogy at the famous Reggio Emilia school. They describe:

... pedagogical work as co-construction of knowledge and identity and opening up new possibilities for democracy [which] can be viewed as contributing to the

exercise of freedom, understood in a Foucauldian sense as being able to think critically—to think opposition, to promote ‘reflective indocility’—and by so doing to take more control of our lives, through questioning the way we view the world and increasing our ability to shape our own subjectivity. Thinking critically makes it possible to unmask and free ourselves from existing discourses, concepts and constructions, and to move on by producing different ones. (p. 79)

The stature of Douglas and Woodruff as professional artists with an international presence in itself exemplified possibilities for young African-American artists. However, it must be noted that their professional identities were not the only aspects of their identities involved in how they defined and carried out their roles as educators (Shujaa, 1995). Through their lives and their art, did Douglas and Woodruff reshape the ways their students understood the world? Did the expanded pedagogies of Douglas and Woodruff compel their students to question the constructs of race and limitations of segregation and racism hence opening up “new possibilities for democracy” (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999, p. 79)? Giroux (1988) advocates for notions of pedagogy that extend beyond the classroom as well. He explains:

The belief that schooling can be defined as the sum of its official course offerings is a naïve one. ... Once the relationship between schooling and the larger society is recognized, questions about the nature and meaning of the schooling experience can be viewed from a theoretical perspective capable of illuminating the often ignored relationship between school knowledge and social control. (p. 22)

Although the formative education of Douglas and Woodruff may have focused more on tradition, they were aligned with some of the most influential Black political

leaders of the era. Alain Locke and W. E. B. Du Bois befriended both artists. Although Douglas and Woodruff were not students of these highly regarded Black intellectuals, the influence of Du Bois and Locke surely impacted young artists. As the impact of Du Bois and Locke resonated with Douglas and Woodruff, the influence of Douglas and Woodruff likely stayed with their students. Did this influence compel these students to look beyond the limitations of the segregated South in order to discover new resources from which they could construct their identities?

Understanding Black Identity

In this section I discuss issues revolving around how one constructs and understands Black identity. Although in many cases one defines identity based on a set of assumptions regarding characteristics of sameness or by that, which is recognizable, identity is sometimes constructed outside of the assumed paradigms of cognition (Rolling, 2004). James Haywood Rolling (2004) tells us “identities are constructed from personal experiences, from interpsychological detritus, from cultural debris, from popular residue” (p. 72). For the purpose of this study I employ this notion of identity. Furthermore, given the individual and collective social, cultural, and political history of those of the African Diaspora, questions of *Black* identity evoke additional contradictions (Mama, 1995).

Racism and cultural domination have had a major impact on how Blacks define and identify themselves (Du Bois, 1903/1995; Mama, 1995; Wright, 2004). Some of the major contradictions lay in the fact that Black identity construction has been largely based on the approval or preoccupation with other racial groups, namely White

Americans and Europeans (hence the impact of formal training in predominately White/European institutions and White Patronage) (Du Bois, 1903/1995). Since the early 20th century, Black intellectuals began investing their energies in deconstructing the psychological impact of slavery and its long-term effects, in order to more inclusively chart the evolution of Black identity (Mama, 1995). Some scholars have even concluded that the colonization and enslavement of Africans has had negative psychological effects on subsequent generations (Woodson, 1933/1990).

The task of arriving at any reliable definition of Black identity is insurmountable and perhaps pointless. Seemingly there is more pedagogical merit in approaching excavations of Black identity as a continuous journey where one should avoid closure. Michelle Wright (2004) agrees that a more constructive quest could involve exploring the space between our assumptions and the contradictions that emerge from this venture. This complex journey of race politics informs the work of many contemporary Black artists at present and has been a driving force for Black artists of the past (Bloemink, 1999; Harris, 2003; Powell, 2003). Their process of searching and defining themselves is in itself a process of writing history on their own terms and within their own time.

As African-American educators Douglas and Woodruff struggled to define themselves in a time when there is no precedent for teaching art to African-American students. To what extent were Douglas and Woodruff at odds with the many structures and parameters set forth and by the dominant culture? Even history itself was by and large controlled and written by forces, which exclude the contributions of African-Americans. To what extent did Douglas and Woodruff create a pedagogy—an expanded

pedagogy—that should be written as the history of Black artist pedagogy and to what extent does the pedagogy they created still serve as a model today?

Problematizing Social Responsibility

In this study *social responsibility* is defined as acting for the greater good of the group. In this case, the group refers to African-Americans and the action is racial uplift. Irving King (1912) advocates for the importance of social responsibility in education. He exclaims:

The greatest good for the group is not attained by permitting each individual to cultivate all his [or her] native endowments of initiative for himself alone. In emphasizing the place of initiative in the education of a progressive society, we have constantly in mind, then, the absolute requirement that it shall, throughout, be dominated by ideals of social responsibility and social service. (p. 229)

In the earlier stages of Douglas’s and Woodruff’s career, opinions aligning notions of social responsibility with Black Nationalism or racial uplift became increasingly popular. According to Kinfé Abraham (1991) “It [Black Nationalism] was a counter-cultural reaction to the old ideology and the strategies used to legitimize the inferior status of the black heritage in art, literature, and history” (p. 44). Several Black intellectual and political leaders voiced their perspectives on the subject of nationalism and social responsibility. Since Douglas and Woodruff avidly read progressive Black journals, it is likely that they were privy to this discourse (Kirschke, 1995; Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

Jamaican born Black activist and political leader, Marcus Garvey, founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in Harlem in 1918. He was one of the most prominent voices on the subject of African-American social responsibility. Garvey expanded this notion to encompass economic independence and self-determination (Hill & Bair, 1987). Garvey defined education as "the medium by which a people are prepared for the creation of their own particular civilization and the advancement of their own particular race" (Garvey quoted in Hill & Bair, 1987, p. 6). Garvey had distinct ideas about the purpose of art and education in the Black nation (Hill & Bair, 1987).

Probably one of the most popular discussions of social responsibility is evidenced in W. E. B. Du Bois's stance against the then popular view of Booker T. Washington who advocated for industrial education for Blacks (Du Bois, 1995). By the 1920s, Du Bois was a highly regarded writer, editor, political leader, educator, and an impassioned orator. Among Du Bois's many accomplishments he organized the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and wrote memorializing accounts of the Reconstruction period that gave voice to Black perspectives. Through his research on the race problem in the United States, in the north and south, Du Bois was well aware of the psychological hardships African-Americans faced (Du Bois, 1995). In *The Negro Problem* published in 1903, Du Bois took a stance on what form of education he believed was most fitting for African-Americans. He proposed that the talented tenth receive the best education possible so that they may provide leadership and direction for the entire race. He states:

The college-bred Negro ... is, as he ought to be, the group leader, the man who sets the ideals of the community where he lives, directs its thoughts, and heads its

social movements. It need hardly be argued that the Negro people need social leadership more than most groups; that they have no traditions to fall back upon, no long-established customs, no strong family ties, no well defined social class.

(Quoted in Ravitch, 2000, p. 376)

Notions of social responsibility can be interpreted differently depending on the particular historical or political context. For example what one might consider progressive for the late 19th century may not be in the early 20th century. Interpretations of social responsibility also differ depending on one's social or political agenda, as in the example of the debate between Washington and Du Bois. They each had different ideas regarding how to define and strive for the social progress of African-Americans. From before the renowned African-American abolitionist, Fredrick Douglas (1855/2003), to the New Negro poet Langston Hughes (1926), through the Black Arts Movement writer, Amiri Baraka (1971), and beyond, there have been many positions taken on the subject of the social responsibility and social progress of African-Americans. Depending on the time period in which one is discussing the struggle of African-Americans and social progress one's mission can vary. Progress is relative to the oppressive conditions in which one finds one's self (Shujaa, 1994). How one defined progress during slavery will certainly differ from the demands African-Americans made during the Civil Rights Movement. In the name of progress oppressed people used whatever means they had to define and strive for progress. Shujaa (1994) states: "For the oppressed, the political role of education had to be aimed precisely at finding the means to end the oppression" (p. 85). In the early 20th century, Du Bois among others believed African-American artists should also have a specific role in the uplift of the African-American race.

Based on Du Bois's expectations of the "talented tenth," talented, experienced, and educated African-Americans like Douglas and Woodruff were expected to guide and direct the race. This is a responsibility, which Douglas and Woodruff, consciously or subconsciously, accepted in the art departments at Fisk University and Atlanta University when they built art programs from the ground up (Kirschke, 1995; Stoelting, 1978).

Although there were many inspirational African-American teaching artists of the early 20th century, I have selected Aaron Douglas and Hale Woodruff as my research subjects for several reasons. Since the impact of race and social responsibility are critical to many of my interpretations, it is appropriate to examine artists who spent their tenures struggling to create fertile ground for teaching art to African-American art students who faced limitations due to racial hardships of the segregated south. Their pedagogy is partially defined by their confrontation of the color bar. Douglas spent his teaching career in Nashville, Tennessee, while Woodruff spent several years teaching in Atlanta, Georgia (Kirschke, 1995; Stoelting, 1978).

These two artists also make a fascinating parallel. Both Douglas and Woodruff struggled to make a living and to earn money to travel/study but were subjected to racist working conditions in service and industrial jobs. The formative educational and professional careers of Douglas and Woodruff could not be more distinct. Douglas spent his formative years studying at the University of Nebraska and later trained as a young professional with Winold Reiss, a German portrait artist and illustrator, during the height of the New Negro Movement. He painted murals, designed book and magazine covers for up and coming Black cultural and political figures and organizations in Harlem, New York. Douglas was also awarded the opportunity to study from the collection of Modern

Art and African Sculpture at the Barnes Foundation in the 1920s (Bearden & Henderson, 1993; Kirschke, 1995). Douglas is one of the artists most closely associated with the movement in Harlem (Powell, 1997).

Woodruff studied for a short time at the Herron Art School in Indianapolis and at The Art Institute of Chicago before traveling to France where he studied easel painting and learned from the European Modernists in Paris, France, at the Academie Scandinave. While studying in Paris, Woodruff published illustrations and stories of his experiences in Paris in his hometown newspaper. He also tried to sustain himself by competing for prizes through the Harmon Foundation and other organizations and programs designed to support African-American artists (Stoelting, 1978). Woodruff was as in tuned with the development of French Modernism as he was with the racial discourse and uses of Black content in Harlem. His early experience with the movement was comparatively indirect. Additionally, as professional artists they were both compelled to negotiate the influence and patronage of both Blacks and Whites (For further information see Appendix A and B for chronologies of Douglas's and Woodruff's lives.)

Many of their experiences and works of art provide valuable lessons for African-American aspiring artists today. Unfortunately the legacy of Douglas and Woodruff and the Black Academy never realized its potential to inform current African-American students. The pedagogical merit of these two artist's lives extends far beyond their influence as teachers and painters. Can their triumphs and adversities provide a history on which educators and students can reflect and grow? My inquiry explores the direct and indirect impact of race on the careers of Douglas and Woodruff. In this social-political

inquiry of archival materials, I ask these general questions of Douglas's and Woodruff's teaching careers:

1. In what ways was their instruction within in the classroom setting an expression or reflection of their sense of an African-American identity and of a responsibility toward the larger Black community, and in what way did these efforts extend beyond the classroom in the form of expanded pedagogies?
2. Were compromises made in content, agency, and identity in their curriculum and instructions within the classroom site as well as in their expanded pedagogies, and if so, how and for what reasons?
3. How did European academic art training—as well as Modernism and contemporary art styles and trends, White patronage, and personal politics—affect their pedagogy and interest in promoting racial solidarity?

Interpreting Blackness and the Black Artist's Social Role

In interpreting works of art created by African-Americans there are several factors in which one should consider to include style, subject matter, and function. Just as notions of social progress have changed, each of these criteria has changed drastically from one historical/political period to the next. While the styles of works created by African-Americans have been largely impacted by trends and art historical periods, the subject matter and function of these works has also evolved along with ideologies of social progress and responsibility. For example, most African-American artists of the 19th century subscribed to the tastes of White patrons; therefore, they seldom produced images of African-Americans. However, those aligned with the Abolitionists utilized the

Black image as a tool for social commentary and protest (Bearden & Henderson, 1993; Harris, 2003).

Terms, which are used to describe works of art created by African-Americans, are sometimes improperly employed; therefore, they cloud our interpretive lenses. Meanings shift over time and terms or categories, which may have had specific conceptual or political roots, are misused and no longer serve their intended purpose. For this reason, it is in order to define and problematize some of the ideas and terms used to categorize and interpret African-American art. This will assist the reader in understanding various ways of understanding the style, subject matter, and function of works created during the time through which Douglas and Woodruff taught. Furthermore, this will highlight future discussions revolving around social responsibility and the function of Black content which is critical to this study of Douglas's and Woodruff's pedagogy. In the following, I discuss my reasons for which words and usages I intend to omit and which I purposely employ.

Since cultural and political leaders, critics, and historians have championed works created by African-American artists, specific language has been employed to categorize and describe style, subject matter, and function. The meanings of terms and categories like *Negro Art*, *Negro Idiom*, *Black Sensibility*, *Black Art*, and *Black Aesthetics* differ depending on the historical period in which they are used. The discourse revolving around works created by African-American art reached its height during two major periods of cultural production and critical debate, The New Negro Movement and The Black Arts Movement. I will focus my discussions on these periods.

W. E. B. Du Bois and Alain Locke are two of the most influential African-American voices of the New Negro Movement. They made profound contributions to the philosophies and culture of African-Americans in the early twentieth century. In addition to the various efforts they made to support and promote the works of New Negro artists, Locke wrote prolifically on the subject of African and African-American art and mentored and supported Black artists throughout his life.

Locke, one of the guiding forces of the New Negro Movement, was an avid collector and student of African art. His philosophies and writings served as a strong motivating force for both Douglas and Woodruff. His interest was in promoting mutual understanding of Black and White Americans. Locke felt that the responsibility of artists, writers, actors, and musicians was to rehabilitate the race in the world esteem from the loss of prestige, which resulted from slavery (Bearden & Henderson, 1993; Locke, 1925). Locke felt that each cultural group had its own identity that it was entitled to protect and promote. He believed that the race problem in America could be ameliorated through the African-American's contributions to arts and culture. He advocated for works that possessed a "*Negro idiom*," i.e., works which emerged as cultural political products resulting from the Black experience (Locke, 1939, p. 552). Locke promoted the notion that African-Americans should be proud of their rich cultural and historical foundation and that their works should speak to this pride. He advocated for African-American artists who made this history of African art foundational to their development as European artists built on the traditions of Greece and Rome. Locke believed that African-Americans would earn their respect by distinguishing themselves from White Americans not emulating them (Locke, 1925; Huggins, 1971).

Locke felt that the academic mold maintained by many African-American artists of the late 19th and early 20th century was a handicap to the development of a racially representative art (Locke, 1940). Locke stressed the decorative and abstract symbolism in “negro art” but down played portraiture (Patton, 1998). Locke felt strongly about African-Americans connecting with their African-American heritage but additionally standing in support of Africa. Locke (1925) states: “the possible role of the American Negro in the future development of Africa is one of the most constructive and universally helpful missions that any modern people can lay claim to” (p. 15). Locke (1925) also stressed that the “Negro in Art” was part of a long African tradition. He suggested:

As an individual, the Negro’s artistic task, today, is merely that of expressing his modern self in contemporary idioms, those of his adopted culture. But in terms of group and cultural significance, it should never be forgotten that in America the Negro is having his second rather than his first career in the fine arts. Deeper awareness of this, especially by our artists, would have converted the heavy tasks of overcoming handicap and of correcting the imposed lopsidedness in our artistic development into a zestful effort to resume lost cultural interests and recapture lapsed skills. (p .8)

Locke (1940) wrote more extensively on the subject of the African-American’s responsibility and the importance of affirming a connection to African and its legacy. He stated:

African art is one of the fountainheads of modernist style in contemporary art, and this happy accident has saved what might otherwise have been a lost cultural heritage for the American Negro. Yet lack of continuity with this traditional

African culture and its arts gives him no advantage, other than sentimental, in either its use or understanding. As modern artists, however, he cannot escape an influence, which has become an integral part of modern art idioms. This art tradition, properly understood and assimilated, however, should and can have even greater influence on the art of the Negro today. (p. 207)

Ironically Locke supported the notion of African-American artists discovering African art by way of European Modernists (Harris, 2003). Others believed Locke's insistence on *Negro Idioms* placed limits on African-American artists. They felt that the contrived pursuit of *primitive* styles and themes would stress a singular and limited view of the complex and multilayered African-American. They believed that Locke's views would set apart the form and content of Negro Art and not necessarily make it more acceptable to the White public (Porter, 1943/1969/1992).

W. E. B. Du Bois shared many of Locke's opinions regarding the social role of works created by African-American artists. They both agreed that the arts could be a powerful social, political, and economic tool for racial uplift. While Locke advocated for individual expression, Du Bois felt that African-American artists should share a collective mission. In Du Bois's statements regarding the social role of "Negro artist," he stressed the importance for African-Americans to invest their creative energies in the promotion of solidarity through shared aesthetic, ideology, and aspirations for freedom. Based on Du Bois's remarks in his 1926 essay the *Criteria for Negro Art* where he stated, "I do not care a damn for any art that is not used for propaganda. But I do care when propaganda is confined to one side while the other side is stripped and silent" (cited in Worth, 1995, p. 467). Apparently his idea of propaganda was for African-American

artists to produce images that would counter the prevalent derogatory images of African-Americans in society with images that portrayed a unique positive and dignified African-American. Du Bois was not interested in entertaining the various social functions of art.

Artists and art historian, James Porter, who wrote the first critical and historical account of the African-Americans artistic accomplishments in the United States in his 1943 book entitled *Modern Negro Art*, did not subscribe to the expectations Du Bois and Locke placed on Black artists. He contended that Locke's philosophies promoted the creation of works, which were superficially related to African art, and that these works would lack the spiritual power and cultural significance African works possessed. He was extremely critical of Locke and others who supported this idea of African-Americans connecting with their ancestral legacy. He feared that African-American artists would confuse the special geometric forms of African art with specific racial feelings. Porter opined that African-American artists could not make authentic connections to the psychological directives behind African art. He surprisingly was supportive of those who limited their relationship with African art to formal emulation, like Picasso and Braque (Porter, 1943/1969/1992).

Conflicting attitudes by artists, writers, and scholars eventually divided into two groups. Each group took a polar stance regarding the social role of the Black artist. One group argued that to avoid imitating White culture and tradition, the African-American must reject everything that might be interpreted as deriving from the White American experience; the other group insisted that African-American artists should encompass all experience. In June 1926, *The Nation* published two popular essays, which convincingly illustrate the polar ends of the debate. George Schulyer wrote an essay entitled *The Negro*

Art Hokum. He argued that Black artists were equally diverse as Whites and to expect them to devise any uniform style or subject matter or mission was as absurd as the stereotypes Black artists were expected to challenge (Schuyler, 1926). Schuyler's stance was countered by the New Negro writer, Langston Hughes, in his essay *The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain*. Essentially Hughes's position was that the cultural and artistic production of African-Americans should serve to uplift the race by validating the culture or political stance of African-Americans and if it did not, then it served Whites. Porter believed that this division ultimately stifled the entire movement but Hughes's position became a more common one for future generations of Black artists in the 1960s and 1970s (Hughes, 1926; Porter, 1992).

By the 1960s, terms like *Negro Idiom* and *Negro sensibility* evolved into new terms to describe works of art created by African-Americans, which denoted a less integrationist approach. Terms like *Black art* or *Black Aesthetics* referred to work, that was created for the sole purpose of the Black community. African-American artists tackled various styles and utilized a multitude of materials, but shared messages of protest and racial solidarity. Many African-American artists of this movement prioritized social relevance over form (Fine, 1971).

Some older generations of Africa-American artists were adamantly against being associated with this new mission. This is evidenced by Woodruff's reflections of those politically charged works of "Black Art," which emerge out of the late 1960s and 1970s. Woodruff explained:

I don't think there is any such thing as Black art ... African Art had a unique form and characteristic. It is the only true art ... Black art is more political. This is not

about aesthetics, it's political. There is a distinction between content and aesthetics. (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973)

Other artists who excelled as social realists merged their styles with confrontational political content. Although Elizabeth Catlett's career began much earlier, her politically charged works regained popularity. Charles White, who was a young art student during the New Negro Movement, adamantly maintained his aesthetic and masterfully drafted historical and genre scenes of Black life throughout his career. He also injected his style of well-rendered figurative works with social political commentary.

As during the New Negro Movement, there was a great deal of debate concerning the visual forms of *Black Art*. The expected role of the Black artists should be distinguished from those of the Negro Artists before them. There was seemingly more acceptance for the various styles and functions of "Negro" subject matter. Some approaches targeted Black audiences while others functioned to serve White patrons or the global esteem of the race. In contrast, Black artists were compelled to reconsider the social and political significance of their work. According to Addison Gayle (1971), *Black Aesthetics* are defined by a fusion of Black vernacular culture, African aesthetics, and ethics designed to uplift the Black community or challenge the White establishment (Gayle, 1971).

Those of the Black Arts Movement felt that *Black Art* was integrally connected to the community in the struggle for social change, and Black art exhibitions became common sites for dialogue on revolution and resistance (Fine, 1971). William O. Thomas, a spokesperson for the Black Man's Art Gallery, a gallery apparently founded to support the artistic efforts of Black males organized in 1967, describes the philosophy of

it's representatives: "We determine for ourselves what Black art is, artistically, aesthetically and ethically, based on our African origins, enlightened by frustration and anxieties of living in a white racist society" (Quoted in Fine, 1971, p. 192). It was more than anger, intolerance, and militancy that separated the artists of the New Negro Movement from the Black artists (Gayle, 1971). Gayle (1971) notes some of these differences:

The serious black artists of today are at war with the American society as few have been throughout American history. Too often, as Richard Wright noted, the black (artists) "entered the court of American public opinion dressed in the knee pants of servility, curtsying to show that the Negro was not inferior, that he was human, and that he had was comparable to other people." They wage war not against society but against the societal laws and mores that barred them from equal membership. They were, in the main, anxious to become Americans, to share in the fruits of the country's economic system and to surrender their history and culture to a universal melting pot. (p. xviii)

Black people were involved in this struggle on various levels. It was a reactionary time for African-Americans in the United States. People were compelled in this time by political strife to react to their conditions (Ringgold, 1995). Du Bois and Locke had great hopes of African-Americans earning a respectable place in the human race during the New Negro Movement. The art that African-Americans produced during the Black Arts Movement amplified the social and political inequities previously seen in the work of Social Realists of the Work Progress Administration (W.P.A.) era (Patton, 1998). The

New Negro embraced and promoted Americanism while those of the Black Arts Movement challenged it. Gayle (1971) adds:

The black artist of the past worked with the white public in mind. The guidelines by which he measured his production were its acceptance or rejection by white people. To be damned by a white critic and disavowed by a white public was reason enough to damn the artist in the eyes of his own people. The invisible censor, white power, hovered over him in the sanctuary of his private room—whether at the piano or the typewriter—and, like his black brothers, he debated about what he could say to the world without bringing censure upon himself. The mannerisms he had used to survive in the society outside, he brought to his art. ... The result was usually an artistic creation filled with half-truths. (Gayle, 1971, p. xxi)

Gayle (1971) suggested that “an aesthetic based upon economic and class determinism is one which has minimal value for Black people. For Black writers and critics the starting point must be the proposition that the history of Black people in America is the history of the struggle against racism” (p. 43). It is likely that in his statement he was offering a critique to the previous efforts of African-Americans to evoke social change, namely the New Negro Movement.

Leaders of the New Negro Movement were optimistic about race relations and hoped to earn the favor and support of Whites. Patronage and philanthropy of Whites contributed to the boom in Harlem. In this period those promoting the image of the New Negro were concerned with the political, economic, and social agenda that would benefit the Black community nationally (Huggins, 1971). In contrast, leaders of the Black Arts

Movement (1965-1976) were taking more militant action. The art made for the people was made by the people (Gayle, 1971). Gayle (1971) explains: “The artists will create the art and the people will create the Artists; therefore, the People will create the art” (p. 56). In 1969, Amiri Baraka, one of the major figures of the movement, laid concrete boundaries for a nationalistic art. Baraka (1971) wrote:

The Art is the National Spirit. That manifestation of it. Black Art must be the Nationalist's vision given more form and feeling, as a razor to cut away what is not central to National Liberation. To show that which is. As a humanistic expression it is itself raised. And these are the poles, out of which we create, to raise, or as raised. (p. 11)

African-American artists during the Black Power Movement (1965-1976) were more inspired to produce works that reflected political ideas. Those producing art wanted to find a way they could use their voices to forward the cause (Ringgold, 1995). Although the styles and subjects were more expansive than that of the New Negro Movement, some artists still believed attitudes during the Black Arts Movement regarding the artist's role could limit the aesthetic development of artists interested in themes beyond community and politics (Fine, 1971).

African-American Artists and Modernism

In addition to all of the social/political debates, which influenced the direction of African-American artists, Modernism had a profound impact on visual artists of the second half of the New Negro Movement in the late 1930s, and early 1940s (Stokes-Sims, 2003). The Modernist influence is evidenced in the work of both Douglas and

Woodruff. Douglas studied the works of American and European Modernists at the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia and Woodruff studied Modernism as a student in Europe when he frequented the galleries and museums in Paris (Bearden & Henderson, 1993; Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). The Modernist influence can be regarded as a style that is primarily based on formalist aesthetics.

Formalism is the major aesthetic theory within Modernism (Gaudelius & Speirs, 2002).

Formalism essentially focuses on establishing criteria for judging works of art based on the work itself, not its content. Art historian Christopher L. C. E. Witcombe (2000) describes:

In the late 19th century, we find art beginning to be discussed by critics and art historians largely in formal terms, which effectively removed the question of meaning and purpose from consideration. From now on, art was to be discussed in terms of style—color, line, shape, space, composition — conveniently ignoring or playing down whatever social, political, or progressive statements the artist had hoped to make in his or her work. This approach became pervasive to the extent that artists, too, certainly the weaker ones, and even some of the strong ones as they got older or more comfortable, lost sight of their modernist purpose and became willy-nilly absorbed into this formalist way of thinking about art. In defense of this attitude, it was argued that as the function of art is to preserve and enhance the values and sensibilities of civilized human beings, it should attempt to remain aloof from the malignant influences of an increasingly crass and dehumanizing technological culture. Eventually there emerged the notion that

modernist art is practiced entirely within a closed formalist sphere, necessarily separated from, so as not to be contaminated by, the real world.

Modernist interpretations, which downplayed questions of meaning, purpose, and reflections of the world, created considerable challenges for African-American artists (Stokes-Sims, 2003). Although African-American artists assimilated various styles from the Modernist, the social and political expectations of African-American artists caused few to abandon their content completely (Gibson, 1997; Powell, 1997). Jeffery Stewart (1997) elaborates:

Modernism is a tricky word when used in association with the Harlem Renaissance [New Negro Movement]. Modernism most often refers to the rebellious artistic literary movements of the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century European and white Americans, whose sense of alienation from the rise of the corporate industrial state was reflected in the breakdown of the representational and the familiar in literature and art. But Modernism is also linked to more sociological processes, usually termed modernity: social forces such as industrialization, urbanization, secularization and commodification, and technological innovations such as photography and film that reflect the rise of the machine age in Western Europe and America. It is because of these social forces such as technological innovations that America is usually thought to have reached modernity in the 1920s-the Model A, the rise of motion pictures, the radio, etc.-but it is because of modernism that the Harlem Renaissance, according to many commentators, emerged as a distinctive African-American literary and artistic movement in the 1920s. ... Modernism in African-American culture is voiced by

an imagined community or nationalism in turn-of-the-century literary forms, the scope for what is and is not modernism widens considerably. Yet several factors have prevented the African-American from fitting neatly into the white American narrative of modernism and modernity in American life. ... modernist theorists usually validate the primacy of the art object as the center of any aesthetic interpretation and consider the social, political and economic underpinnings of cultural production marginal. (p. 92)

Popular Modernist notions completely negated the social relevance of works created by African-American artists like Douglas and Woodruff, who did not fully submit to the demands and expectations of Modernism (Stokes- Sims, 2003; Powell, 1997). Art historian Lowery Stokes-Sims (2003) explains:

As African-American visual artists confronted the challenge to be modern, they would have to consider how they would navigate notions of heritage and the engagement of “tribal” arts, of primitivism and authenticity, of plastic radicalism and stereotypical caricature, of secularism and spirituality. To do so they would have to perform the seemingly impossible task of addressing the expectations both on the part of the larger white society and within the black community.

Herein lay the challenge of the modern for African-American artists. (p. 14)

The great majority of the visual arts produced during the New Negro Movement could be comfortably placed into three categories as it pertains to style, subject matter, and function: One category includes traditional sculpture/portraiture that focused on idealized African-American subjects. It specifically served to celebrate the rise of the Africa-American middle-class and lift the global esteem of the race. These works depict

well-to-do African-American sitters and celebrate African-American physiognomy. They also debunked many of the demeaning Black caricatures, which gained popularity during the abolitionist movement and the Reconstruction Era (Harris, 2003). These images fulfilled Du Bois's hope for art serving as propaganda for African-Americans (Worth, 1995).

The second category involves Africanists, i.e., African-American artists who studied, glorified, or reinterpreted African content and African design sensibilities. Some took an academic approach but incorporated African themes and content. Other artists studied African art directly or by way of European Modernists but used modes of African art expressions to arrive at original Black Modernist expressions. Locke primarily championed this mode.

The third category also embraces Modernist sensibilities but focuses on vernacular subjects. During the later part of the movement some artists began to boldly express aspects of Black culture, which focused on northern urban and southern rural African-American themes. This resulted in a unique form of African-American Modernist painting as well (Lewis, 2003).

Black Abstraction

Not long after the New Negro Movement, in the 1940s, Abstract Expressionism emerged as the new face of contemporary American painting (Gibson, 1997). In the 1950s and 1960s American action painters such as Jackson Pollock and Willem DeKooning were championed by the critical writings of Clement Greenberg (Okediji, 2003). Greenberg (1960) shares his criteria for a successful Modernist painting. He states:

Because flatness was the only condition painting shared with no other art, Modernist painting oriented itself to flatness as it did to nothing else. The Old Masters had sensed that it was necessary to preserve what is called the integrity of the picture plane: that is, to signify the enduring presence of flatness underneath and above the most vivid illusion of three-dimensional space. The apparent contradiction involved was essential to the success of their art, as it is indeed to the success of all pictorial art. The Modernists have neither avoided nor resolved this contradiction; rather, they have reversed its terms. One is made aware of the flatness of their pictures before, instead of after, being made aware of what the flatness contains. Whereas one tends to see what is in an Old Master before one sees the picture itself, one sees a Modernist picture as a picture first. This is, of course, the best way of seeing any kind of picture, Old Master or Modernist, but Modernism imposes it as the only and necessary way, and Modernism's success in doing so is a success of self-criticism.

Modernist painting in its latest phase has not abandoned the representation of recognizable objects in principle. What it has abandoned in principle is the representation of the kind of space that recognizable objects can inhabit.

Abstractness, or the non-figurative, has in itself still not proved to be an altogether necessary moment in the self-criticism of pictorial art, even though artists as eminent as Kandinsky and Mondrian have thought so. As such, representation, or illustration, does not attain the uniqueness of pictorial art; what does do so is the associations of things represented. (p. 17)

The noted Black Abstractionists of the second half of the 20th century include: Charles Alston, Romare Bearden, Norman Lewis, and Hale Woodruff. Although they subscribed to many of the “rules” Greenberg set forth, regarding flatness, space, and the non-figurative, they did continue to integrate various representations of African symbols and Black subjects into their work. Most of them also continued to produce portraits and genre paintings, which embraced Black subjects in addition to their pursuits of abstraction. However painter Norman Lewis, who held steadfast to the styles and aesthetics of the Abstractionist school, is probably the most closely associated African-American with the movement (Gibson, 1997). Unfortunately Abstract Expressionism was regarded as a White male phenomenon therefore few White patrons supported African-American artists who produced works of art which were not representational of their race and culture (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

African art also had a profound impact on the direction of Modern art in Europe at the turn of the 20th century. During the New Negro Movement, Locke recognized that the “Great European Modernists” were influenced by African art. He believed African-American artists could benefit from studying such works for a variety of reasons (Locke, 1925). Locke insisted that studying one’s ancestral legacy would instill in Blacks a sense of cultural pride and have a galvanizing influence on their art. Locke also suggested that studying these works could give Blacks a greater appreciation for the sophisticated and laconic style of African art, which contrasted with the humanistic and emotional sensibility of African-American art (Locke, 1925).

Unfortunately Blacks of the 1920s and 1930s had limited exposure to African influences. European Modernism as well as contemporary American art influenced their work (Salomon, 1998). Stokes-Sims (2003) continues:

The engagement of Africa and African art by African-American artists came a decade after European and Euro-American artists had enlisted the traditional arts of Africa, the First Peoples of the Americas and the Pacific to revolutionize western art traditions. As a result, African-American artists had to grapple with the fact that white artists had already trumped their proprietary relationship with their ancestral arts. While the concept of primitivism—which emerged at the end of the nineteenth century—demonstrated the importance of world art to modernity, this convergence of cultures would inevitably raise the question if “modern” art could not exist without the ‘primitive,’ can the “primitive,” also be “modern”? (p. 17)

This shift from realistically rendered African-American figures to attempts to emulate African art merged with Black vernacular subjects and Modernist aesthetics distinguished these Black Modernists from their White Modernist counterparts. However, the Black artist’s relationship to Modernism and African art was often construed as disingenuous (Gibson, 1997; Porter, 1992). Art Historian Richard Powell (2003) describes:

Modern aesthetics repeatedly produced and sanctioned the spurious truths of an unjust racial order. Blacks “negroes” appeared regularly in writing about the nature and essence of western art. Racial difference was repeatedly cited where

critics pondered the inability of non-Europeans to produce legitimate and therefore authentic art. These distinctions were often, though by no means always, expressed in the opposition between primitive and civilized. They became central to modern specifications of exactly what art should comprise. (p. 42)

In addition to the fusion of “Primitivism” shared by artists like Picasso and Braque, African-American artists including Douglas, Woodruff, and William, H. Johnson incorporated African sculpture, African symbols, and African-American vernacular influences. Neither Douglas nor Woodruff limited their artistic objectives to combating racial stereotypes or creating non-representational paintings. They found affinities with a broad range of influences including collections of African art and Modernist works (Gibson, 1997). African-American artists like Romare Bearden, (his earlier work), and Norman Lewis pursued styles that did not address racial ethnicity, their work evolved from an additional set of social, cultural, and political circumstances beyond Modernism.

The African-American community had conflicting reactions to Black Abstractionists. Historically the African-American art community has been divided between issues of representational verses non-representational art forms or figurative verses abstract art. This divided aesthetic began in the 1940s and culminated during the Black Arts Movement in the 1960s and 1970s during a time when artists separated into “Blackstream” or “mainstream” (Fine, 1971; Salomon, 1998). Black art was perceived or expected to take a political relevance, or stance. The Black art community considered those who produced work that did not somehow connect to these notions of self-determination and affirmation of Blackness as self-serving. Black art had distinguished itself through its objective to repair a damaged group psychology and reshape a warped

social perspective of Blackness (Locke, 1925). When African-American artists were grappling with their own personal artistic objectives and striving for a more universal style they abandoned representation. As a result the Black community questioned the Black abstractionist's commitment to African-American political struggle. In the 1970s, many members of the Black community felt African-American artists who worked in this genre were more concerned with competing or earning individual acceptance in the White-American male dominated art world. Black artists who chose this direction would ultimately have more opportunities to exhibit, sell their work, and enter the mainstream discourse (Salomon, 1998).

On the other hand, during the 1940s and 50s, the biographies and political stances of mainstream artists were not stressed in the interpretations of mainstream art. The formal analysis of these works silently maintained the status quo by not disrupting the dominant power structure. Art historian Ann Gibson (1997) describes:

criticism as it was practiced delegated the authority, power and creativity required to create "great" Abstract Expressionist works nearly exclusive to white, male and presumably heterosexual artists. The greatest understanding of the style, these critics evidently felt, would come from formal analysis of the "masters". (p. 59)

Although identification such as gender, race, and sexual orientation are not the only aspects of one's identity or art, they can be factors for interpreting art (Keifer-Boyd, 2003). These constructs often contributed to limits imposed on abstractionists of non-White descent. Black culture was popularly defined as primitive. When European/American Modernists were praised for finding inspiration in African art, Blacks who created works, which were inspired by their heritage, were seen as simply

doing what came naturally. Unfortunately, they were not given credit for achieving the same level of skill and sophistication as Whites who worked in a similar genre. One of the ways that Black artists like Norman Lewis escaped these assumptions was to create work, which had little chance of raising racial associations (Gibson, 1997). Seemingly any racial or cultural references evoked would somehow substantiate claims that the non-White artists had no “Modernist Genius.” It is likely that these pressures made it difficult for Black artists to approach their works from the formal/objective standpoint, which critics claimed to be the essence of Modernism (Greenberg, 1960).

The greatest challenge for the Black Modernist was to contribute to both discourses or reconcile the two without limiting one’s perspective to any singular cultural political perspective or aesthetic vision. Most Black artists were accommodating, resisting, fleeing, or rejecting these societal demands (Gibson, 1997). This began a new tradition of Black artists who broke away from the White-Americans’ course of artistic development. These artists including Douglas and Woodruff resisted the imposition of Modernist aesthetic. This change in course created a new found legacy of Black artists and art educators. African-American cultural history and African Art fueled this legacy.

Although many of the terms used in this section including art, aesthetics, sensibility, Modernists, etc. are those one might typically use in writing to examine or interpret works of art or the history of art, simply placing the word *Black* in front of any of those terms brings forth connotations rooted in specific socio-political histories. It may do an injustice to employ a newer lens to interpret works of the past. However, my goal is to clarify my thesis, by using the term *Black content* to denote the use of African or African-American subject matter.

History of the Black Academy

In order to best understand the challenges of African-American art educators in the mid-20th century one must first have a historical overview of the formation and development of art departments at historical Black colleges and universities. Until the 1920s and 1930s, most art education in the United States was dominated by traditional European styles (Lewis, 2003; Holland, 1998). The content of African-American artists reflected White-American life, which marginalized or excluded Blacks as in the curricula for African-American students (Lewis, 2003). Until the 1940s, most professional Black fine artists were educated in predominantly White schools, studied abroad in Europe, and responded to the 19th and 20th century art movements, not specifically as a politically defined Black artist (Fine, 1971).

From the early 19th century to the inception and expansion of art departments in historical Black colleges and universities in the 1940s, the attitudes and approaches of African-American art teachers changed dramatically. Black art educators began to encourage their students to look to African and Black culture for inspiration during and following the New Negro Movement in the 1920s and early 1930s (Locke, 1925). The studio presence of these artists also reflected such an aesthetic. This ideological shift in identity politics had profound effects on the pedagogy of Black art educators. This new school, which affirmed Black identity, is known as the Black Academy (Holland, 1998).

The Black Academy, a term coined by art historian David Driskell in the 1980s, is denoted by the years when veteran Black artists, who studied abroad in Europe and developed ideologically and aesthetically during the New Negro Movement, began to

work as teachers, painters, and muralists in the W.P.A. projects. They began the “Black Academy” to nurture future generations as university professors (Holland, 1998). Aaron Douglas and Hale Woodruff were both active in the development of the Black Academy. Though they were primarily painters, their efforts as muralists, illustrators, curators, and teachers promoted aesthetics rooted in the Black experience (Lewis, 2003). Douglas and Woodruff directed the art departments at Fisk and Clark Atlanta Universities, respectively, where they worked diligently to broaden the understandings of their students through teaching, programming, and expanding the university gallery’s art collection (Driskell, 1985; Kirschke, 1995; Stoelting, 1978). Could these efforts of Douglas and Woodruff affirm their identities as African-American artists while also contributing to the discourse of Modern American art?

African-American Art Educators

There are few studies on the legacy of African-American art educators. The pedagogy of African-American artists has been under-recognized in U.S. history. Even the most notable African-American art educators are not recognized as being part of a legacy. Although these histories hold great potential for African-American students segregation and racism has created schools, which are not only designed to not support such content, but are resistant to it (Shujaa, 1995). Benjamin Bowser (1995) explains the impact of racism on the educational system:

The normative assumptions that inform legitimate knowledge in the schools are defined by the cultural religious and social class ethos of the schools. Black experiences and histories do not influence such systems of knowledge, and

structurally nothing in the way of school is designed will necessitate such considerations. Black knowledge constructs remain marginalized. (p. 276)

It is of critical importance to explore a culturally relevant method of teaching the visual artists to African-American students (Grigsby, 1977). Despite the sacrifices these African-American teaching artists made, little has been published regarding their efforts and challenges in supporting young African-American students. Art educators like Augusta Savage and Charles Alston, were instrumental in educating, mentoring, and employing young African-American artists in the 1920s and 1930s. Savage began teaching art courses in her Harlem garage among other places. She was later appointed as director of the Harlem Community Art Center during the W.P.A. era. Alston also provided studio space for young artists as founder of the Utopian Neighborhood Center, and opened his home for young and veteran African-American artists to discuss cultural identity and aesthetic development. Savage and Alston were also active in the Harlem Artist Guild, a union of sorts, which worked to employ African-American artists and educators through the W.P.A. and to gain for them gallery representation for them. They taught and inspired several African-American art students who later earned acclaim including Romare Bearden, Robert Blackburn, Ernest Crichlow, Jacob Lawrence, and Norman Lewis (Bidley, 1988).

Painter and art educator John Biggers was not only mentored by the renowned art educator Victor Lowenfeld during his doctoral studies at the Pennsylvania State University, but was also profoundly impacted by African-American muralists and printmakers, Charles White and Elizabeth Catlett, as a young art student at Hampton Institute. White and Catlett came to Hampton to teach and complete a public commission

through a Rosenwald Fellowship. For many art students at Hampton, this was their first exposure to professional African-American artists. The energy brought forth by White's and Catlett's teaching and studio presence had a profound effect on them (Grigsby, 1977). In his later years, White went on to teach noteworthy contemporary African-American artists Melvin Edwards and David Hammonds, who both acknowledge the impact of Charles White's legacy.

Artist and art educator, Eugene Grigsby, was a student of Hale Woodruff at Atlanta University in the 1940s. Dr. Grigsby has had an extensive career as an artist and educator and continues to actively exhibit and lecture in the first decade of the 21st century throughout the United States. Grigsby's major contribution to the field of art education was his 1977 book *Art and Ethnics*, which spoke to the importance of culturally relevant art education. Artist Jeff Donaldson was a former student of Romare Bearden and founding member of AfriCobra, a group of African-American artists who developed a collective aesthetic in the late 1960s during the Black Arts Movement (Okediji, 2003). During his tenure at Howard University, Donaldson shared his concerns for the *Black Aesthetic* and his convictions regarding the social responsibility of African-American artists with a generation of young African-American art students, many whom have active careers as artists and scholars in the field. Michael Harris (2003) is an art historian, professor, curator, and former student of Donaldson. Harris writes prolifically on the history of African-American art.

There is undoubtedly a legacy of African-American art educators whose history and accomplishments are even more fragmented than that of African-American artists. If one were to look specifically at the legacy set forth at historical Black colleges and

universities the tradition of dispensing technical, formal, aesthetic, ideological, and political information as it pertains to the production of African-American art is traceable. Because little effort has been made to empower young African-American art students and art education students with studies of the legacy of African-American art education this valuable and enriching research area is uncharted. Art educator Eugene Grisby (1973) stated: “Tradition is important for understanding cultural heritage and important as a means of self-realization for youth ... The art teachers must recognize and understand the importance of traditions but at the same time must not be bound by them” (p. x).

Carter G. Woodson (1933/1990) purposed that the educational system is worthless to African-Americans unless teachers “revolutionize the social order for the good of the community” (p. 145). Over the past three decades, there has been an increasing demand for more content concerning the African-American experience. Some African-American communities recognize the need for curriculum, which is culturally relevant to African-Americans (Shujaa, 1994). In creating an educational experience that is useful to African-Americans many believe that a counter-hegemonic strategy is in order. Shujaa (1994) tells us that:

African and African-American curriculum content reforms are products of counter-hegemonic intentions and their initiators. These reforms have the potential to provide teachers with a broader knowledge base from which to expose students of all cultures to alternate interpretations of the world and assumptions about social reality. Such change however must begin in the realities of the present. These realities include the culture dynamics of race, gender and class in the existing social order and the different ways people relate to them. (p. 194)

Art Education curriculum today is still influenced by the residual effects of racial segregation and cultural domination (Grigsby, 1977; Shujaa, 1994). As art teachers become aware of the reality that we live in a pluralistic society, the need for changing their approach to pedagogy and curricula in order to promote social justice is paramount.

A History of African-American Art Pedagogy: Problems and Challenges

My initial inquires focused exclusively on the classroom practices of Douglas and Woodruff but through my research I discovered an unwritten history within the lives of these artists. These findings have the potential to provide a powerful model for teachers and students, especially those of the African descent. The history of African-American pedagogy has not been written. Several factors have contributed to the reason why this history has not been discovered. Previously few theoretical notions of examining history approached the subject in way, which inclusively addressed the complex history of African-Americans. The difficulties with unearthing this history, of African-American art education, are that it cannot be found within the boundaries of curricular and instructional materials. These boundaries must be challenged to support an expanded pedagogy. In light of expanded pedagogy, Douglas and Woodruff bravely took the helm and in many instances sacrificed their own professional/artistic pursuits in order to build a program and share what they believed it meant to be a man, an artist, and a teacher in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s to young African-American art students.

Marable (1981) identifies three value orientations of historians who have examined the African American experience: (a) the “negro has no history school of thought,” (b) the “individual contributions” approach, and (c) a modern school that treats

the history of African Americans as “a history of struggle rooted in the concept that human beings collectively made their own history” and “fought to maintain their unique identity as a people and to secure by whatever means, the economic and political tools for self-determination, self-reliance” (pp. 5-6). Marable concludes that only the third value orientation is capable of producing a body of knowledge that informs a self-contained model of Black/Africana Studies consistent with the field's multiple missions. By ‘a self-contained model’ I am referring to an approach to history that utilizes a historical scope which does not depend on a White or Eurocentric lens for its focus or interpretation. Although the two previous value orientations, reconciling that the absence of recorded history (no history) with one’s achievements (contributionist) in the present, are fundamental to understanding the evolution of scholarship in Africana studies or, more specific to this study, African-American art, the third approach is clearly a more encompassing method of teaching history which is inclusive of the complex identities and postmodern stances of contemporary African-American artists and art students (Stewart, 1992).

The expanded pedagogy of Douglas and Woodruff broadens the focus of their influence to include the socio-political realities of the Black experience and their reactions and responses to those realities. The challenges that result from racism and race politics are typically omitted from art histories (Powell, 1997). For this reason some are led to believe that there is no history of African-Americans outside of the oppressive frameworks which have previously limited its potential. However through their lived pedagogy Douglas and Woodruff provided a history of African-American art education. Their expanded pedagogy is crucial to comprehending how their influence was felt by the

Black community, their students and, in some instances, by the world. Marables framework provides profound insights into the interpretations of Douglas's and Woodruff's expanded pedagogy and the history of African-American art education.

Historian Lerone Bennett Jr. (1961/1988) argues African-Americans to completely revise our concept of *Black time*. He advocates for detaching one's perception and understanding of African-American history or art history, from its "White shell," and reinsert it into a Black time-line, which should extend from its African origins to the transformation of African-Americans in the present (Bennett, 1961/1988, p. ii). When one attempts to chart any linear progression of African-American art history, there are a multitude of potential excavation sites, for interpretation, limited by perceived boundaries. African-American art history does not fit the mold of conventional art historical methods (Vlach, 1978/1990). John Michael Vlach (1978/1990) describes, "The nature of the works requires that attention be focused not simply on the objects and their makers but on broad historical and cultural issues" (p. 1).

This method of interpreting art and art education history allows one to explore a broad range of possibilities that are in no way limited by materials, rules, or power structures, and instead offers me a method of historiography in which I can give voice from primary source data analysis regarding the responsibilities Douglas and Woodruff took for their students outside of the context of art or the classroom. These are sites for interpreting the transformative power of these artists who challenged the structure or segregation, and Modernism (Powell, 1997). In efforts to evoke these transformations these artists were forced to challenge hegemonic cannon and the imposition of white content.

Exploring the notion of expanded pedagogy has revealed an additional list of questions which I explore throughout this study.

1. How does this notion of expanded pedagogy broaden one's understanding of the history of African-American art and art education?
2. How can histories which embrace "Expanded Pedagogies" be used as foundations to current strategies for empowering and educating African-American youth?
3. What is the history of African-American art education's relationship to the dominant history of which African-American students are compelled to learn?
4. Is there an effective way to challenge the hegemonic canon and resist or embrace White content without disempowering African-American students?

Giving Voice to the Marginalized: Reading Between the Lines

Understanding the impact of racial, political, and cultural identity on a learning community is critical to one's teaching effectiveness in the art classroom. Alternative teaching methods, which address issues of power and identity in a pluralistic society, can be extracted through diversified perspectives on the history of art education. Perspectives, which include the influences and strategies of art teachers working in various racial, cultural, and ethnic contexts, help us to understand the varying needs of underrepresented students. The influence of New Negro artists on historical Black colleges and universities is an under-researched area. Although in recent years there have been efforts to supplement k-12 art curricula by including the study of African-American art and artists, there is a general avoidance of contextualizing African-Americans in the visual arts and

in art education. The accomplishments and critical merit of works created by African-American artists like Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence, Faith Ringgold, David Hammonds, and Fred Wilson in recent curricula emerge as historical anomalies outside of the context of cultural identity and race politics in the United States. In order to fill one of the crucial gaps left in U.S. art education, the influence of post New Negro Movement artists/art educators on the African-American art community and historical Black colleges and universities should be studied and documented.

It is important to explore the pedagogical merit of African-American artists' artwork, instruction, and their lives. This could assist today's teachers in creating learning environments that seek to empower otherwise marginalized students (Shujaa, 1995). Cultural differences, values, attitudes, and belief systems must be bridged in order for teachers to facilitate student's growth in developing their own cultural art forms. Students can first learn to take pride in their own cultural and artistic contributions to society before they learn to appreciate others (Grigsby, 1977). Not only did Aaron Douglas and Hale Woodruff have extensive careers as artists, they also devoted a considerable amount of time to the education of African-American art students. Including the voices and influence of these art educators promotes social justice and democracy in the classroom because by doing so cultural hegemony is challenged.

The aims of this project are to examine the instruction and pedagogy of two specific African-American artists who addressed African-American identity in their pedagogy. There has been little historical research conducted on the Black Academy. A few African-American artists are championed in the mainstream today but the historical context from which the content of African-American artists and art educators has

emerged has not realized its potential to inform our interpretations of these works as they pertain to race, resistance, identity, and pedagogy. The activists, teachers, artists, and mentors who sacrificed, influenced, and laid the groundwork for those African-American artists who are recognized by “history” are seldom mentioned. The findings from this historical study diversify perspectives on the history of art education to include the influences of African-American art teachers on historical Black colleges and mainstream institutions.

During Aaron Douglas's and Hale Woodruff's teaching careers in the 1940s at Fisk and Clark Atlanta universities, respectively, both made public their responsibility to the African-American art community to promote African-American artists whose art expressed African-American experiences. They also pursued acceptance in the art world as respected artists during the high Modernist era, which defined the Western art world's aesthetic ideology in the 1940s. As a result Douglas and Woodruff included a fusion of Modernist aesthetics and a responsibility to represent African-American experiences through the visual arts in their teaching (Powell, 1997).

Organization of the Study

The research questions guided the organization of the study. In Chapter Two, I describe the research methodology and data collection in the archives at Robert Woodruff Library at Atlanta University Center Archives and Special Collections, in Atlanta, Georgia, and Fisk University Franklin Library and Special Collections, in Nashville, Tennessee. I begin by describing the archival materials I worked with and discuss how the data were collected to include decisions on the range and depth, as well as the limitations of the data collection. This study was primarily informed by primary sources

revolving around Douglas's and Woodruff's teaching and professional careers. In examining their teaching and pedagogy, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to consider many professional correspondences with colleagues, museums, universities, and organizations as well as testimony from their friends and former students regarding their personal and aesthetic influence. This chapter candidly reveals some of my own biases, which I had to overcome as I collected and interpreted these data. In addition, I describe how the data were ultimately analyzed and how the findings are presented in this dissertation.

In Chapter Three, I list criteria for examining and defining social responsibility. The chapter also situates Douglas's and Woodruff's challenges regarding racism, segregation, and social responsibility, and their creative, cultural, and political influences in the history of African-American artists. It explores this history from slavery to the 1960s. I also discuss, through an analysis of specific works of art produced by African-American artists, how these works signify social roles to serve African-Americans. My analysis is derived from thoroughly examining the expressions of African-American identity and social responsibility to the African-American community. Chapter Three also describes how notions of struggle and social progress differ from one historical context to the next. Apparently radicalism and social progress during slavery will contrast from the period when African-Americans took advantage of more liberties and mobilized as they did during the Civil Rights Movement.

Chapter Four focuses on Douglas's and Woodruff's pedagogy outside of classroom instruction. It explores the impact of race politics and social responsibility on the careers and artwork of Douglas and Woodruff. I examine the effects of the African-

American community, White and Eurocentric education, and White patronage on the content of their work and their career decisions as they struggled to earn a living as professional artists during The Great Depression. I extend this focus to analyze the content of Douglas's and Woodruff's lectures at historically Black colleges and mainstream universities across the United States to understand the national influence of these two artists. Their efforts to expose their students to works of art outside of what they could offer in the classroom, through extended networks of artists, arts organizations, museums, and galleries as they held positions at Fisk and Atlanta University gallery directors is also critical to this chapter.

Chapter Five compares the effectiveness of Douglas's and Woodruff's instruction with their expanded pedagogy. I advocate for how their presence outside of the classroom was as integral to preparing young African-American students to sustain themselves as professionals and educators, as was the formal, art historical, and technical instruction they provided in classroom teaching. In the conclusion to this study I reflect on my own experience as an African-American student, artist, and presently as an art educator in a historically Black university in light of my notions of expanded pedagogy. I speculate on the validity of Douglas's and Woodruff's pedagogical approach in the 1930s and 1940s to understand how to empower and educate today's African-American youth through the visual arts.

CHAPTER TWO

CRITICAL SOURCES AND ARCHIVAL RESEARCH: FISK UNIVERSITY FRANKLIN LIBRARY AND ROBERT WOODRUFF LIBRARY OF THE ATLANTA UNIVERSITY CENTER ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

In Chapter Two, I outline and describe the research methodology employed in this study. I discuss the decisions made in conducting archival research at the two major sites, Fisk University Library and the Robert Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center Archives and Special Collections. I begin by describing the historical methodology I employ and describe the archival materials with which I worked as well as those that were particularly useful to this study. I discuss how the data were collected to include decisions on the range and depth, as well as the limitations of the data collection. In addition, I describe how the data were analyzed and how the findings are presented in this dissertation.

The historical methodology I employ in this study is an attempt to revise histories, which have excluded the presence of the African-American experience. African-American historians primarily rewrite histories to correct or revise the dominant “historical truth” or White supremacist accounts (Shujaa, 1994). According to the Wikipedia encyclopedia “*historical revisionism* is the hypercritical reexamination of historical facts, with an eye towards rewriting histories with newly discovered information. The assumption is that history as it has been traditionally told may not be entirely accurate” (p. 1.). As I read through the historical information available on African-American art and artists, few examined the pedagogical merit of this history

through situating these artists and their works in their cultural and political settings.

Shujaa (1994) explains:

If history is to have value beyond a literary form of collecting antiques, it must provide a guide to action. For those struggling against oppression and for justice, history must assess the past to suggest political, social and economic strategies for the present and the future. Like education, history is inescapably political. (p. 86)

My initial purpose in conducting this research was to examine the history of African-American artists with a specific focus on race and social progress and African-American perspectives in order to assess the data's potential to empower African-American students in the present (Kershaw, 2000). In order to do this it is important to reorient the data into a framework, which is most effective in forwarding the cause of African-American people. According to Asante, "Afrocentricity is an orientation to data that places African people as subjects and agents in the shaping of life chances and experiences" (Quoted in Kershaw, 2000, p. 32). In doing so this research gives agency to Douglas and Woodruff, which previous histories did not. Terry Kershaw (2000) continues: "The guiding principle of centrism is met by locating African people to their African centers and granting agency to African people through their voice and deeds" (p. 34). The hope is to present this data in a way that gives voice to the conditions that Douglas and Woodruff endured.

The majority of the primary sources for this study were located in the archives at Fisk University Library and at the Robert Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center. Given that Aaron Douglas spent his entire teaching career at Fisk University, the Special Collections library has extensive personal and professional records of Douglas's

years in Nashville and New York. “The Aaron Douglas Papers” consist of: general and personal correspondence (1921-1974) with museums, foundations, the media; early drawings, sketches, watercolors, writings, lectures, speeches, and reports by Douglas and others; classroom materials (while Douglas was head of the Department of Art at Fisk University); programs, pamphlets, leaflets; exhibitions by Douglas, Woodruff, and others; accounts, bills, notes; photographs; publications (such as magazines, guides, directories) relating to art; and newspaper clippings. In addition, the collection contains letters; prints, drawings, sketchbooks; drafts of lectures; printed material and reports concerning the Sigma Pi Phi fraternity; teaching notes, exams, quizzes; bills and receipts; exhibition catalogs, clippings and other printed material; and photographs of Douglas and his works of art. The collection mostly concerns Douglas's years at Fisk and the development of the art department, and the management of the Stieglitz art collection. Among the correspondents are Charles Alston, Claude Clark, John Cowles, William Dawson, Jeff Donaldson, Cedric Dover, David Driskell, Mary Beattie Brady of the Harmon Foundation, John Davis Hatch, William C. Haygood of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, Georgia O’Keeffe, and Walter Pach.

The Black Oral History Archives at Fisk University’s Special Collections held two transcribed Aaron Douglas interviews that took place in 1971 and 1973. Douglas was at this point in his early seventies and spoke with passion and conviction about his life, teaching, and hopes for young African-American artists. These interviews provided insight into Douglas’s political views, which was not evidenced to such a degree in any of the other materials.

The research of Amy Helene Kirschke, who had spent a considerable amount of time in the Fisk archives prior to the publication of her book *Aaron Douglas: Art, Race and The New Negro Movement* (1995), was also helpful to this study. Reading her book and understanding how she made these archives useful to her study served as a guide for me as I came to understand how one could use primary sources to substantiate one's thesis.

The Hale Woodruff collection at the Robert Woodruff Library at Atlanta University is not nearly as extensive. Since Woodruff's teaching career in the Atlanta University system was twelve years (1931-1943), when he then relocated to accept a teaching position at New York University, there is a limited amount of personal materials, letters, notes, books, etc., in the Woodruff collection. The collection consists chiefly of materials collected by Winifred Stoelting in doing research for her dissertation, *Hale Woodruff, Artist and Teacher: Through the Atlanta Years* (Emory University, 1978). Upon completion of her dissertation, Stoelting donated her data to the Atlanta University Trevor Arnett Library Negro Collection. These materials include tape-recorded interviews with Woodruff, his students and colleagues, correspondence between Woodruff and Stoelting, and slides of his work. The collection also includes a copy of Dr. Stoelting's dissertation and several brochures from Woodruff's exhibitions, as well as correspondences and programs revolving around the Atlanta Annual exhibitions. Woodruff's teaching duties in the Atlanta University System varied a great deal. He worked in a variety of capacities in several venues. Initially he taught student teachers in the Laboratory High School. Grades six through twelve were located at Spelman, while kindergarten through fifth grade students were taught at the Atlanta University campus.

Additionally, undergraduates from Spelman and Morehouse studied painting, drawing, art history, stagecraft, and printmaking under Woodruff's guidance (Stoelting, 1978).

Thanks to the groundwork laid by Dr. Stoelting in the 1970s, I was able to access taped discussions of teacher candidates and art students who taught in the lab school, which included several people who later distinguished themselves as artists and art educators. Although Woodruff worked with many students during his years in Atlanta, I found the testimony of these artists particularly useful. Eugene Grigsby, who went on to become an influential African-American art educator in his own right at Arizona State University, worked under Woodruff in various capacities. He took art history and studio courses, including painting and printmaking, as well as teaching in the Laboratory High School under Woodruff's supervision. Grigsby's reflections, coming from the point of view of an experienced art educator, were especially poignant.

Robert Neal was Woodruff's foremost assistant on his mural commissions. He worked intimately with Woodruff and traveled with him. Therefore, he also brought an unusual perspective. He later became an art teacher in the Dayton public school system in Ohio. Both of these artists and art educators described Woodruff as a father figure and reflected anecdotally on the impact he had on their lives.

Jenelsie Walden Holloway, since working with Woodruff, went on to become an art historian and professor at Spelman College. She spoke specifically about the limitations gender placed on their working relationship. Given that he worked so closely with students, traveling and involving them on his mural commissions, perhaps Woodruff did not feel comfortable working so intimately with a young female student. Dr. Holloway described that he was so committed to educating his young African-American

male students that he involved some from the community who never officially enrolled in Atlanta University (Holloway, taped oral interview, September 29, 1976).

Interviews with other artists and art educators included: jewelry designer Wilmer Jennings, Vernon Winslow, former associate professor of art at Dillard University in New Orleans; Hayward Oubre, former chairman of the art department at Winston Salem State University in North Carolina; and John Howard, former chairman of the art department at the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff. Several of Woodruff's peers and colleagues also contributed statements, interviews, and letters to the collection. Ben Shute, who was one of the founding figures in what came to be Atlanta College of Art, and Lamar Dodd, a former faculty member at The University of Georgia, provided detailed testimony regarding the pedagogical and creative influence of Woodruff.

However, from the information in the Woodruff collection, I found most useful a taped interview conducted by Dr. Stoelting in November of 1973, and one tape-recorded response to a series of mailed questions provided by Stoelting in August of 1977. In addition there were more than twenty hand-written personal correspondences between Woodruff and Stoelting spanning 1973 and 1978. My research on Woodruff focuses solely on his teaching career in the Atlanta University system, a historically Black college. Although his interest and efforts to challenge the "color bar" are important to this study, my primary focus is on his impact on African-American students between 1931 and 1943. Although Aaron Douglas remained at Fisk University for his entire 29-year teaching career, I still focus primarily on his teaching during the same time period, from The Depression years up to the 1950s.

In reviewing and recording these data, I continually asked myself questions, in addition to the key research questions for this study, that I found pertinent to my current position as an art educator at a historically Black university:

1. Are race and culture necessary factors to consider in the development of art students?
2. What do young African-American art students need to know outside of the scope of African-American art history, artistic styles, and culture?
3. How does one go about exposing African-American students to the history, techniques, and traditional and contemporary processes of creating art?
4. Are there specific strategies needed to empower young African-American art students and what cultural and historical information is useful in doing so?

I am currently working to expose, mainly underprivileged African-American students, to a broader world through teaching, exhibiting, and mentorship I am continually struggling with the balance of empowering them through providing knowledge of African and African-American art (processes, techniques, styles, and content) without negating the influences of the mainstream Modernist and Postmodernist art world. If race and culture are important considerations in educating young African-Americans, then what strategies did Douglas and Woodruff employ? Given that the discourse of African-American art was almost nonexistent and definitely not included in mainstream textbooks, it was even more challenging to expose students to such achievements in the 1930s and 1940s. My inquiry focused primarily on how Douglas and

Woodruff took responsibility for developing, empowering, and exposing African-American students through their own creative influence and those of their friends and colleagues. Considerations in transcribing the data included:

1. When, where, and how did Douglas and Woodruff expose their students to African and African-American art, i.e., its aesthetics, philosophies, and ideologies?
2. When, where, and how did Douglas and Woodruff explore, expose, and discuss the cultural, social, economic, and political issues revolving around the Black experience with students?
3. How did Douglas and Woodruff expose their students to the broader mainstream art world, its styles, techniques, aesthetics, values, histories, and business?

In recording the data, I closely examined how the impact of race affects the pedagogy of Douglas and Woodruff. I consider how the content of their work, which embraced African-American vernacular and African-American historical subject matters, affected their teaching and their reception by students. Given that neither Douglas, nor Woodruff had received training from African-American artists, the question of how their teaching methods compare to previous models or were adjusted to meet the needs of their students is important to this study.

I closely read and noted any reference to race, racism, segregation, African or African-American art, assimilatory efforts (through patronage, education, social, or otherwise), or efforts to communicate an individual or universal message to the mainstream or the segregated African-American community. Most of the data that I

utilized resulted from direct correspondences, interviews, and statements from Douglas and Woodruff, their colleagues, and students.

Criticism Strategies Employed in Analysis

In analyzing these data it is of critical importance that one considers the audience for which the source was intended. Sometimes the author's intended audience can have a profound impact on the content of the document. Many of the materials I found in the *Douglas Papers* were formal typed lecture notes, autobiographical narratives, and letters to museums, galleries, and patrons. Most of these notes and letters were written for professional purposes, therefore, they did not reveal the biases, values, and political concerns that one might find in his unofficial and personal correspondences.

The *Douglas Papers* additionally included various publications to which Douglas subscribed. Therefore, I was able to infer things about his interests and educational values based on the journals and magazines he read. For example, Douglas's political and global interests were broad given that he had several subscriptions to *Time* and *Life* magazines. Copies of *Jet* magazine and *Black World* in the archives indicate that he was also interested in staying in tune with the news and events of the African-American community.

Unfortunately, the *Hale Woodruff Collection* does not cover as wide a scope as that of the Douglas papers. Most of these data were collected in the 1970s, more than 30 years after Woodruff left his teaching position at Atlanta University. The collection largely revolves around a retired Woodruff and his students reflecting on experiences they shared in the 1930s and 1940s. Most of Woodruff's comments are seemingly

forthright and are not accompanied with the baggage of one who struggles in his time. It does not allow one to consider changes in the artist's values and interest as he becomes more mature, established, and financially stable, as does the *Douglas Papers*. The interviews and recorded comments are responses to questions Dr. Stoelting wrote and mailed to Woodruff. As a result he had ample time to consider his answers. Therefore, it is likely that his responses were contrived without the benefit of the authenticity, which results from a more vulnerable and anxious interviewee.

By comparing Aaron Douglas's personal notes and letters to his typed lecture notes, I was able to better understand how his public image as an artist and educator compared to his uncensored opinions. For example, Douglas wrote to his eventual wife, Alta Sawyer, describing how he was compelled to humble himself so that he may get the full benefit of his relationship with his teacher and mentor, Winold Reiss. He described that he often condescended but maintained his poise. Yet he never revealed his knowledge and experience. He simply smiled and expressed his gratitude (Kirschke, 1995). In his letter he described: "While everything is going nicely one must not forget to be careful" (Douglas, 1925). It is likely that "careful" in this case meant that he must maintain an awareness of racism and cultural difference on their working relationship. Douglas was clearly speaking of the hardships of African-Americans working in a White dominated workforce when he stated in regards to his relationship with Reiss, "No one knows better than a Negro the real power of a smile" (Douglas, 1925).

Also in reading notes and interviews from the older and more established Douglas, it is apparent that he had less to lose by speaking more forthrightly about his experiences than he would as an up and coming young artist. For example, although

Douglas had a productive and cordial relationship with Harmon Foundation director, Mary Beattie Brady, in his 1960 interview spoke critically regarding the criteria of the Foundation in selecting and promoting African-American artists. Douglas also questioned the motives of those untrained artists who took advantage of the Harmon Foundation. He explained:

When unsuspecting Negroes were found with a brush in their hands they were immediately hauled away and held for interpretation. They were given places of honor and bowed to with much ceremony. Every effort to protest their innocence was drowned out with big-mouthed praise. A number escaped and returned to a more reasonable existence. Many fell in with the game and went along making hollow and meaningless gestures with a brush and palette. (Quoted in Dover, 1960, p. 31)

It is possible that Douglas's criticism of the Harmon Foundation was the result of his own bitterness. While he did participate in the Harmon Foundation's 1928 traveling exhibition, he never received an award from the Harmon Foundation. However, Douglas was not alone in his criticisms of the Harmon exhibits. Artists and African-American art historians James Porter and Romare Bearden agreed that the Harmon Foundation included many under-developed and experimental works along the side of those which were mature and competently executed (Kirschke, 1995; Lewis, 2003). It is not likely that Douglas would have shared these criticisms publicly in a time when he along with many other African-American artists were working to earn the favor of the Harmon Foundation in order to gain support to travel and study.

Authorship, Authenticity, and Integrity: Considerations Toward the Data

To effectively conduct analysis of historical documents for a study of such a political nature, one must be critical of the authorship and authenticity of the collected materials. Given that most of these data were recorded during segregation and racial subjugation of African-American people, bias should be expected and discerned. For example, the superior tone and condescension exemplified in the *Time* magazine articles in description of Woodruff's painters' guild or the *Atlanta Annual Exhibition of Negro Painting and Sculpture* indicates that achievements of African-Americans were not showcased in the brightest lights. When *Time* (1945) covered the Atlanta Annuals they could not review the exhibition outside of the context of race. Every attempt to interpret even those works that did not overtly express African-American content were either limited by the popular White obsessions over the exotic Black primitive or marginalized by White cultural domination. *Time* shockingly described paintings from the *Atlanta Annual* exhibition with racial overtones. The author (1945) describes:

The canvases were strongly flavored with expressionism and romanticism, but most had a primitive quality peculiarly their own. Painted in savage splashes of purple, red, black and brown, many containing writhing weaving forms, which suggested the rhythm of a voodoo ritual (Unknown Author, *Time*, 1945).

Terms like "primitive," "savage," and "voodoo" were not uncommon when White writers described and interpreted works of art created by African-Americans. The article went on to describe the exhibition's reception and relationship to the larger White Atlanta community. These works were either described as some feeble attempt to emulate White

art or as innately primitive gift (Unknown Author, *Time*, 1945). These stereotypical interpretations stem from racist ideas. The terms above, among others, were prejudicially imposed on anyone of African descent to negate the ideas that these works were not random happenings that primitive race easily stumbled upon, but achievements which took time, experience, discipline, and skill (Reilly, Kaufman, & Bodino, 2003; Gibson, 1997).

Time magazine was equally unjust in their description of Woodruff's interest in inspiring his students to embrace the influence of Regionalist painting when he founded a painters' guild in the 1940s. Woodruff was seemingly not surprised or upset, but his students were disturbed by the idea that *Time* referred to the painters' guild as the "Out House School" (Bearden & Henderson, 1993, p. 121). There was more focus by the art critics on the fact that much of the Georgian landscapes that Woodruff's students painted included outhouses, rather than more typical art criticism focused on style, content, or aesthetic of artworks (Unknown Author, *Time*, 1945). Perhaps, this limited perspective by White art critics in discussing art by African-American artists was intended to negate the fact that these paintings carried a social message regarding the dismal realities of segregated African-American life during The Depression years. Unfortunately, aside from *The Crisis* and *Opportunity* magazines, writings or critiques by African-American artists and critics were sparse.

The accuracy of this research results from knowledge of the sources and consideration of the author's background, affiliation, politics, age, gender, and religious, and cultural beliefs. The intent or position of the authors who come from different political, cultural, or ideological backgrounds can reveal a great deal in providing

multiple viewpoints. As one can anticipate racial bashing by the mainstream media, it is not surprising that most African-American writers, artists, and historians who were or are interested in restoring and preserving the legacy of African-American art and its history wrote favorably about African-American artists. As a result there are few primary sources where African-American critics write critically about the work of Douglas and Woodruff. In most cases they are both regarded as heroes who took the helm of leadership during the vanguard of African-American art. Given the lack of representations of African-American artists in mainstream texts these authors worked to create supplemental writings to counter the hegemonic perspectives, which result from racism and cultural domination.

Few of the current African-American art survey texts are written with the insight and passion of Romare Bearden and Harry Henderson's *A History of African-American Artists: From 1792-the Present* (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Bearden, who is clearly one of, if not the most distinguished African-American artist of the 20th century, knew several of these artists personally, including Douglas and Woodruff. He regarded Douglas as one of "preeminent stature" and described Woodruff as one with "depth and wisdom ... His voice had the authority of true experience" (Bearden & Henderson, 1993, pp. 127 & 200).

One exception is evidenced in artist and art historian James Porter's (1969) *Modern Negro Art*. Locke championed Douglas as the first "Africanist" in Negro Art, but Porter was critical that Douglas had any success in finding authentic connection to the African sculptures he studied at the Barnes Foundation (Lewis, 2003; Porter, 1969). Porter (1969) stated that:

There is little evidence of African influences in Douglas' schematic mural paintings or his book illustrations with their posturing figures. What we do find is a species of exoticism, fanciful and unpredictable rather than controlled, pointing to an effort to find an equivalent in design for the imagined exotic character of Negro life. (p. 115)

Porter, however, regarded Woodruff as "one of the true geniuses of American painting" (p. 118).

Douglas and Woodruff typically spoke with authority and confidence regarding the African-American's artistic legacy and social responsibility. However there were cases when each spoke with even more candor. Douglas's letters to his fiancée have a particular sensitivity and honesty in contrast to his guarded and contrived written speeches and lecture notes. Some of these letters are the only sources that speak personally to the issues revolving around the experience of being a struggling African-American artist in a White-male dominant world. For example, Douglas speaks more freely regarding the nature of his relationship to Reiss in his letter to his fiancée. It is clear that many of Douglas's speeches were intended for African-American audiences. In many cases these lectures were conducted at historically Black colleges and universities. He eloquently and forcefully shares a social message for African-American youth in *The Development of Negro Art in American Life*:

Present day youth like those of my day are inclined to be impatient of the past.

They feel the past as an obstacle, an impediment, and withal an intolerable burden. This attitude is of course, a mistake. The past rather than constituting a burden on our backs or a stone around our necks can become, when properly

understood, the hard inner core of life giving bounce and resilience to our efforts, which would otherwise [be] flat and dull. (Douglas, n.d., # 6, p. 1)

Douglas's remarks were apparently intended to instill racial pride in young African-American art students.

In most cases Woodruff did not waver or censor his words when speaking to mainstream predominantly White audiences. In a 1942 *Time* magazine interview he describes the intention and direction of the *Painter's Guild* he established at Atlanta University. He describes: "We are interested in expressing the South as a field, as a territory, its peculiar run-down landscape, its social and economic problems, the Negro people" (Quoted in Bearden & Henderson, 1993, p. 122). Although Woodruff felt very passionate about African art and the African-American's connection to Africa he claimed it was not something he felt he should force on his students (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). His later reflections from the 1970s were even more forthright.

While Douglas and Woodruff taught at Fisk and Atlanta universities, respectively, they each made public their interest in promoting African-American artists whose art expressed the social and economic experience of being Black. In my analysis, I contextualize my findings according to the social circumstances of Douglas and Woodruff's life. It was important to keep in mind that Douglas and Woodruff, although Woodruff never earned an official degree, were academically trained. Douglas and Woodruff also pursued acceptance in the art world during the High Modernist era, which defined the Western art world's aesthetic ideology in the 1940s. As a result, Douglas and Woodruff included in their teaching and artistic presence a fusion of academic training, Modernist aesthetics, and a responsibility to represent African-American experiences

through the visual arts. My central research questions are based on if and how these three emphases fused in their preparation of young African-American artists.

Therefore, my analysis focused on the artists' efforts to broaden the students horizons in their pedagogy as curator and gallery directors, their interest in teaching traditionalism as well as Modernism, their reflections on their own African-American communities, as well as their efforts to assimilate into the mainstream. I looked for evidence concerning whether Douglas and Woodruff talked to their students about issues beyond the technical and Modernist notions of art. As Woodruff took students in for dinner during The Depression, and as he brought students into the Georgia region to paint the social conditions of Blacks, it is evidenced that they discussed the plight of the African-American American and the African-American artist. This content is also evidenced in some of Woodruff's paintings and prints in the works of those Atlanta University students who were part of his Painters' Guild.

In the recorded interviews and in Woodruff's notes and correspondences I noted when and where he advocated for composition and style and if he stressed these visual aspects over social/political content. Douglas and Woodruff were both well aware that in order for their students to succeed as artists they needed to have a well-rounded experience in the arts. Clearly there were attempts made to create a balance for these students. However, their foremost concern was to provide their students with formal, compositional, and rendering training. Therefore, figure drawing, still life, and landscapes were fundamental content.

Woodruff had more regard for technique and form, than for the social-political content of works of art. For example, in his 1977 interview he spoke critically of those

works of the Black Arts Movement, which held social political content over aesthetics and composition. He regarded what he called “Black Art” as an art form where the political intent superseded the aesthetic value. He seemed to place it in a category all to itself.

Questions regarding the merit of excellence in process and technique over the cultural or political content of works of art are among those I continued to grapple with throughout this study. I was continually confronted with my own biases as I excavated the archives for culturally or politically relevant data. My hope was to locate strong and plentiful evidence, which disclosed that Douglas and Woodruff experienced and learned from racial subjugation and devoted their teaching to preparing young African-American students to prevail in environments, which were not conducive to Blacks achieving success. I wanted to portray them as the artistic heroes who rescued African-American art students in the 1930s. However, in many cases political content or anti-racist sentiment was rare. As far as their teaching was concerned they usually focused on traditional techniques, formalist criteria, and European based art historical curriculum. Although there was certainly a social political relevance to the pedagogical position of Woodruff toward his more advanced *Painter's Guild* students, Woodruff combined his Western traditional teaching methods with those he learned under Rivera in Mexico. However, he also believed that it would be an imposition of his personal views if he promoted African art aesthetics in his classroom (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

The *Douglas Papers* were limited in that they did not include substantial materials that spoke to Douglas's impression of his peers, cohorts, and students. The papers were extensive, but only a small percentage of what I reviewed was found useful. I was,

however, very interested in the array of personal materials, books, programs, magazines, etc., that indicated that Douglas was in fact well read and that he constantly pursued his interest in global perspectives on art. In contrast, the *Woodruff Collection* was an ideal archive for this study. Each interview specifically addressed the importance of Woodruff's impact. Additionally in the recorded interviews between Stoelting and Woodruff he seemed forthright about his opinions on Modernism, The Depression, his murals, and the African-American artist of the 1970s. I was constantly finding data that supported my thesis, hence motivating me to continue. Each hour resulted in pages of notes, which kept me busy as I analyzed and typed in the evening. It is apparent that both of these artists endured racism as young men, but it did not seem to define how they interpreted and conveyed standards for excellence in the visual arts.

CHAPTER THREE

SITUATING AARON DOUGLAS AND HALE WOODRUFF IN AFRICAN-AMERICAN ARTISTS' PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

In this investigation of perceptions of social responsibility of African-American artists, I explore the history of the African-American artist's cultural and political influence, which begins long before Blacks were permitted to produce "Art" outside of the control and direction of White slave owners (Powell, 2003). In this chapter, I discuss what social responsibility has meant for African-American artists from an analysis of specific works produced by African-American artists. My analysis is derived from thoroughly examining the expressions of African-American identity and social responsibility to the African-American community from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1970s.

Although the specific focus of this study is on the impact of racial consciousness and African-American identity on pedagogy in specific historically Black colleges and universities, namely in the teaching of Douglas and Woodruff, their art education is not confined to institutions. I consider not only the formal teaching and content of Douglas and Woodruff's work but I also take into account their political activism, studio presence, and their lives. Incidentally, in most cases Douglas and Woodruff painted in their own studios, which were down the hall from, or adjacent to, the classrooms, hence, they provided a unique artistic influence as working professionals.

As I previously discussed in Chapter One, definitions of social responsibility or social progress are dependent on the historical and political context from which these artists emerge. Therefore, this chapter describes the limitations and possibilities of

African-American artists within each of the following historical periods. I situate their work within historical contexts of the African-American artists' sense of social responsibility to aid Blacks during Slavery (1619-1865), Abolition (1800-1862), the New Negro Movement (1920-1940), the Civil Rights Movement (1954-1964), and Black Arts Movement (1965-1976) (Franklin, 1994). African-American artists were involved in these struggles for human rights through organizing, protesting, and fighting for liberation (Fine, 1971).

While in some cases the commitment of African-American artists to the African-American community is more overt than others, many took proactive roles and struggled to combat negative representations of Blacks, and to increase the exposure of African-American art and political awareness (Bloemink, 1999). Through seemingly insurmountable odds, African-American artists earned opportunities as students and educators as well as cultural and political leaders. Although visual arts departments in higher education designed to train African-American students did not exist until the 20th century, African-American artists employed a variety of strategies to make their cultural and political voices heard through visual forms including traditional portraiture, abolitionist etchings and lithographs, decorative crafts, painting and sculpture (Driskell, 1976; Lewis, 2003; Patton, 1998). They catered to White patrons, aligned themselves with Abolitionists, and worked closely with White mentors, educators, and Black political leaders to earn the necessary exposure and financial support to sustain themselves as artists (Leininger-Miller, 2001; Lewis, 2003). It is necessary to describe how these various historically periods and the stances of African-American artists have evolved throughout history in order to assist readers in understanding the liberties and

difficulties that Douglas and Woodruff faced in their lives. Since African-American artists and arts educators have gained visibility in the United States, they have continually resisted the limitations imposed by the dominant White society by supporting the African-American community or by earning broad individual recognition in the mainstream (Driskell, 1976; Lewis, 2003).

In this study, the construct *social responsibility*, as it pertains to the life of African-American artists, is defined by:

1. Their efforts to affirm African-American identity or sustained African heritage/cultural practices, by piecing together remnants of one's African past or holding to one's African-American traditions.
2. How they built or maintained African-American solidarity, gave voice to Africans/African-Americans through political activism and/or counter-narratives. African-American artists worked to remind or inform the world of the horrors and injustices Blacks faced in segregated United States.
3. Those who resisted cultural domination, racial oppression, or economic exploitation.

I examine and discuss these artists with a specific focus in the following areas:

1. Art Work: The content and style of their work.
2. Curriculum and Instruction: The content and strategies of their teaching.
3. Personal Politics: The beliefs demonstrated in their studio presence, teaching, student/teacher relationships, and political activism.

All of the above areas are interpreted within social, political, and art historical contexts.

In order to contextualize the struggles Douglas and Woodruff faced during their careers

as teaching artists, I explore how social responsibility—which affirms African-American identity, builds solidarity, and resists hegemony—is manifested in the artwork, pedagogy, and personal politics of African-American artists prior and during Douglas and Woodruff's careers.

Social Role of African-American Artists

The following is an overview of key differences in what *social responsibility* has meant to African-American artists in the United States from the mid 1800s to the mid 1900s. In the 18th and early 19th centuries African-American craftspeople produced works that maintained their African cultural memory while painters and sculptors aided in the abolitionist cause. They created works that revealed the inhumane horrors of slavery and promoted positive images of free African-American professionals (Lewis, 2003; Patton, 1998). The artistic freedom of slaves was limited to trades and crafts. African-American artists adhered to European values and aesthetics with hopes of gaining White patronage. The violent enslavement and cultural domination African-American artists of the 19th century endured, compelled them to play a different role in the struggle for Black liberation. African-American artists took responsibility, not in preserving African traditions or celebrating African-American culture, but in proving to the world that they could function as professionals in the same arenas as the rest of humanity. Despite the destructive impact of Whites on Non-whites, the political voice of African-American artists prevailed.

At the turn of the 20th century, thousands of southern Blacks fled the harsh conditions of the rural south for jobs in the northern cities. The cultural and racial climate

of these cities changed drastically. African-American artists and political leaders of the early 20th century urged African-American artists to create a new image of the “American Negro” to counter the negative images of Blacks propagated during the Civil War and Reconstruction Era (Powell, 2003). Artists of the “New Negro Movement” advocated for the superiority of Black physiognomy, a celebration of African-Americans, and an implementation of African design sensibilities (Locke, 1925). These artists individually worked to reconcile various European, African, White-American, and African-American artists’ influences. The transatlantic slave trade, European colonialism, Western imperialism, and American racism all contributed to the complexity of the African-American artist making ideological solidarity nearly impossible (Porter, 1960; Powell, 2003).

The leading African-American artists and political voices of that era, including Alain Locke, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Walter White, continued to champion African-American artists who affirm a dignified African-American identity. However, as Alain Locke described, “The chief bond between [African-American artists] has been that of a common condition rather than a common consciousness; a problem in common rather than a life in common” (Quoted in Brawley, 1937, p. 7). The cultural, political, and aesthetical perspectives of African-American artists evoked conflicting ideas regarding what form the visual representation of the “New Negro” should take (Porter, 1960). African-American artists of the early 20th century had their own independent philosophies, political ideas, and aesthetic visions (Brawley, 1937; Locke, 1925).

By the 1960s, African-American artists began to separate themselves aesthetically and ideologically from Whites. During what came to be called the Black Arts Movement,

African-American artists increased their visual contributions to the struggle for Black liberation as the political, economic, and social climate became more intolerable.

African-American artists worked collectively to exhibit and produce ideological posters and other forms of visual culture to revolt against political oppression. They completely resisted mainstream views regarding arts and culture. Their mission was to use art as a vehicle for informing and empowering the African-American community (Fine, 1971).

Unlike the New Negro Movement when African-Americans welcomed White patronage, artists of the Black Arts Movement were concerned with community activism and political power (Britton, 1996; Huggins, 1971). Although a broader variety of artistic styles was employed during the Black Arts Movement, many still believed that attitudes regarding the artist's social role limited the development of artists interested in other aesthetic sensibilities (Fine, 1971). Although Woodruff agreed with this position and may not have looked favorably on much "Black art" of the era, he was active in organizing a Black artist collective, *Spiral*, with some of the young artist of the 1960s along with his contemporaries, Charles Alston and Romare Bearden (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973; Patton, 1998). Perhaps it was because they enjoyed relative independent success that Douglas and the acclaimed African-American painter Jacob Lawrence did not include themselves in this racial discourse. As was the case during the New Negro Movement, African-American artists continued to define social responsibility.

The following section explores the nature of *social responsibility* for African-American artists by examining specific African-American art works from the 19th to the 20th century in order to understand how historical and political contexts, have impacted

what “social responsibility” has meant for African-American artists from the mid 1800s to the mid 1900s, as it did during the period when *Spiral* emerged. This discussion in Chapter Three situates a thorough interrogation of social responsibility in the work of Aaron Douglas and Hale Woodruff within a socio-historical context of African-American artists.

***Contextualizing the Study: A Historical Overview of the
Social Responsibility of African-American Artists***

Long before the emergence of art departments at historical Black colleges and universities, African-American artists took responsibility for promoting political solidarity and racial identity through the creation of artwork. Some of the limitations set forth by social, political, and economic obstacles continued to challenge Black artists and art educators well into the 20th century. This section describes the legacy of Black artists who made efforts to fight for freedom and resist the annihilation of Black/African culture. The conditions which compelled Black artists and educators to compromise their content and cultural identities continued to affect Woodruff and Douglas in their efforts to create and teach Black students in the United States in the 1930s and 40s.

Beginnings of an African-American Aesthetic: Resistance and Identity

Since Africans were captured and brought to the United States, they have acted in a variety of ways to ensure their cultural survival (Vlach, 1978/1990). The late 17th century “slave drum,” discussed by art historian Richard Powell (2003), illustrates how slave artisans took responsibility for sustaining African cultural traditions in early

America. The slave drum is not much different than many drums one might find in Africa among Akan- and Fon-speaking peoples (Powell, 2003). It is, however, created with cedar and deerskin, “New World” materials (Vlach, 1978/1990). Powell’s description of the drum as “American-in origin, African-in-design, and transatlantic-in praxis” serves as a metaphor for much of the culture and products resulting from the African Diaspora (p. 8). The African-American’s ability to adapt and improvise resulted in a unique creative drive. These artists utilized whatever time and resources they could to maintain their cultural traditions. Through difficult circumstances Black artists sought alternative ways to share the importance of perpetuating their own cultural practices and evolving identities.

The red clay found on the surface of the intricately carved slave drum indicates that it was buried away when it was not in use. Apparently this drum was hidden during a time when drumming was unlawful activity for slaves since it was considered a form of subversion. Despite these restrictions some slaves took responsibility for seeing to it that the African tradition of drumming was sustained on the slave plantation (Vlach, 1978/1990).

Some slaves were forced to adopt Western methods of producing utilitarian objects as they were compelled to assist their masters as blacksmiths, cabinet-makers, seamstresses, weavers, and potters (Vlach, 1978/1990). A slave, best known as “Dave the potter,” threw enormous stoneware storage jars. The size of these enormous jars was a testament to Dave’s strength and competence. Wheel-thrown and glazed stoneware pots were nonexistent amongst African traditions. African wares were typically hand-built from low-fired unglazed earthenware clays. Dave did not employ African processes or

techniques. He did, however, incise food storage instructions, as well as sentiments about slavery, pride, and spirituality across the belly of these jars (Britton, 1996; Patton, 1998). Prior to becoming a potter, Dave worked for his owner as a typesetter for the *Edgefield Hive*, a South Carolina newspaper, where he learned to read and write, an unusual accomplishment for a slave (Vlach, 1978/1990). Although one may not typically interpret Dave's forms as objects of political resistance, I argue that they are within their historic and political context.

Like the drums created almost 200 years prior, Dave's creations were progressive in their own right. Since it was also forbidden, during slavery, for a slave to learn to read and write, a literate slave who asserted himself through his mastery of clay and extended his message of self-empowerment was especially revolutionary in this time (Douglas, 1855/2003). Although these jars did not speak to an African ancestral past, Dave's pots could be interpreted as a form of resistance. Dave exercised freedoms that most slaves could not attain in the 19th century.

Although both of these forms of resistance were forbidden, it was likely that Dave's pots were able to influence a larger community of people who identified themselves as either Black or White. He extended powerful symbolic messages of determination to his people, in a time when crafts and fine arts made by freedmen and slaves were created predominantly to suite the taste of White-Americans (Britton, 1996; Patton, 1998). While the drum maker worked to sustain an African aesthetic, the circumstances revolving around the production of Dave's pots resulted in an African-American aesthetic. This African-American aesthetic is one that evolved from debasing the African and then the African-American's immersion into a foreign White hegemony,

in which African-Americans experienced social, political, and economic exclusion.

Although a Black man threw these pots, they were created while employing the technologies and aesthetics of European and White-Americans. Hence Dave's identity as a craftsperson was largely influenced by the facilities of Whites.

Different Approaches to Social Responsibility to the Black Community

For African-American artists, resistance did not only mean to withdraw from or subvert the dominant culture, sometimes it meant making one's voice heard from within the dominant culture. In many cases slaves were able to utilize a European vehicle—cultural, technical, or otherwise—as a mode of expression to arrive at a more syncretic resolution for sharing one's cultural and political identity (Vlach, 1978/1990). As enslaved African were forced to assimilate into colonial American culture, they continued to find creative ways to redefine themselves (Harris, 2003). They were compelled to reconsider how their cultural, political, and creative influence could impact the communities from which they emerged.

Based on the kinds of works these artists produced it is clear to see that they took different stances on how they defined community and social responsibility. Unlike the drummer who held steadfast to his or her cultural identity, Dave used whatever means he had available to convey his message (Vlach, 1978/1990). The question of whether to work to sustain one's African/African-American identity through resistance or isolation, like the drummer, or to make the compromises and adjustments necessary to produce and earn a living through the support of Whites is a notion that continued to impact the technical, conceptual, and aesthetical decisions of Black artists for generations to come.

As the visual arts continued to influence “high culture” in the late 19th century, African-Americans were forced to accept the challenge of proving that they were cultured and educated enough to produce works, which met White standards of sophistication and quality (Lewis, 2003). However several social factors excluded them from any mainstream discourse. Many African-American artists realized that social structures were such that the best they could achieve was earning the reputation as great “Black artists” (Holland, 1998). Scholar Benjamin Brawley opined on the African-American artist’s lack of racial consciousness and desire to conform to European standards in the 19th century and early 20th century. “We had in the main, as Alain Locke has said, Negro artists but not Negro art” (Brawley, 1937, p. 317). African-American artists wanted to be recognized as artists and not to be viewed as “Negro artists” so that they could compete on the same playing field.

Many African-American artists then expressed their freedom by demonstrating their ability to compete in the same arena of European artists, as did White-Americans. For example, African-American portrait artist Joshua Johnson spent his entire career in the Baltimore area. With the exceptionally rare occasion of having an affluent African-American sitter (two recorded), Johnson was supported by White patrons. He painted portraits of wealthy Whites, their families and children in Maryland. He successfully competed with area White portrait artists in Baltimore and was well received (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Johnson’s achievements debunked notions of Whites having racial superiority in the fine arts. Nineteenth century African-American painters, Robert Duncanson and Edward Banister among others received numerous accolades for their artistic achievements. In the 19th century African-Americans shared Whites’ beliefs that

the European derived arts represented the height of achievement and they strived to beat them at their own game (Holland, 1998). Juanita Holland (1998) explains:

Thus, while the first aspect of their public identity must validate their membership in the human race, equally important was their need to establish a place in that class of Western society that was considered able to appreciate and participate in “high culture”. (p. 26)

Many African-American artists aspired to have their influence felt universally (Driskell, 1978). Unfortunately attempting to earn broader appreciation for one’s work often meant social isolation from the Black community or disassociation from the styles and content of African-American people (Holland, 1998). As Woodruff’s work developed he transitioned from Modernist landscapes to Black genre paintings to American regionalism and finally to Abstract Expressionism. He continued to receive mixed reviews from his patrons and community. Stoelting (1978) describes:

His [Woodruff’s] goal went beyond that of cultural representation. Woodruff had not aligned himself with the “regionalists,” although many saw him as one in his depictions of a land and its people. In philosophy, Woodruff felt his ideas were closer to those of Stuart Davis. (p. 279)

Woodruff admired Davis’s ability to depict his reaction to American life through what he described as a “Pictorial Essence” (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, August 28, 1977). Woodruff was a firm believer of the importance for artists to transform the personal to the universal (Stoelting, 1978).

Based on their extensive travels, the journals and publication they read, and the diversity of their associates, one can conclude that both Douglas and Woodruff were

influenced by a variety of factors; some from within the Black art community, some from the mainstream, and some from the international art scene. At different periods in their careers, Douglas and Woodruff were strongly influenced by European artistic traditions, material/process, Modernism, African art, African-American, and U.S. culture.

One could speculate that Woodruff's passion for material process, later in his career, compelled him to invest his creative energies in the High Modernist movement of the 1950s, but Woodruff led a culturally enriching life, which embraced other influences as well. As a young man, in Indianapolis, Woodruff was given a book, written in German entitled *Afrikanische Plastik*, by the local art supply storeowner who suggested that Woodruff learned "something about his own people" (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). Woodruff who avidly read *The Crisis* and *Opportunity* magazines was likely aware of the poignancy of African art. He became one of the first African-American artists to study African art and embrace its influence (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). He continued to marvel over the potential of African art's contributions to the work of African-American artists throughout his life. In a 1973 interview Woodruff maintained his stance:

I believe in my heritage, my artistic heritage, African art, I can learn from them like the Western artists learned from Greek art. (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973)

Obviously Woodruff felt he had an affinity with those works created by African artists. He believed he had an authentic connection to Africa's artistic legacy.

Woodruff also held the works of internationally acclaimed African-American painter, Henry Tanner, in high regards (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview,

November 11, 1973). As a young man Woodruff took a room at the Indianapolis YMCA in exchange for working as a desk clerk. While there he took advantage of the opportunity to hear several lectures conducted by distinguished African-Americans in various disciplines. It was there that he met scholar John Hope, who later came to be president of Atlanta University. He also spoke with African-American painter William Edouard Scott, who told Woodruff of his visit with Tanner in France (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Since reading and hearing about Tanner's career in France and learning of the European Modernists, as a high school student, Woodruff had his sights set on moving to Europe to study painting.

Woodruff was an active high school student with high aspirations. In high school Woodruff was involved in the publication of the school newspaper where he contributed as a writer and an illustrator. After he completed school, he contributed to the *Indianapolis Star*, a local Negro newspaper, where he earned five dollars for each cartoon that addressed issues such as police brutality, lynching, and poverty in the Black community. He also spent hours in the library where he gained exposure to a variety of influences in reading books and magazines about African-Americans. At such a young age Woodruff was already working to expose the social injustices of African-Americans in the United States (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

After Woodruff finally earned the opportunity to study in France he continued to contribute to the *Indianapolis Star* by writing essays and sending illustrations, which described the life of African-American artists in France. Although he received monetary compensation, the importance of sharing his international experience with the Black community was surely one that he valued. His intentions were to inform his community

and to dispel assumptions about racism against Blacks in France (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

Woodruff's interest in going to France was to study and learn from the works of the "old masters". Woodruff explains:

I was a young man in Paris trying to identify with, what were then, the current aspects of art ... and to find adequate instruction ... I almost lived in the Louvre ... I set about finding a means by which I could learn from these examples. Not to copy them but to learn from the basic ideas behind them. (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973)

Woodruff spent many hours studying historical works, taking formal lessons, and traveling extensively. He earned a reputation for his realistic depictions of Blacks during the New Negro Movement but later adopted a Modernist style. He described his early Modernist influence:

My early art training consisted largely of giving attention to the structure ... even abstract or the geometric aspects of realistic expression ... So it was not a hard matter for me to become intentionally interested in the so-called modern movement (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

Based on these remarks Woodruff's increasing interest in structure, technique, and paint superseded his interest in conveying a single social or political message. Perhaps Woodruff felt that in being distinguished as a Modernist who happens to be African-American he would surely be received as a credit to his race.

Although there were occasional references to African sculpture and symbols, most of Woodruff's later works completely abandon subject matter. He, however,

maintained an enthusiasm for African art throughout his career. He became increasingly interested in Modernist art and ideology but recognized the value of maintaining a connection to African sensibilities and the African-American community. While in France, Woodruff spent time socializing and traveling with other African-American scholars and artists of the New Negro era. Although he spent time with many distinguished African-American artists and scholars during this period, he was especially close to Countee Cullen and Palmer Hayden. Even while abroad, Woodruff maintained his network of African-American friends and colleagues. Incidentally, Paris is where Woodruff reconnected with John Hope of Atlanta University who was interested in having Woodruff build an art department in the Atlanta University System (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

Aaron Douglas also spent significant time studying in France before accepting a position at Fisk University. Douglas initially earned his reputation as a Black Modernist, but was well-trained and passionate about portraiture. He shared his passion for capturing his sitter's portraits "I always had a great fondness for portraiture and worked hard to master the techniques and discipline necessary for the proper delineation and interpretation of the sitter's likeness" (Douglas, n.d, # 4).

It is evident that Douglas's passion for painting portraits and capturing likenesses could potentially supersede his choice of subject matter. Throughout his career he continued to produce realistic portraits of affluent Blacks and Black historical figures. Douglas additionally remained active as a muralist and an illustrator (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). His Modernist style was well received by progressive Black poets, musicians, historians, and playwrights during the New Negro Movement (Reynolds &

Wright, 1989). Douglas, who was recognized as the foremost painter of the New Negro Movement, was seemingly gifted with the ability to work in a diversity of styles associated with various aesthetic positions. Although Douglas did earn esteem through his realistic portraiture, he was famous for his highly stylized illustrations and murals associated with the New Negro Movement. African-American artist, historian, and successor of Douglas as Fisk University gallery director, David Driskell (1971) confirms:

He [Douglas] successfully turned his palette to a modernization of a style that thematically reflected an African past. He designed cover jackets and plates for many books including works for Countee Cullen, Alain Locke, Langston Hughes, and James Weldon Johnson. (p. 3)

Working Toward Acceptance in White Society

Throughout their careers, both Douglas and Woodruff gained valuable experience as to how one can best negotiate the aesthetics and values of two cultures: White-American and African-American. Both Douglas and Woodruff were active artists during the New Negro Movement; they were avid students of African art, and were later professors at historically Black universities. However, they also shared with their students the importance of recognizing the potential of maintaining awareness of “White centered” art historical traditions and the modern world (Kirschke, 1995; Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

Douglas and Woodruff both seemingly believed in the possibility of the visual arts to evoke social change for Blacks in the United States. They took advantage of

opportunities to offer their students exposure to diverse and integrated experiences (Neel, tape-recorded oral interview, August 13, 1977). They believed they could earn opportunities, commissions, grants, patronage, and sponsorship through their negotiations and relationships with Whites and therefore expose their students to White/European aesthetics, among other aesthetic influences (Kirschke, 1995; Leninger-Miller, 2001). In addition to involving their students in national exhibitions, they also brought an array of artwork to the campus through traveling exhibitions and networks across the country (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

It was important to Douglas and Woodruff to provide their students diverse educational experiences in the arts in order to equip them as professional artists in a world far more diverse than a segregated campus. They believed in using these teaching experiences to promote the social and professional growth of young African-American students. Many of these students grew up in impoverished rural Black communities during the “Great Depression” and therefore had limited world experience. Douglas and Woodruff were fortunate to have enjoyed a variety of experiences resulting from their accomplishments as students and professional artists in the 1920s and 1930s through winning competitions, traveling, and receiving grants, and sponsorships through their patrons (Powell & Reynolds, 1999). Surely they hoped that their students would enjoy equally enriching experiences.

It is evidenced in Douglas’s lecture, “The Negro, too, in American Art,” that he recognized the merit of mainstream achievement of young African-American artists. Douglas spoke optimistically about the future of young African-American artists and their potential to transcend the racial barrier.

New and remarkably talented men like Lawrence, Wilson, Bearden, Ellis, Blackburn, Crichlow, Pitman all merit extended commendation. All for the most part still quite young have reached the mainstream of American art where their paintings are accepted by the commercial galleries, criticized and sold without reference to color. . . . The future, I should say, is bright, given the extraordinary talent for art possessed by our people and an expanding horizon, disclosing a more liberal attitude toward this cultural discipline, there are no limits to our possibility. But to obtain these results we must be prepared to exert ourselves to the utmost in patience, endurance, understanding, unselfishness, and genuine humility. (Douglas, n.d., # 5, p.7)

Unfortunately, Douglas's remarks focused narrowly on what he hoped African-American men could achieve and excluded women artists from his aspirations for the Black community. However, he expressed the need and importance of patience, endurance, and even understanding, among other attributes, when confronting the race barrier. Certainly Douglas hoped to instill these qualities in his own students. When Douglas remarked that the work of these accomplished young male artists were "criticized and sold without reference to color," he seemingly interpreted the idea of these artists enjoying success, or gaining recognition outside of the context of race to be an achievement in itself. Perhaps this implies that he believed that when one is noted for their accomplishments despite color, it indicates potential for a "bright" future. Douglas advocates for the importance of African-Americans to earn recognition outside of the African-American community. The "unselfishness" Douglas described perhaps alluded to

the idea that his hopes for progress would take a collective effort or responsibility on the part of African-Americans.

Woodruff also advocated for the importance of his students earning mainstream visibility. He was instrumental in securing for his favored student, Fredrick Flemister, a full scholarship to his alma mater, The John Herron Art Institute. Flemister excelled as a member of Woodruff's *Painters Guild* while enrolled in Morehouse University from 1935-1939. After Flemister earned his masters degree at Herron, a mainstream institution, Woodruff invited him back to Atlanta University to work as an art instructor (Powell & Reynolds, 1999).

Robert Neel, one of Woodruff's teaching assistants at the lab school, explained that it was due to the influence of Woodruff that he attended his first integrated events. On one occasion Woodruff actually came to his home, picked up Neel's paintings to enter them into an upcoming exhibit. He then returned to escort Neel to the reception where he won an award. Neel described that Woodruff was even helpful in assisting Neel in finding something to wear to the reception (Neel, tape-recorded oral interview, August 13, 1976).

Surely it took mentorship beyond the classroom and studio to instill the kind of confidence economically poor African-American students needed to develop and succeed in the segregated south. Art educator Eugene Grigsby, another former student of Woodruff's who taught at the lab school under Woodruff's supervision, reflected on Woodruff's teaching style:

Woodruff's guidance was almost parental. His manner of teaching was very uplifting and built confidence in me to carry on. It was anecdotal, philosophical.

He shared funny stories about living in France. He taught about discovery. It was informal but important. He shared things that one might not think were appropriate but it brought us close, like family. (Grigsby, tape-recorded oral interview, May 10, 1977)

Even later in his career Woodruff was continually creating diverse opportunities for his students. In 1958, Woodruff was asked by the Modern Museum of Art to teach at the Brussels World's Fair. Woodruff declined only to suggest that the opportunity be given to Grigsby (Grigsby, tape-recorded oral interview, May 10, 1977).

It was clear that Douglas and Woodruff hoped their students could have the kinds of professional experiences that afforded them broad opportunities and exposure possible to have their artistic influences felt by the mainstream. They hoped to instill a sense of African-American pride in their students. They did so through their teaching, by involving them in their commissions throughout the United States, through exhibitions, and also by providing national and international venues for their students to teach, exhibit and receive further academic training. In doing this they utilized the support of the Black community but made strides toward having an impact on the larger art and international community.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPACT OF RACIAL-CONSCIOUSNESS AND BLACK IDENTITY ON THE PEDAGOGY OF AARON DOUGLAS AND HALE WOODRUFF

This chapter examines the impact of racial-consciousness and Black identity on the pedagogy of Aaron Douglas and Hale Woodruff. How Douglas and Woodruff went about confronting or negotiating the race barrier in the United States and built solidarity among African-Americans through their efforts as artists, teachers, lecturers, mentors, curators, and gallery directors is integral to this study. This chapter also discusses how, why, and when Black content was promoted in their teaching and implemented in their own artwork. I address in this chapter the three questions from my problem statement for this study (see Chapter One).

Working the Galleries to Promote Diversity

Aaron Douglas worked diligently as the director of the Carl Van Vechten Gallery of Fine Arts during his tenure at Fisk University. He recognized the gallery as a powerful cultural force for the entire Nashville community (Douglas, n.d., # 2). Although he taught in Nashville, Douglas maintained an apartment in New York City and regularly attended lectures at the museum to gain assistance in expanding Fisk's slide library (Douglas 1949, 1951, 1953). He also corresponded with the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Harmon Foundation. As a result he was able to expose his students to diverse exhibitions and programming.

The Harmon Foundation was a vital organization for archiving the history of African-American art. William E. Harmon, who earned his fortune in real estate, became a chief philanthropist and patron in support of African-American arts and culture in the 1920s. In 1926, the Foundation established awards for outstanding artistic achievements among African-Americans (Reynolds & Wright, 1989). The Foundation also promoted the acceptance of African-American artworks to audiences across the United States through traveling exhibitions (Fine, 1971; Patton, 1998).

Douglas maintained a relationship with Mary Beattie Brady, director of the Harmon Foundation, since his early involvement in the New York art scene. This relationship was advantageous to Douglas's position as gallery director. Brady kept Douglas abreast of the many major exhibitions in New York that could potentially benefit the Fisk community. Brady also shared many of her international contacts and made introductions for Douglas (Douglas, 1959, 1960, 1961). Douglas was also successful in borrowing exhibitions from the Grace Borgenicht Gallery in New York (Douglas, n.d., # 2). It is evident that Douglas networked beyond the Black community. Through Douglas's efforts the Carl Van Vechten Gallery represented works by accomplished Black artists like Romare Bearden and Charles Alston as well as works from collections all over the world (Douglas, n.d., # 2; Douglas, 1959). The works that Fisk students enjoyed extended far beyond those which African-American artists achieved (Douglas, 1949, 1959, 1961).

One of Douglas's most important contributions as gallery director was his handling of a major donation by Georgia O'Keeffe. O'Keeffe donated the entire art collection of her late husband, photographer Alfred Stieglitz. The collection served to

diversify an already promising collection of African-American art that Douglas had acquired through his network. The collection included paintings by Picasso, Toulouse-Lautrec, Renoir and Cézanne, as well as some of O'Keeffe's works (Douglas, n.d., # 3). Clearly Douglas's vision for the purpose of the university gallery was not only to expose the campus to the creative genius of African-Americans, but also to showcase inclusive creative and cultural influences to the university and Nashville community (Douglas, n.d., # 2). It is apparent that Douglas wanted to empower his students by making them aware that these skills and achievements were attainable for African-Americans, but he also wanted to reveal to them questions and explorations outside of the context of African-American culture. Douglas's influence as a gallery director, who tenaciously and confidently met with White-Americans to afford his students more diverse and enriching opportunities through gallery programming, surely impacted his students socially and professionally (Holloway, tape-recorded oral interview, September, 29, 1976).

Hale Woodruff, who never served as an official gallery director, was also active in expanding the university's gallery programming independently and through the assistance of White-American philanthropists and organizers. He too was successful in bringing Harmon Foundation sponsored exhibitions to campus (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Woodruff shared his collection of Mexican Folk Art acquired during his travels and studies in Mexico in 1936. He also showcased his extensive collection of African art, which he later donated to the Dusable Museum of African-American History. After 50 years of collecting, Woodruff's African art collection included more than 200 pieces (Bearden & Henderson, 1993; Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11,

1973). Woodruff's interest in donating such a collection is testament to how strongly he felt about exposing the public to the artistic legacy of Africans.

After establishing an impressive art department in the Atlanta University System, Woodruff began to arrange student exhibitions at the Atlanta University library (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). In 1942, he began to organize the first of many national juried Negro art exhibitions. These exhibitions, which later came to be known as "The Atlanta Annuals," were the first exhibitions of its kind sponsored by a Black institution (Powell & Reynolds, 1999; Atlanta University Bulletin July, 1942). An assembled jury carefully selected one hundred and seven paintings for the first exhibition. Later exhibitions included sculpture and printmaking as well (Atlanta University Bulletin, July, 1942).

Woodruff recognized the importance of having a diverse panel of jurors to select works of the highest quality (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). The selection of jurors included, university administrators and museum directors, as well as artists, and art educators. The African-Americans involved in the early jury process included Aaron Douglas, Rufus Clement, the Atlanta University president, and Hale Woodruff. The jury also included Jean Charlot, a Mexican painter, along with influential Whites from the mainstream art community including Lewis Skidmore, director of the High Museum, Lamar Dodd, chairman of the University of Georgia's Fine Arts Department, and Harold Bush-Brown of Georgia Institute of Technology's Architectural Department (Atlanta Annuals Exhibition program, 1942).

Woodruff's criteria for forming a jury primarily involved finding jurors with knowledge, experience, and integrity. Therefore, he formed a racially mixed group.

Woodruff described that he told the White jurors “not to be patronizing in their judgment ...We want a high level show” (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). Woodruff was adamant about these jurors being genuine and objective about their selection process. He felt that the work should be selected based on quality not politics. He was frustrated with the idea that in some exhibitions young Black artists earned praise for poorly executed work. “Do not sacrifice quality to encourage youth,” Woodruff exclaimed. “Don’t think because your Black you’ll be accepted and you got it made” (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). Woodruff believed that if one had work of merit but not excellence they should not be convinced that they were ready to compete with professionals. The Harmon Foundation sponsored a two hundred and fifty dollar first place award. By 1945 hundreds of artists were submitting works to the show, which offered more than \$1400 in prize money (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Woodruff suggested that the less experienced artists should receive scholarships for further training not monetary awards.

Sixty-two works created by African-American artists were installed in the basement of Atlanta University’s library for the initial show. Some of Woodruff’s friends—including artists Charles Alston, Charles White, and Elizabeth Catlett—traveled to Atlanta to assist Woodruff in installing the show each year. These artists took a collective effort to see to it that the show was a success (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). The purposes of the exhibits were “to present the best creative works by living Negro artists, to encourage Negro artists to achieve as high a standard of work as possible, to bring to light latent talent that might be among undiscovered artists, to stimulate art education, and to increase an appreciation of the fine

art” (Atlanta University Bulletin, July, 1942). These goals align with goals of social responsibility in that Woodruff created a venue to expose the university and Atlanta community to the visual art created by African-American artists. These exhibits not only served to showcase the works of some of the more established artists, but also to provide an opportunity where early career Black artists could gain experience, feedback, and a chance to compete for cash prizes. The university also supported these artists through purchase awards to expand the university’s collection. By the time this exhibition was discontinued the university had acquired an important collection of three hundred and fifty works created by African-American artists, a collection that was only rivaled by Howard and Hampton University (Bearden & Henderson, 1993; Powell & Reynolds, 1999). For these young artists to have the opportunity to compete with the more experienced and established African-American artists was not only an honor but also it raised the bar for excellence in the visual arts.

The invited speaker of the first Atlanta exhibition, Dr. Alain Locke, of Howard University, a good friend of Woodruff and a major contributor to the ideological development of the New Negro Movement, wrote in the exhibition program.

There is a peculiar timeliness and as well a special appropriateness to this first “National Exhibition of the Work of Negro Artists” at Atlanta University. In the first place, one of the ultimate goals of the whole art movement among Negroes has been to encourage a healthy and representative art of the people with its roots in its own native soil rather than a sophisticated studio art divorced from the racial feeling and interest of a people. (Locke, 1942, p. 1)

At the reception, Locke delivered a speech discussing the important factors revolving around recent developments in Negro art (Atlanta University Bulletin, July, 1942). The fact alone that Woodruff invited Locke, who had a reputation for encouraging Black artists to look to Africa or their “own native soil” for influence and to Black culture for content, is evidence that Woodruff wanted to instill a sense of collective purpose and solidarity in African-American artists whom he taught.

As the reception for the exhibition grew, Woodruff and several artists felt that the exhibition should evolve to include White artists as well. Their hope was that their works could reach a broader audience. As the more established African-American artists began to earn acceptance in larger integrated venues they felt that an all Black exhibition set limitations on the competition as well as the exposure of the show (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). In 1948, two years after Woodruff left his position in Atlanta, a written poll was mailed out asking exhibitors how they felt about having an integrated Atlanta University exhibition. Although the results of the poll with respect to the question of participation by other races in the annual art exhibition concluded that about 50% of the respondents agreed with Woodruff’s desire to include Whites, the exhibition committee decided to continue the annuals as they were with only Black artists included (Art Exhibition Committee, 1948). The university president felt the *Atlanta Annuals* gave Black artists an unusual opportunity and that they should continue this tradition (Powell & Reynolds, 1999). As a result, several of the more accomplished Black artists, including Woodruff, discontinued participation in the exhibition.

Woodruff adamantly believed that it was time that African-American artists compete on the same playing field as the mainstream. He stated, “We cannot strive for

integration on one hand and then not integrate on another” (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). Some Black artists saw assimilation in a positive light and felt comfortable, or accepted their circumstances and competed with White artists by developing European aesthetics and focusing on White-American content. They worked to gain acceptance as “Fine Artists” with hopes that they might raise esteem for Black people (Fine, 1971). Others believed the visual arts were an effective vehicle for social change and that eventually, skillfully executed work will not be ignored despite its content (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). Surely Woodruff’s former Atlanta students discovered that Woodruff discontinued participating in an exhibition he essentially established. It is likely that he made them aware of his convictions about tackling the color-bar and holding to one’s convictions through this effort. Woodruff firmly believed that he and other Black artists were more than capable of competing in the mainstream (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

Unfortunately, after Woodruff left his position at Atlanta University in 1943, and moved to New York, the juries were made up almost exclusively of White men. Speculatively, the *Atlanta Annual* exhibitions did experience the bias that Woodruff was hoping to avoid (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). In 2005 Tina Dunkley, director of the Clark Atlanta Gallery, curated an exhibition from the Atlanta University’s permanent collection entitled, *In the Eye of the Jury*. The exhibition examined the jury selections and purchase awards during the Atlanta University Art Annuals of 1952 and 1953 when there was little or no African-American influence in the

process. Apparently many of the works which explored African subject matter and are best known for their excellence today did not receive such recognition during those years.

Reconciling Community: Black and White Patronage

Although much of Douglas's and Woodruff's initial professional success was due to the support of Black leaders, institutions, and patrons, they realized that it was important to build alliances with Whites as well. Some Black artists believed that by earning a reception by Whites they would in turn be taking responsibility for evoking social progress in the Black community (Kirschke, 1995). Many Black artists of the 20th century employed White and European aesthetics yet used their talents to voice social and political concerns (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Some Black artists of the 19th century found support through abolitionist patronage. These White patrons assisted African-American artists including Robert Douglas, Patrick Reason, Robert Duncanson, and Edmonia Lewis in locating funds to continue their studies in Europe and to sustain themselves as professionals in the United States. In the 19th century there was little patronage stemming from African-Americans. However, following the establishment of antiracist and nationalists organizations that emerged in the turn of the 20th century, Black support for African-American artists increased (Lewis, 2003).

Although from an early age Douglas and Woodruff knew they wanted to pursue careers in the arts, they first worked as unskilled laborers in order to save money for supplies and tuition. As a result they moved to major northern cities. Douglas moved from Kansas to Detroit, Michigan; and Woodruff moved from Tennessee to Indianapolis, Indiana (Douglas, # 4; Kirschke, 1995; Leininger-Miller, 2001). As manual laborers they

worked in extremely unpleasant conditions and they endured daily racial abuse. Douglas described the climate in which many African-Americans faced in the post migration workforce:

All kinds of outlandish myths were concocted to justify the exclusion of black men from our industries. It was seriously argued, for instance, that the black man's eyes, ears and reflexes were not sufficiently keen for regular factory work or our sense of touch was considered to be inadequate for the control and effective handling of fine tools, delicate instruments and expensive machines. These myths were eternally driven into the minds of the majority of Americans, both black and white, until nearly every black child in the land was afflicted with feelings of inferiority almost impossible to overcome ... those were the days when the black man at times could be crushed and utterly silenced by such derisive terms as "nigger," "coon," "shine," and the like. (Kirschke, 1995, p. 5)

Fortunately Douglas and Woodruff were both well read and self-motivated. While in high school they both read progressive African-American publications (Kirschke, 1995; Leininger-Miller, 2001). They left high school with the intention of entering college or eventually studying painting in Paris. Their spirits were not as easily broken as the unskilled uneducated Black farmers and sharecroppers who migrated to the north with hopes of a better life in industry. For Douglas and Woodruff these menial jobs were only temporary. They were confident that their dreams to train and work as professional artists would be realized (Kirschke, 1995; Leininger-Miller, 2001).

Hard work and sacrifice resulted in the many enriching educational experiences during their years as young painters. Much of their early successes resulted from

cultivating the favor of both Blacks and Whites alike. Throughout their studies they had to sustain themselves by winning competitions and sponsorships through the National Association for Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the National Urban League, and the Harmon Foundation. These competitions were, in many cases, organized or influenced by White patrons, administrators, and philanthropists (Reynolds & Wright, 1989; Leininger-Miller, 2001).

In the early 1920s, *Opportunity*, a magazine published by the National Urban League, began offering prizes for short stories, poetry, plays, essays, and personal sketches. *Opportunity* also offered opportunities for Black artists to design the publication's cover. Eugene Kinckle Jones, an African-American who served as executive secretary of the National Urban League, personally commissioned several African-American artists; and Charles Johnson, head of the National Urban League was supportive of African-American artists as well (Holland, 1998; Kirschke, 1995; Reynolds & Wright, 1989). In Douglas's 1971 interview he describes that he was especially close to Dr. Johnson:

I got to know Dr. Johnson quite intimately. And we—to the extent on occasion going to certain things, certain parties and so on, I might not have exactly the right things, I'd borrow things from him, you see. And that sort [of] relationship he understood really what [he] was going to promote, to add his strength to promote it in a way that was—now we see it was one of the greatest things that existed at that time and he promoted almost every young person at that time what had any talent whatsoever; could be encouraged and could be pushed along by Dr. Johnson. (Douglas, tape-recorded oral interview, July 16, 1971, p. 6)

Through Johnson, Douglas met Vechten as well as Dorothy Barnes, wife of Albert Barnes of the Barnes Foundation. It was also through Johnson's connections that Douglas received the commission to do the Fisk University murals (Douglas, tape-recorded oral interview, July 16, 1971).

Joel Springarn, a Jewish professor and Chairman of the Board of the NAACP, also initiated some of the earliest awards for the accomplishments of Blacks. A competition was arranged where monetary awards were given to Blacks for high achievement in a variety of fields. In 1924, Springarn's wife expanded the competition to include poetry and visual arts. Artists earned awards for their illustrations, cover designs, and cartoons, which were published in the NAACP's magazine, *The Crisis*. From its inception, *The Crisis* featured works created by Black artists on its cover (Reynolds & Wright, 1989). Both *The Crisis* and *Opportunity* featured articles on individual Black artists and announced exhibitions, which included Black artists in New York City and elsewhere (Holland, 1998; Reynolds & Wright, 1989). Aaron Douglas recalled how influential these publications were in his early years:

For several years a remarkable buy of poems, short stories and essays had appeared in *The Crisis*, *Opportunity*, and *Messenger* magazines indicating a serious effort on the part of young Negro writers to express in artistic language their reactions to life's hopes, joys, victories, and defeats, which had for so long remained unspoken (Douglas, n.d., # 4, p. 4).

The Crisis's offices also purchased works and commissioned paintings by Black artists under the direction of its first editor, W. E. B. Du Bois (Reynolds & Wright, 1989).

In 1925, Woodruff submitted five paintings to *The Crisis* competition under a fictitious name. Perhaps Woodruff did not use his own name because he felt there was some bias against him since he explored issues and content outside of the context of race in his artwork. During this period Woodruff invested a great deal of time painting landscapes in France. In many instances Woodruff received criticism because he seemingly did not produce the kind work that was expected from a Black painter during the 1920s (Leininger-Miller, 2001). However, one of his landscapes earned him third prize and a ten-dollar cash award for illustration. Du Bois was so impressed by these works that he not only requested that Woodruff submit cover designs for the magazine but he also hung them in his office (Leininger-Miller, 2001).

In 1926, Woodruff won a bronze medal through the Harmon Foundation exhibitions for his figurative painting entitled *Two Old Women*. The Harmon Foundation juries were typically made up of four to five people with at least one African-American represented (Kirschke, 1995). Through this honor Woodruff achieved national acclaim and was awarded a \$100 cash prize. He hoped to use these funds toward realizing his dream of studying in Paris. To help with this effort several New Yorkers assisted Woodruff in securing additional funds for his trip. Walter White, an African-American and assistant executive secretary of the NAACP, took a special interest in Woodruff. He spoke enthusiastically of Woodruff's talent to wealthy White art patrons and often took collections in order to send him to Paris for classes at the Academie Scandinave. Eventually White convinced a White New York banker and arts patron, Otto Kahn, to donate an additional \$250 for every two years of Woodruff's studies (Leininger-Miller, 2001).

Following Woodruff's success at the Harmon Foundation exhibition, as well as from the White patronage and support he received, and an award from his home state of Indiana, it seemed as if the race barrier had been shattered. The governor, who was rumored to be a leading Ku Klux Klansman, pinned a medal on young Woodruff. Members of a local all-White club held a stage production in Woodruff's honor and raised another \$150 toward his studies (Leininger-Miller, 2001). Woodruff, who lived and worked in Indianapolis during the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and experienced racism while looking for a job as a skilled laborer, was shocked by the White praise and support. He exclaimed "This was supposedly Klan country! Yet here they were giving me \$150 along with praise. Knowing the history and reality of the way we were treated day in and day out, it was virtually unbelievable" (Leininger-Miller, 2001, p. 109). Woodruff was not only able to see the possible financial rewards of his relationship with Whites, but he also witnessed the possibility of the visual arts to mend racial conflict. Woodruff gained additional financial support from friends and family. Shortly thereafter he set sail for Paris (Leininger-Miller, 2001).

Although much of Woodruff's painting in France focused on Modernist landscapes, he continued to execute figure studies at the Academie Scandinave. He also submitted figurative cover designs to *The Crisis* and *Opportunity* magazine competitions. He lived meagerly and supplemented his income through articles and illustrations he submitted to *Indianapolis Star*, a Negro newspaper. He primarily wrote about art and tourism in France and sketched French architectural structures. Winning competitions and occasionally selling paintings in the United States assisted Woodruff in extending his stay (Leininger-Miller, 2001).

For most of Woodruff's time in France he experienced financial hardship. At one point he went as far as posing as a Moor to secure a job as a road worker when he was unable to obtain a work visa because of his U.S. citizenship. In some cases Woodruff faced eviction and got by on meager meals. Walter White continued to advocate for Woodruff by taking up collections and working to sell his paintings in the United States (Stoelting, 1978).

Woodruff was keen on earning more prize money and selling his paintings by way of the Harmon Foundation. He corresponded with the Foundation staff seeking advice on pricing his work. George Haynes, assistant to William Harmon, purchased at least one of Woodruff's landscapes. Haynes was instrumental in assisting Woodruff's good friend, Palmer Hayden, with his travels and studies in France. Haynes suggested that Woodruff focus on building patronage of his own race. He remarked that recently works were being sold to Black patrons. He described the huge Black reception for Marvin Gray Johnson's painting *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* and paintings similar in style and subject matter. He encouraged Woodruff to work in this manner and focus on Black subjects as well (Leininger-Miller, 2001).

Locke also sent Woodruff a letter remarking the need for a "strong racial vein of originality" in the Harmon Exhibits. Additionally Walter White, who initially assisted Woodruff in gaining funds to travel to France, visited him regularly in Paris. He cautioned Woodruff about "going too abstract" (Leininger-Miller, 2001). Woodruff later wrote the staff at the Harmon Foundation explaining that his current work had a more "racial view" (Leininger-Miller, 2001, p. 125). He began submitting paintings which depicted Black people, but he continued to produce and submit Modernist landscapes as

well. Woodruff explained, “I did this because I thought it would add more weight to my submission” (Leininger-Miller, 2001, p. 125). Although Woodruff needed the money and support of his patrons, there was more to his painting than money. He stayed the course and continued to develop his explorative Modernist landscapes (Leininger-Miller, 2001).

Woodruff arrived at some interesting comprises of style and subject matter. In his 1929 painting *Old Woman Peeling Apples*, Woodruff painted an aerial view of an old African-American women sitting at a table peeling apples. This work was painted in the style of one of Woodruff’s favorite Modernist painters, Paul Cézanne. Although this work met the expectations of the Harmon Foundation judges and Black patrons in the United States, Woodruff afforded himself the freedom to explore structure and space in Cézanne-like still-life on the table in which the woman sat (Leininger-Miller, 2001).

Another oil painting Woodruff submitted to the Harmon Foundation Exhibitions focusing on a Black subject was *The Banjo Player*. It is likely that Henry Tanner’s 1893 *The Banjo Lesson* inspired Woodruff’s interest in this subject (Leininger-Miller, 2001). The subject depicts a Black musician with a mature face playing the banjo. The banjo player is neatly dressed with a large grin on his face. The background again references the work of Cézanne. Not surprising, once Woodruff began to compromise his interest in Modernism and focus on “that which one might expect from a Negro Painter” he was favorably received by the Harmon Foundation (Leininger-Miller, 2001, p. 125). *The Banjo Player* won Honorable Mention and was reproduced in the Harmon exhibit catalog (Leininger-Miller, 2001). Art historian Theresa Leininger-Miller (2001) expands on the pressure for Black artists to work within specific parameters:

For all of the success that Woodruff had with his landscapes and depictions of French cultural monuments, he, like Hayden, could not escape the expectations of white patrons that he racialize his paintings by drawing upon stock images of African-Americans ... Woodruff had a genuine interest in and affection for black folk culture, from a different perspective ... [of the *Old Women Peeling Apples* and *The Banjo Player*]. He must have been aware that they projected a sense of exoticism and nostalgia in their deliberate theatricality. It is precisely this aura of Primitivism, of escape to a mystical time when ignorant blacks did not threaten to break the color line but instead happily served and performed for whites, that struck a responsive chord with certain factions of the Harmon Foundation and the White public. (p. 127)

Although Aaron Douglas was by comparison an overnight success, he too was compelled to grapple with the values and aesthetics of both Black and White patrons (Kirschke, 1995). He initially came to New York on his way to Paris in 1925, but when he discovered what a vital place Harlem was for Black artists he remained in New York for the next few years (Douglas, n.d., # 4). Douglas explained:

I originally wanted to go to Paris to study as this seemed to be the goal of every painter in my time but when I reached New York, that summer, on my way to Paris, I was persuaded to let down my bucket. This decision was a correct one as New York was where the action was as far as the young Negro was concerned. (p. 6)

Several people discouraged Douglas from leaving for Paris and convinced him to move to Harlem. When he was in New York, on his way to Paris, Ethel Ray Nance, secretary of

the National Urban League, introduced him to the Urban League officials. He was immediately offered opportunities to design covers for *The Crisis* and *Opportunity*. To supplement his income, he was given a job by *The Crisis* magazine, working part-time, mailing packages. He was given addition support by *Opportunity*. Douglas describes other benefits of working with *The Crisis* and *Opportunity*:

Opportunity got me a place in the Reiss school, a scholarship in the Reiss school, that made it possible for me to work there, classes in the mornings from nine to twelve, and then over after lunch to *The Crisis* and work all afternoon. So I was able to keep myself afloat (Douglas, tape-recorded oral interview, November 18, 1973, p.11)

Between the financial opportunities and the artistic and cultural climate in Harlem, it did not take much more to convince Douglas to move and hone his craft in New York (Kirschke, 1995).

In 1925, *Survey* magazine, a major journal of social work in the United States in the 1920s, devoted a special illustrated issue to the cultural and artistic development of Blacks in Harlem. The issue was entitled “*Harlem, Mecca of the New Negro*”. The *Survey Graphic* magazine was the first of several attempts to formulate a major publication devoted to the political and cultural voice of the New Negro (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Professor Alain Locke oversaw and edited this special issue devoted to Black America’s distinguished cultural and artistic development in Harlem (Patton, 1998).

Locke was a prominent voice of the New Negro Movement. Locke’s opinions regarding Black art and the social role of the Black artists were even more influential

than Du Bois's. He made profound contributions to the philosophies and culture of African-Americans in the late 19th and early 20th century. Locke later wrote prolifically on the subject of African and African-American art and mentored and supported Black artists throughout his life (Huggins, 1971). His philosophies and writings served as a strong motivating force. His interest was in promoting mutual understanding of Black and White-Americans. Locke believed the responsibility of Black artists, writers, actors, and musicians was to rehabilitate the esteem from which African-Americans had fallen during slavery (Locke, 1925). Locke felt that each cultural group had its own identity that it was entitled to protect and promote. He believed that the race problem in the United States could be meliorated through African-American's contributions to arts and culture (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

Shortly before Douglas came to Harlem, he received a letter from a friend, urging him to submit designs for the competition for the *Survey Graphic's* cover. Douglas, unsure of himself for his lack of experience with the climate of Harlem, neglected to submit any designs. Douglas was, however, moved by the issue for its inclusion of the illustrations accredited to a German artist named Winold Reiss. The publication included a brief discussion, possibly written by Locke, explaining the importance of Reiss's illustrations. Reiss was a Bavarian artist who had established a reputation in Europe and in the United States for his ability to realistically capture the physiognomy of ethnic groups. Reiss typically contextualized his subjects with a number of decorative, cultural, and historical elements. His works captured the attention of influential Black leaders because they did not subscribe to those derogatory stereotypical caricatures most White artists perpetuated (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Reiss also worked as a professor of

mural painting at New York University (Kirschke, 1995). Ironically Reiss, a German born artist, won the competition to illustrate one of the most significant publications of the New Negro Movement (Kirschke, 1995).

Douglas and Reiss became acquainted, and Reiss offered him a scholarship to study in his school. Less than a year later, Locke re-published the contents of the March 1925 *Survey Graphic* in an expanded anthology titled the *New Negro* (Reynolds & Wright, 1989). Reiss encouraged his new pupil, Douglas, to undertake the illustrations for this publication (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

Douglas described that he was initially disinterested in Black subject matter when he arrived in New York. It was only after Reiss encouraged him to do so that he began to develop his signature style. “I was a little reluctant, I was hesitant. I didn’t want to ... I wanted to do something else. Actually, I was a little hesitant about this blackness, so he almost forced me ... to use this material” (Driskell, 1971, p. 6). Reiss interested Douglas in developing as a portrait artist as well as encouraged him to subscribe to the increasingly popular “Primitivism”. Douglas expands on Reiss’s influence:

He [Reiss] saw what I was doing with the little schooling that I had had in art out of Nebraska which wasn’t very much at all in relation to what you should have had. But, what he was interested in was my arriving at something of a style of art that would reflect my background and what I was doing there was simply—I was only interested in transcribing what I saw, not what my attitude toward life was and that sort of thing the artist must be involved in, must be concerned with. With that idea in mind I would have come to grips with this business of the, of what does a black do. What kind of picture, what kind of world does a black artist see

and transcribe, must be responsible for transcribing. That wasn't easy, That was a terrific problem. ... He [Reiss] was interested in me—in getting me to translate this black thing that nobody had any notion about. So, and I didn't either, as an artist. And, not only didn't have a notion, but wasn't really sympathetic toward it. We had on occasion had models, black people as models, but we treated it just like you would a landscape. It was just something to be transcribed on paper. The feeling sometime after I commenced to understand something about what he wanted me to do. He was doing it because he wanted me to. He realized that he was doing it, but he wasn't a black person. He couldn't really do it. As wonderful as he was as an artist, he couldn't do this for me. I had to do this. (Douglas, tape-recorded oral interview, November 18, 1973, pp. 12-13)

Douglas's new style was well received by many Black poets, playwrights, actors, scholars, and musicians of the New Negro Movement. His style, employed in his illustrations and murals, combined Egyptian, West African, Cubist, and Art Deco influences. He explored African motifs and focused on the celebration of African and African-American culture and history. The titles of some of Douglas public murals and illustrations such as "Aspects of Negro Life," "Spirits Rising," "Into Bondage," and "Building More Stately Mansions" suggests that he was interested in conveying the struggle and triumphs of African-Americans in the United States (Powell & Reynolds, 1999). Douglas describes the difficulty he had with this transition and the reception to this style which he considered underdeveloped:

It was like nothing to me, the people that saw it in those days, looked at it, and thought it was something terrific. They didn't mind that sort of thing and they

wanted me to—oh, encouraged me to do it, wanted me to continue with this sort of thing. I sort of at first threw it off as, well, I didn't know what to do. I wanted to do something else, but I gradually, they insisted so vehemently that I finally thought that maybe there is something to this thing, this primitive thing. What I was up against was trying to put myself back in, say, into 1850, 1840-1860. And try to see the world as a black artist would have seen it during that time. And without the facilities, without the training and education that that person would have had, or that person had. How did he see the world? (Douglas, tape-recorded oral interview, November 18, 1973, p. 13)

Apparently patrons were so taken by his new style that they were almost insistent that he continue to develop in this genre. Reiss and Locke became Douglas's strongest support system. It was advantageous that Douglas earned the favor of Reiss and other leading figures of the Movement. However, his relationship with Reiss was not without racial tension. In 1925 he wrote to Alta Sawyer regarding his relationship with Reiss.

While everything is going nicely one must not forget to be careful ... to keep their acquaintances separate and in line. You must let your right hand know what's going on with your left. My tactics are these, assume a look of dumbness graduated to the occasion, keep eyes and ears open and say as little as possible. No one knows better than a Negro the real power of a smile. It seems to be instinctive for one man to want to teach the other man something. What a real disappointment it is to find that the other fellow knows what we are about to tell him. (Douglas, 1925, p. 2)

Douglas played the game, yet had high respect for Reiss and his abilities. Douglas was patient and tolerant. As a result Reiss brought Douglas to the attention of Du Bois and Locke (Kirschke, 1995). Douglas's and Reiss's relationship continued to evolve into mutual respect, or at least one that was reciprocal. The fact that Douglas was aligned with such influential Black political leaders is testament to his interest in forwarding the efforts of African-Americans. Also aligning himself with these influential Blacks proved to be lucrative. Through this network Douglas connected with wealthy White patrons and worked to maintain their favor as well. As a result he received numerous commissions to paint murals, portraits, and illustrate publications (Driskell, 1971).

Douglas continued to develop the visual aspects of the New Negro Movement, which were set-forth to challenge those negative stereotypes, which came to prominence during the "Jim Crow Era." Douglas negotiated a variety of influences in developing his own style. His work was featured in *Vanity Fair* in the 1925. He was beginning to earn favor and recognition by Blacks and Whites as the premiere artist of the New Negro Movement (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

Albert Barnes, a White man who had earned his fortune with his patent medicine *Argyrol*, began to heavily invest his money and interest in collecting and writing about Modern art. He established an art school outside of Philadelphia where he invited Douglas to study with hopes that he may discover better ways of integrating color into his simplistic black and white style (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Douglas began to travel to Philadelphia to study and draw from African sculpture at the Barnes Foundation where he earned a scholarship to study for two years (Douglas, n.d., # 4). Douglas was able to

inform his work through studying African sculptures as a result of his relationship with a White patron (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

Douglas reflects on his time at the Barnes Foundation and the influence of Albert Barnes:

... there is nothing like that Barnes Foundation for modern pictures—Cezanne, Matisse, the whole of this modern movement you have a greater picture there than anywhere in America. And the number, we counted once, one day we just counted 120 or 30 Cézannes from the great big ones like to that to smaller pictures like that. We counted the Matisses; we counted the Picasso's, and so on. As a matter of fact he had, Barnes, he had Matisse come over and do a mural on his wall. And he [Barnes] was a terrific critic. (Quoted in Kirschke, 1995, p. 21)

Themes of Black “primitivism” continued to gain popularity with Black artists as White patronage for these works increased (Driskell, 1976). Some White critics had charged that the New Negroes subscribed to the fashionable exoticism, which was calculated to appeal to a jaded White audience (Locke, 1925). White patrons who grew seemingly tired of U.S. artistic norms, which were rooted in European traditions, became obsessed with notions of primitivism. They were in turn fascinated with the idea that the African-American possessed an innate savage but exotic gift. Many Black artists capitalized on this interest for hopes of earning profit, and produced works that were disingenuous (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

Art historian Amy Kirschke (1995) comments on the reception of Whites to those “primitive” works created by African-American artists during the New Negro Movement:

a new “white curiosity” about the culture and characteristics of black American appeared in the United States, especially in the center of culture, New York City. After World War I this interest grew, and whites were increasingly attracted to Harlem. Some blacks had misgivings, but leaders such as writer James Weldon Johnson and Charles Johnson, the head of the National Urban League, regarded white interest as a positive development. Charles Johnson in particular hoped that white interests in black arts would lead to public exposure and more professional opportunities for Negro painters and sculptors. This desire did not take long to materialize. (p. 16)

Black leaders encouraged Black artists to capitalize on this ‘fetish’ for Black arts and culture. It promised individual and collective progress for the Black community (Huggins, 1971).

Others maintained traditional academic styles, yet did not direct content to White audiences. However, the pressures to conform to the tastes and interest of Whites persisted. For example, Chicago painter Archibald Motley was distinguished for his genius and unique style with innumerable accolades. In addition to winning the 1928 Gold Medal at the Harmon Foundation exhibition, Motley was the first Black painter to have a solo exhibition in a commercial gallery in New York City and the first Black visual artist to win a Guggenheim Fellowship (Lewis, 2003). His early work employed a realistic style, which focused primarily on portraits of Black women. He recalled his correspondence with the gallery that agreed to show his work in New York in 1928 under certain conditions. Motley explains:

He asked me if I'd mind doing a few voodoo paintings, something which I had never attempted but I had done a lot of research on. I told him: all right, I'll do a few. So I did, I think, five voodoo paintings. They went over quite big. ...

Possibly it was just the mysticism of the thing (Motley, oral interview with Dennis Barrie, January 23, 1978).

Many White patrons obsessed over the assumed innate primitive Black sensibility they believed African-American artists possessed. Charlotte Mason, a wealthy widow of a noted New York surgeon, was a leading supporter of Black artists during the New Negro Movement. In 1928, when Mason was in her 70s, she gave financial support to Douglas along with Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Alain Locke. She adopted her husband's beliefs that great spiritual powers resided in what they referred to as the "primitive" and "child races"—terms they used for African-American and Native American people. She preferred that those artists she supported refer to her as "Godmother" (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

Although her patronage was critical to Douglas's early professional development, she became controlling and unreasonable. She eventually demanded that Douglas give up his studies at the Barnes school and return to New York. After Mason shared with Douglas that she felt that his formal training would be detrimental to his natural instincts and insisted that Douglas leave the Barnes school, Douglas severed the relationship (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). He explains:

I had this thing at the [Barnes] Foundation and she was against my going to the Foundation. But I brushed that off and went on down there because that was about \$125 a month that I could have had for doing nothing—go down there and

looking at pictures and so on. ... So I went to Philadelphia and got my little place to stay and one day I look up and there was, you know, this woman, these people. She was with here governess or whatever. ... Anyway, she came in this place, what we call a Black neighborhood, nice place, but here this old lady is with a car as long as this place here you know and so with this person, and she talked with me for an hour trying to persuade me to give up this thing. ... I couldn't do anything like that. (Douglas, tape-recorded oral interview, November 18, 1973, p. 21)

Ironically, in many cases the patronage and support of Whites was initiated or recommended by respected Black political and cultural leaders like Charles Johnson, Walter White, Locke, and Du Bois. For Black artists it was paramount to understand the critical importance of maintaining support from both Blacks and Whites of wealth and influence (Bearden & Henderson, 1993; Leininger-Miller, 2001). However, some artists worked to appeal to that which was trendy with hopes of earning optimal support (Lewis, 2003).

During the New Negro Movement, many formally trained African-American artists were reconciled to the public's demand for primitive styles, and African and Black vernacular subject matter. For most African-American artists this turn from Europe to Africa was not easily accomplished. The attitude persisted that "European was universal" (Lewis, 2003). Seemingly many African-American artists considered their quest for universality to be synonymous with their search for freedom. Douglas's two styles contrasted so starkly that one could suggest that he had two separate professional careers,

one as a muralist and illustrator who employed an Africanist's style, and the other as a traditional portraitist.

Initially many Black artists addressed African-American content through European styles, but gradually their approaches began to shift. Samella Lewis (2003) summarizes her impression of this period:

During this period, forces for self-expression, both internal and external, had to decide whether to identify with their culture, accepting and exploiting their heritage, or with the international art movement, accepting and exploiting the security of the European artistic tradition. (p. 59)

Historian David Driskell (1976) elaborates on this transition:

As black artists began to make sociological rather than aesthetic decisions about his work, his imagery led him closer to aspects of activism and an intentionally naïve style labeled primitivism. It has been suggested that primitivistic imagery appeared to be [the] most visible alternative to academic, assimilationist approach[es] strongly favored by middle class and exemplified by the work of Henry O. Tanner. (p. 62)

Hale Woodruff, who later became an abstractionist, was skeptical of some artists who came to prominence during the Harmon Foundation exhibitions. He was especially critical of the dramatic shift in the paintings of William Henry Johnson. Woodruff was critical of Black artists who emerged from strong academic training of portraiture and landscapes to earned recognition as Modernist. He felt these explorations were disingenuous and lacked sophistication. He accused Johnson of jumping on what he

described as a “Primitivist Bandwagon” (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, August 28, 1977). Woodruff remarked:

I could not support, aesthetically, the works of William Henry Johnson ... that is the so-called conscious or pseudo-primitivism as evidenced in his later works.

They seemed forced. I had a feeling that he was trying to evolve into a folksy ... into this unsophisticated manner of working that would have a wide appeal. To me it was unconvincing and insincere. (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, August 28, 1977)

Douglas seemingly developed two styles and was able to maintain a universal appeal and support from the Black community. On the other hand, the Black community was not so receptive to Woodruff’s interest in non-representational abstraction. As Woodruff’s work matured and he began to explore the possibilities of abstraction his work received mixed reviews by the African-American community. During the *Atlanta Annual* exhibitions, Woodruff was not as favorably received as the more figurative and realistic painters like John Wilson (Powell & Reynolds, 1999). Interestingly this situation mirrored the experiences Woodruff had as a young painter in the Harmon Foundation exhibitions (Leininger-Miller, 2001). This, however, did not dissuade Woodruff from teaching his students the importance of structure and composition over content. This is evidenced by Woodruff’s reflections of those politically charged “Black art” works, which emerge out of the late 1960s and 1970s. Woodruff explained:

I don’t think there is any such thing as Black art ... African Art had a unique form and characteristic. It is the only true art ... Black art is more political. This is not

about aesthetics, it's political. There is a distinction between content and aesthetics. (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973)

Woodruff believed that African art spoke to what he felt were essential to works of art, a universal appeal. By "true art" it is likely that Woodruff meant a dignified expression emerging from its own culture and history. Woodruff continued to explain in his 1968 interview:

I think it's the image of man in whatever role, whatever state or position or condition he is found. And, again the dignity of man; this is what I find in African sculpture. There's always the dignity. There's always a great sense of self. This is why you'll find this very frontal, monumental, austere quality in all of their sculpture. This is the kind of image we should thrive for. (Woodruff, oral interview with Al Murray, November 18, 1968)

Although Woodruff supported affirming images, he advocated for form over content. One could speculate that his teaching emphasized the importance that his students develop technical and formal compositional skills foremost with less emphasis on the content or intended meaning of their work.

While Woodruff taught in the Atlanta University system he often took his students along with him on public commissions and urged them to part-take in integrated cultural events (Holloway, tape-recorded oral interview, September 29, 1976). As Black artists were able to impact the broader community rather than limiting their influence to the Black community, they were achieving great social progress using their creative influence to meliorate racial conflict and prejudice. Woodruff worked in a variety of capacities in order to provide his students with diverse opportunities, and he held his

students to the highest standards. Although he taught at an exclusively Black institution, he extended his expertise to White students at times. Ben Shute, one of the founding educators of what came to be the Atlanta College of Art, spoke of Woodruff's influence on a potentially intolerant group of southern White students at the Atlanta Art Institute. After he hosted Woodruff as lecturer in the 1940s, during Shute's tenure as head of the department, Shute exclaimed, "Hale was an eloquent and down to earth speaker. ... The southern white students of Atlanta Art Institute were won over by his charm, experience, and command of the subject" (Shute, tape-recorded oral interview, November 25, 1976).

While Woodruff guest lectured in Atlanta in the 1940s he used his influence to gain admittance for himself and the Atlanta Art Institute Black students to the High Museum (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Black students who were never before permitted to enter the museum benefited from seeing traveling exhibitions of noteworthy European Modernists. As a result of having the opportunity to see international museum exhibitions, Woodruff's students were able to gain a more global perspective on the techniques and history of art. They also had an opportunity to place the accomplishments of Black artists with whom they were familiar within a context of their White-American and European counterparts. This was the first museum experience for most of these Black art students. Jenelsie Holloway, a student of Woodruff's during this time in the 1960s described: "It was a very big thing when he took us to the High Museum. Blacks couldn't just walk in" (Holloway, tape-recorded oral interview, September 29, 1976). Bearden and Henderson (1993) remarked on The Atlanta University Art Department's triumph over racial inequalities at the High Museum.

The color bar at the High Museum began to erode long before the sit-ins of the 1960s ... By linking art with democratic progress, Woodruff gave art a meaning in Atlanta's African-American community it never had before. (p. 205)

Based on Woodruff's own education and teaching influence one can conclude that he was aware that in order for Black students to gain a more inclusive cultural and educational experience in the arts one would have to, on some level, confront the race barrier in the United States.

Woodruff and Douglas both made attempts to branch out into the mainstream art community and were successful in many regards. Among their mainstream accomplishments, Douglas was the only African-American artist featured in the 1936 exhibition entitled "Thirty American Artists" at the Findlay Galleries in New York, and he earned his Masters degree of Fine Arts from Columbia University in 1942 (Driskell, 1971). Woodruff was represented in the 1939 World's Fair, and in 1946 he accepted a position at New York University's Art Education Department. This was one of the first tenure track appointments given to an African-American artist by a mainstream university (Powell & Reynolds, 1999). They both recognized the critical importance of having mainstream exposure in addition to gaining the support of the Black community (Holland, 1998; Lewis, 2003).

Race Consciousness and Curricular Materials

This section examines the strategies Douglas and Woodruff employed in their teaching and studio presence to affirm a sense of Black identity or racial solidarity. I examine the specific effects of this racial uplift on the confidence of Douglas's and Woodruff's students and their ability to part-take in the mainstream.

Douglas and Curriculum

Although Douglas brought extensive training, unique experiences, and a broad range of cultural and artistic influences to Fisk, the curriculum Douglas wrote for his students did not appear any different than mainstream White university art curricula of the same period. His art history classes covered from prehistoric through Byzantine, Greek/Roman, Early Christian, Renaissance, and Impressionism (Douglas, n. d. # 1). There was one exception evidenced in an exam question: "What was the contribution of African Negro sculpture to Modern art?" The fact that this question was included in an exam Douglas designed implies that discussions revolving around African art and its importance did take place. However, there was little evidence of African or African-American art in his formal teaching. Douglas was, however, active in inviting African-American artists to Fisk University with whom he was affiliated through exhibiting in the New York art scene. For example, in 1958 he hosted Charles Alston as a visiting artist at Fisk (Douglas, 1958).

Douglas commanded a multitude of subjects in the arts and was an active lecturer on process and technique, as well as general and African-American art history. The lectures that Douglas presented on a survey of art history and for art appreciation courses

included “New Horizons in Art,” “Art in Life,” “Art in Painting,” and “The Phenomenon of the Arts.” The titles of Douglas’s lectures, which focused specifically on the achievements of African-American artists included, “The Development of Negro Art in American Life,” “The New Negro Movement,” “The Negro too, in American Art,” and “Review of the Negro in American Art”. Through speaking engagements Douglas discussed “general” art history, technique, and worked to communicate the significance of Black contributions to the visual arts.

In 1960, Douglas delivered a vehement speech at Dillard University, a historically Black university in New Orleans. He specifically elaborates on the political struggle of artists in Harlem in the 1920s and 30s:

What we young Blacks were dealing with in the 1920s, in our poems, songs, pictures, and novels was in some ways no less than a revival, a quickening of the life rhythms in the souls of Black folk which had miraculously continued to beat, though ever so faintly, from time of man’s first appearance on earth to our present troubled tragic times. We see how this rhythm had continued throughout the two-hundred and forty years of slavery. This rhythm continued to beat even when we were declared to be men without souls. We were seeking in naïve and simple ways to kindle a fire, to infuse breath into the Black man’s inert body, which time and again has served merely as a high road for plundering armies, steppingstones to the wealth of nations. (Douglas, n.d., # 6)

Surely at Dillard, Douglas was connecting with a predominantly African-American audience and he spoke passionately about their social role of artists in the era. The beating he described, as the beating of one’s heart, implies passion and continuity of

African-American people. Clearly he had an influential political presence. However, based on Douglas classroom materials, class notes, and exams-questions of politics, race or contributions about Black culture were sparse.

Of all of Douglas's noted lectures none so blatantly addresses issues of social responsibility as it pertains to African-American art than his opening remarks in "The Development of Negro Art in American Life." I was fortunate to discover a written draft of this speech, which Douglas likely wrote for the Black college circuit. Douglas delivered several speeches on the topic of Negro art throughout his career. Following his opening remarks he states:

In bringing this subject to you we are only concerned with informing you. We desire to stimulate within you a consciousness of your individual responsibility for the quality, the extent, and the direction of the total culture in which you live, as full pledged citizens of the U.S.A. We have a duty to identify, label, and catalogue every aspect of Negro art. When this is achieved it can be offered to American culture to be used, to be integrated with that of all other groups making up our common American cultural heritage (Douglas, n.d., # 6, p. 1).

Douglas's use of the word "We" alone implies racial solidarity and collective responsibility for instilling the importance of upholding the African-American legacy in art. However, he is clearly an advocate for integration as he expresses his hopes that these achievements will fuse to create a "common American cultural heritage" (Douglas, n.d., # 6, p. 1).

Woodruff and Curriculum

Through all of the accolades Woodruff had accrued during his studies in France and his tenure at Atlanta University, from winning prizes through the Harmon Foundation and *The Crisis* magazine to representing the state of Georgia in the 1939 World's Fair, he had earned a reputation among art enthusiasts Black and White alike (Leininger-Miller, 2001). Woodruff, now in a position to educate young artists, taught his students ways to earn the respect and patronage of Whites without compromising their style or content.

Although Woodruff became interested in African art and Modernism, he also recognized the importance of academic training and the need of patrons to support his travels and studies. It was not just the support of White patrons that Woodruff needed in order to pursue a career in the arts. He also needed the support of the Black community. Ironically, in many cases, Blacks shared the same aesthetic as Whites. In the early 20th century, Blacks subscribed similarly to idealized images of Black middle class life (Lewis, 2003). Woodruff was able to earn monies to study in France through winning competitions and publishing political cartoons in the local paper (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). His work in the 1920s remained relatively conservative compared to his later non-representation abstractions (Leininger-Miller, 2001).

Although Woodruff became heavily invested in Abstract Expressionism, as his work matured he was distinguished by his tendency to combine various influences and styles. Art historian Ann Gibson (1997) describes:

[Woodruff] juxtaposed comparatively naturalistic figures with passages of abstraction. In his studio practice, Woodruff was mainly concerned with the abstract mode, whose inspiration he frequently derived from his study of African art. ... But he refused to limit himself to abstraction, continuing to produce figurative paintings like *Girls Skipping* (1949) ... But Woodruff's images conceived with more apparent forethought than de Kooning's, did not provide evidence of the kind of improvisational spontaneity that connoted existential authenticity to the core members of Abstract Expressionism. Woodruff's alternation between abstraction and more mimetic representations from painting to painting implied a rejection of the existential authenticity of gestural brushwork. He saw abstraction, expressionism, and realism as codes, as tools, rather than values in themselves. (p. 106)

In the 1920s Woodruff wavered from his exploration of Modernist French landscapes to win the favor of patrons and judges in the United States by producing works that subscribed to their notions of Black identity. He abandoned his interests in material and process to paint works like the *Banjo Player* in order to sustain himself in France (Leininger-Miller, 2001). A more established and secure Woodruff of the 1930s was not well received by the Black community at the *Atlanta Annuals* because of his non-representational paintings. Yet his continued interest in incorporating Black figures in his work compelled him to follow his own path to interpreting Abstract Expressionism (Gibson, 1997).

The impact of these various artistic and aesthetic influences on Woodruff's life recalls Du Bois's (1903/1995) often quoted description of *double consciousness*. In *The Souls of the Black Folk* he described the African-American as:

... always looking through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. ... One always feels his twoness an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings. (p. 45)

Perhaps in addition to Woodruff's conflict of existing socially within two communities; one African-American, one European/American, he experienced a multitude of aesthetic conflicts as well to include his interests and convictions as a traditionalist, Modernist/Abstractionist, Africanist, and one who produces positive reflections of African-American life (Gibson, 1997). This flux of influences resulted in a unique artistic identity, which is rooted in the Black experience.

As Black artists began to distinguish themselves from White artists, they developed non-academic styles that reflected variations on a newfound Black content (Driskell, 1976). African-American artists shared common experiences of racism and marginalization but they did not reflect in their artwork academic traditions, Black culture, Modernism, and "primitivism" in the same manner. As in the case of Woodruff, their individual histories brought forth varying aesthetics and interests, which took them in different directions. As artists they were separated by distinctive social and aesthetic experiences.

Before the New Negro Movement, Black artists not only aspired to European standards, they depicted images from a White reality where they were marginalized or excluded. Juanita Holland (1998) explains:

History and genre, conspicuously absent from the oeuvres of most Black artists during the nineteenth century, brought with them the tensions of representing the history and social fabric of a society that did not include or welcome those artists. Aspects of American history that Black artists could have most sympathetically approached would have been too controversial for most White America. Genre scenes—the intimate portrayal of everyday lives and people—required Black artists to portray lifestyles from which they were excluded. (p. 27)

European academies set standards that strongly influenced the criteria of Black art for years to come. Although Hale Woodruff never earned an official degree, he was academically trained in a variety of venues including Herron School of Art, Chicago Art Institute, and Academie Scandinave in Paris, France (Leininger-Miller, 2001). The importance of these academic foundations carried over into Woodruff's own educational philosophies. He was not one to support work simply because it addressed Black content. He continued to advocate for the importance of work of what he considered "high quality" and also spoke of the need for themes, which extended beyond the limits of African-American content (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). Black artists' interest in producing work with universal appeal compelled some to avoid Black subject matter. While in France much of Woodruff's work leaned toward a Modernist aesthetic, but after returning to the United States and settling at his Atlanta

University position Woodruff and his students produced what could be considered a form of American regionalism (Schmidt-Campell, 1979).

Woodruff encouraged his students to paint the rural Georgia landscape and the urban shanties in the Black communities of the Depression era. Although all of these works did not include Black subject matter as their content, it is evidenced by the rural conditions that the students were painting the plight of impoverished Black people (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). One of Woodruff's students elaborates "Woodruff was teaching us to tell the story of our people in our environment in a visual way" (Howard, tape-recorded oral interview, June 30, 1976). Bearden and Henderson (1993) commented on how this came to be:

... in order to create in his advanced students a sense of identity and purpose, Woodruff had organized them into a *Painter's Guild*. Regionalism had replaced traditionalism in American art, and Woodruff led his "Guild" out of the studio to paint their region—Georgia's red-clay hills, piney woods, and scrawny barnyards. After Woodruff's "Guild" earned national attention he described his intention in a 1942 interview with *Time* magazine:

We are interested in expressing the South as a field, as a territory, its peculiar rundown landscapes, its social and economic problems, and the Negro people. The students and I ... used to talk about these problems. Not only talked about them, we experienced them ... You'll see their work reflects our interest in the Negro sociological theme or scene.

Hayward Oubre, a former student of Woodruff's and former Chairman of the Art Department at Winston Salem University, discussed the political ramification of the *Painter's Guild*:

There is no way to escape politics, but Mr. Woodruff did not start off with any political idea. He simply started off with the realities of life, which are political. Atlanta had slums and segregation. Mr. Woodruff painted these things, these ideas. I think he had a great influence on politicians who saw his work. ... [for] when [they] saw the reality of the erosion, the outhouses, the very bad slums. ... something was done about these things. Something was done to clear the great slum next to Atlanta University. (Oubre, tape-recorded oral interview, June 29, 1977)

On many occasions Woodruff brought students home for dinner during the hardships of the Depression era. A relationship of this personal nature apparently fostered political discussions in which they discussed the social and economic conditions they faced as Blacks in the United States' southeastern states (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). This exemplifies expanded pedagogy. Unfortunately, *Time* undermined Woodruff's Guild by unfavorably referring to them as the "Outhouse School" (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). They never earned the mainstream acclaim they deserved, but by the mid-thirties, Atlanta University had become the regional center for aspiring African-American art students. Because of the limits imposed in the segregated south and the widespread influence of Woodruff many students opted to study in Atlanta. Vernon Winslow, former professor of art at Dillard University and student of Woodruff

from 1936-1937, observed Woodruff's program before eventually transferring from Chicago Art Institute. He describes:

In the 1930s. ... Atlanta was considered an important art center for Black artists, largely, I believe, because of the presence of the W.P.A., the Atlanta University system, and Hale Woodruff, ... True, New York City had "Spinky" Alston, as Hale used to call him, Romare Bearden, and Jake Lawrence; Chicago was a thriving art center with William Carter, Charles White, Gordon Parks, Charles Sebree, Eldzier Cortor, and Archibald Motley; Washington, D.C. had its Elizabeth Catlett, Professor Herring, and Lois Jones, but the international quality of Hale and the presence of Hale in Atlanta. ... Is the reason I went. ... After being told that the private art schools did not accept Negroes, way back there in 1935, ... I went to Morehouse, specifically to work with Hale Woodruff. (Winslow, taped-recorded oral Interview, May 27, 1977)

Woodruff's and his students' work gave testament to the poverty Southern Blacks experienced in the 1930s and 1940s. Atlanta University hosted a reception for the local community, which honored some of the young Black painters of Woodruff's *Painter's Guild*. This, along with other influences, increased the reception of Black content in the Atlanta area (Powell & Reynolds, 1999).

In 1934 Woodruff earned a grant, through Teacher College Columbia University, to study in Mexico during the summer (Stoelting, 1978). He worked as an apprentice to the famous Mexican muralist Diego Rivera. Although he spent the majority of his time grinding pigments and observing Rivera's method of mixing colors, it is doubtful that an artist with such an overt political agenda could not influence the content of one's work.

LeFalle-Collins and Goldman (1996) describe the relationship of African-American artists and the Mexican muralists:

Their [African-American artists] conscious decision to emulate the tenets, techniques, art processes, and themes of the Mexican School was not just a matter of artistic preference but also a profoundly political choice made during a period of rapid social change, particularly for African-Americans. (p. 19)

New Negro artists and Mexican artists were inspired by the same revolutionary social progress. They also both employed their images to fight for social justice and evoke sympathy and solidarity (Collins & Goldman, 1996). Collins and Goldman (1996) enumerate the four major factors, which contributed to work of those African-American artists who were influenced by the Mexican School:

... the aesthetic theories of Alain Locke; the social realists movement in the United States; the rise of American socialism and communism; and, finally the work of the Mexican School artists themselves, many of whom were active in the United States. ... Social realists believed that art could not be separate from its social and political context, a context that was indebted to Mexican influences ... Political content was critical during this period, and African-American artists supported many socialist, communist, and nationalistic views fore grounded in the works of social realist artists. While most African-American artists did not join any one party, they were attracted to the development of artwork that grew out of class struggle and sought to reform society. (pp. 28-29)

It is likely that the experiences Woodruff shared with the Mexican muralists encouraged him to paint the social conditions of Black Georgians (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

Woodruff also taught his students about the works of Mexican muralists including Covarrubias, Orozco, and Rivera (Winslow, tape-recorded oral interview, May 27, 1977). During this same period Woodruff created a series of woodcuts that were even more specific to the plight of the African-American in the United States. Woodruff accepted an invitation by the Arthur V. Newton Gallery in New York to “An Art Commentary on Lynching,” an exhibition that gave Black and White artists an opportunity to explore the subject of racially motivated violence in the early 20th century. Woodruff exhibited two poignant prints. *Giddap* (1935) graphically portrayed a Black male in the process of being lynched by way of a horse and wagon by a mob including White men and women. *By Parties Unknown* (1935) depicts the aftermath where a lynched Black body is left on the doorstep of what appears to be a church. Woodruff apparently informed his students about the importance of the show. One of his advanced pupils, Wilmer Jennings, also featured a work in the exhibition (Stoelting, 1978).

While Woodruff had a strong political stance and aesthetic interest, he was mindful of his impact on students. Although he was an avid collector and student of African art, he was careful not to impose those interests on his students (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). He reveals in an interview with Romare Bearden in 1967 the following.

I have never taught African art to my students or pushed it in any way. It is a kind of personal interest and feeling that you can't impose on others. If the student seeks it out, that's fine, that is something they then do for themselves, and I am delighted to offer them the benefit of my experience. I have consistently advised my students that blackness alone will not imbue their works with greatness and

immortality. Whatever the theme or expression, the answer to that question will rest finally in their attaining to that highest possible level of achievement and transcendence in their work as art. (p. 213)

He was certainly an advocate for “racial expression,” but encouraged students to pursue their personal creative and explorative endeavors. As is evidenced in Woodruff post 1950s abstract paintings, his work is personal and indeterminably Black or White. He was striving toward his own personal pursuits and probably less preoccupied with the demands and values of race politics. It is probable that he hoped his students would enjoy the same creative freedom.

Black Content. In the late 19th and early 20th- centuries, African-American artists worked within a European academic style, but began to focus on African and Black subjects. They created images, which served to humanize the African-American, with hopes that the world would take notice of their talents as contributions to Western culture. African-American artists then worked to affirm Black life without necessarily pleading the cause of racial injustice (Driskell, 1976).

Since both Douglas and Woodruff emerged during the New Negro Movement, they were not strangers to employing Black content in their work or showcasing the work of African-American artists on campus. LeFalle-Collins and Goldman (1996) described the attitudes and ideological development revolving around the image of the New Negro:

The New Negro was an ideal, an image meant to replace the Jim Crow stereotypes of the 19th century and to reconstruct the ways Blacks regarded themselves. Ultimately, the purpose of the New Negro Movement was to emancipate the mind and spirit of the race, something that could not be

accomplished by legislation alone ... The appearance of the New Negro was supposed to be as far removed from the old images of slaves as possible. Posture and demeanor were considered important signifiers of education and class. Confidence and moral conviction were also key New Negro characteristics. (p. 20)

Douglas and Woodruff came to prominence in a time when it was encouraged through Black and White patronage for African-Americans to re-create images stemming from various notions of African-American identity (Huggins, 1971).

Douglas and Woodruff were both inspired by one of the most reputable African-American artists of the 19th century, Henry Ossawa Tanner. Tanner's accomplishments served as an inspiration to many Black artists who developed during the New Negro Movement including Woodruff and Douglas, who both visited Tanner in his studio in France (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Although throughout his career, Tanner explored a variety of subject matter, he is posthumously best known for his creation of two well-known Black genre paintings.

After fleeing an intolerable racial climate at the Philadelphia Academy of Art and Design where he studied for a short time, Tanner traveled to rural North Carolina in the summer of 1889 before accepting a teaching position to teach drawing at Atlanta University (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). It was during this time that Tanner began to sketch local Blacks in rural settings. There he conducted studies and took photographs for what later became two of the most significant works in African-American art history, *The Banjo Lesson* and *The Thankful Poor* (Holland, 1998).

In these works Tanner was supposedly only responding to the suggestions of his mentor and teacher, Thomas Eakins, to work from Black subjects. However, when one interprets these images in relationship to the numerous depictions of denigrating stereotypical caricatures produced by Whites in the 19th century one recognizes their revolutionary poignancy (Harris, 2003). Tanner transformed these previously stereotypical notions of Black culture into dignified teachers and family men (Collins & Goldman, 1996).

Clearly Tanner could have effectively delivered strong messages of racial pride throughout his career, but it is doubtful that he would have been able to sustain the necessary patronage for an artist's survival in the late 19th century. He was adamant about constructing an identity that he believed would allow him the greatest freedom as an artist (Holland, 1998). In the 19th century, race was such a negative signifier it is not surprising that he found expendability in the racial aspect of his identity (Harris, 2003). Douglas and Woodruff lived in a time when there were more possibilities for an African-American who chose art as a career (Lewis, 2003).

As a young painter Woodruff finally met Tanner in his studio in France in the late 1920s. After Woodruff showed Tanner a series of his Modernist landscapes, Tanner advised him of the vital importance of exploring the human condition through figurative works. In a 1934 painting, *Poor Man's Cotton*, Woodruff used bursts of color and rhythmic movements and, like Tanner, successfully meliorates a Black subject matter typically associated with stereotypes, hardship, and toil. The energy of positive and negative geometric shapes represented by elbows, bent knees, hunched shoulders, and

garden tools create a sense of movement, which is certainly more celebratory than dismal.

Like Tanner, Woodruff similarly shifted subject matter when he moved to Georgia where he gained interest in American Regionalism. Although his initial focus was mainly on the Georgian landscape, in the early 1930s, Woodruff, along with several of his advanced painting students, began to travel around in the Atlanta area and paint the social conditions of African-Americans during The Great Depression.

Some of the more socially aware works Woodruff produced during the development of the *Painter's Guild* include a painting of a nearby Atlanta ghetto where Blacks and poor Whites often fought against the segregation of their respective neighborhoods. The oil painting depicts two side-by-side shanties divided by a sign, which reads: *Dividing Line Between White and Colored Which Were Mutually Agreed to by Both*. In addition to executing formally and technically well-resolved painting, this work speaks volumes to the racial conflict among people who faced similar social and economic hardship in the South (Stoelting, 1978). Regarding the work Woodruff described: “Most people were too busy fighting bread and butter problems to spend time fighting race problems, we were all in there together you know” (Woodruff, oral interview with Al Murray November 18, 1968). In 1935, through the support of the W.P.A., Woodruff also painted a set of murals, which also bordered between landscape and social commentary. At the Atlanta School of Social Work—the first African-American School of Social Work founded by Lugenia Burns Hope, the wife of Atlanta University President John Hope—he painted two panels: *Shantytown* and *Mudhill Row*. Woodruff’s depiction of the harsh living conditions of African-Americans coincided with

the mission of a social agency devoted to assisting African-Americans who suffered during the Depression. These murals were well received by the university community and the neighborhood (Ferguson, 2002; Stoelting, 1978). During this time Woodruff also produced severally politically charged woodcuts. His 1936 print entitled *Despair* portrays an African-American couple walking the city streets who appear sad, impoverished, and depressed (Stoelting, 1978).

As Woodruff's work matured and he began to explore the possibilities of abstraction, his work received mixed reviews by the Black community. During the Atlanta annual exhibitions Woodruff was not as favorably received as the more figurative and realistic painters like John Wilson (Powell & Reynolds, 1999).

In addition to the stylized murals and illustrations Douglas produced, he was active in creating dignified portraits of Blacks throughout his career. He continued to paint Black genre paintings as well as portraits of affluent Blacks, university administrators, and Black historical figures (Kirschke, 1995).

Murals as Social/Political Teaching Tools. In addition to the exhibiting and teaching careers of Douglas and Woodruff, they both contributed significantly as muralists in the 1930s and 1940s. In fact both Woodruff and Douglas are probably best known for their murals. Where Douglas's murals were more stylized and incorporated symbolic imagery, Woodruff's murals were depicted in the mode of the Social Realists (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Several public murals, which were produced by Douglas and Woodruff, were financially supported by Roosevelt's *New Deal*. Many programs were put in place in an attempt to offer relief to those who suffered during The Great Depression following the crash in the stock market in 1929 (Stewart, 1978). Under the

Work Progress Administration (W.P.A.) the Easel Painting Division, Mural Division, and Teachers Division created thousands of jobs for artists and was particularly promising to the Black community, which was accustomed to scarce opportunities and limited funding. Under this program, thousands of artists were given the opportunity to feed their families through teaching and creating public art (Stewart, 1978). Thanks to government support African-American artists were given the opportunity to share their personal and collective stories publicly through large-scale mural projects. As a result of the W.P.A., both Douglas and Woodruff were able to complete major public murals (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

None of Woodruff's works carry a more forceful social message, particularly for African-Americans, than his murals. Surely the political influence of working with acclaimed Mexican muralist, Diego Rivera, had a profound impact on Woodruff's choice of subject matter (Collins & Goldman, 1996). Each of his murals spoke on some level on the economic condition or the historical significance of the African-American experience. Woodruff invested considerable time conducting research in preparation for his murals (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 13, 1977). His early lesser-known murals, *Shantytown* and *Mudhill*, spoke to the economic and inadequate housing conditions of impoverished Blacks (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

Undoubtedly none of the works of Woodruff's entire career have earned more critical acclaim than his mural series at Talladega College in Alabama. The president of the university was determined to change the prevalent negative institutional-image that plagued many Black colleges. He suggested that Woodruff focus on the mutiny of *Amistad* in 1839 as his subject matter. He wanted to instill in the students of Talladega

that African-Americans were not voluntarily enslaved. The idea that this event involved a slave insurgency could communicate that there were events of resistance and determination in the history of African-Americans (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

A slave revolt had taken place on the *Amistad*, a Spanish ship en route to Cuba, under the leadership of Cinque, an African prince (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). The slaves were being smuggled as contraband to work on a sugar plantation. The Africans broke free and got hold of the sugar-cane machetes and, subsequently killed the captain and many of the crew. The African mutineers held those crewmen who were not killed as prisoners. Upon their arrival in the United States, the African captives who had broken free from enslavement were tried and charged with murder and mutiny (Stoelting, 1978). Black churches in many major cities raised money for their defense. After a three-year legal process they were acquitted and returned home (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

The ordeal was graphically told in Woodruff's four panel series. Panel one depicts the mutiny aboard the *Amistad*, where the Africans assume power. This panel is the most visually explicit of the four. White slavers are being violently thrown to the deck and butchered by muscular half-clothed African men. Although many positive, affirming, and relatively radical images had been produced during the New Negro and W.P.A. eras, never had a painting with such poignancy and physical presence been attributed to an African-American artist. Art historian Winifred Stoelting (1978), who conducted extensive research on Woodruff's years in Atlanta, said of this panel: "The fury of the combat is brilliantly accented both by the strong rhythms and the bright contrast colors of the tropical scene" (p. 232). These are landmark images in the history of African-

American art. The power of these images, which were created in 1939, still resonates today.

Panels two and three serve as one continuous composition that represents the trial in New Haven, Connecticut. On one side the accused Africans sit as they faced their accusers. The African defendants were dressed in suits and ties modeled after the fashion of the male English aristocrats of the period. Cinque is standing seemingly in his own defense (Stoelting, 1978). The other side, panel three, depicts the predominately White group of attendees, one of which is standing and accusatorially pointing at Cinque, as to say “guilty,” the prosecutor has his back to the viewers of the murals. The White-haired judge sits poised as he hears the testimony. Panel four depicts the acquitted Africans saying their farewells and preparing for their voyage back to Sierra Leone (Stoelting, 1978).

This four-panel mural demanded intensive research from Woodruff. Bearden and Henderson (1993) wrote regarding Woodruff’s intent on capturing historically accurate characters:

Woodruff’s most intensive research was pictorial. In Yale’s libraries in New Haven he learned that a Connecticut abolitionist artist, Nathaniel Jocelyn, had made portraits of Cinque and twenty other slaves in the mutiny. Ultimately, Woodruff located portraits of all trial participants except the prosecutor; in the mural the prosecutor has his back to the viewer. Woodruff portrayed himself, his hand supporting his head, as slave defendant. (p. 208)

The idea that Woodruff depicted himself as a slave defendant and as a juror speaks volumes to his positionality and his stance for social justice and his affinity for the prosecuted captives.

Woodruff also involved his students on this immense project. They modeled, prepared the canvas, mixed paints, and assisted him in transferring the drawing. Some of the students were even involved in the painting (Stoelting, 1978). Woodruff shares his gratitude for the efforts of his foremost assistant, Robert Neal:

He kept my sketches and equipment in order. He transferred the cartoons to the actual canvas. He posed for all of the hands and figure gestures that appeared in the mural. I don't know what I would have done without him. (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973)

This painting was not only technically informative for the Atlanta University students he involved, but they also learned significant historical information regarding the middle passage of slavery. Du Bois wrote favorably of Woodruff's *Amistad* murals in April 1939 in *The Crisis*. Many people were reintroduced to an ordeal that took place more than one hundred years prior, thanks to Woodruff's creative genius. Prior to this endeavor, this major historical event was unknown to many including Woodruff himself (Stoelting, 1978).

In 1948 Woodruff collaborated with friend and noteworthy muralist Charles Alston. On this project for the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company they depict the African-American participants in California's history. In a very dense and vibrant mural painted in the style of the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, they capture the spirit of Black pioneers, gold miners, fishers, Pony Express riders, workers on the construction of

the Golden Gate Bridge, and those who were involved in the creation of *The Elevator*, a Californian Black newspaper (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). He and Alston successfully illustrated a significant piece of early Black American history.

Woodruff's success in California likely resulted in his gaining the opportunity to return to Atlanta University a couple of years after he left to accept a position in New York University in 1946 (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Woodruff had proposed a mural at Atlanta University previously but was met with some resistance. He eventually changed his mind and decided to focus on what he considered a more important topic than what he initially set out to paint (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 13, 1973). In 1938, he proposed a series of murals devoted to "Episodes in the Development of the Negro." Woodruff wanted to include panels on "Enslavement," "Leaders," and "Liberators." Two panels would be reserved for each topic. He later changed his idea. Woodruff spoke of his motivations to change:

These murals would deal with a subject of which little was known, Art. Also in the 50s there was not an upheaval of Negro concern of our ancestry. Then I took the idea that art [a] little known subject would attract the curiosity and attention of young people and older people toward further study and that way it would have educational value. (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 13, 1973)

The mural series was entitled *The Art of the Negro*. Interestingly, Woodruff did not only want this mural to serve as pedagogy to raise the interest and awareness of the African-Americans artistic involvement in history, but he also hoped to recruit students to enroll in art courses of study.

In Woodruff's six-panel mural, *The Art of the Negro*, created in 1950-51 for the University's Trevor Arnett Library at Atlanta University, he depicts a history of the African-American's creative influence connecting to an Africa legacy (Powell & Reynolds, 1999). He literally bridges Modernism to African art. In the earlier panels he even connects the African's artistic legacy as having had a strong influence on those of ancient Greek and Mayan cultures. The second panel denotes the influence of the art of Black Africans on the cultures of ancient Greece, Rome, and Egypt. Panel three depicts the destruction of African culture by symbolizing the looting and destruction of the Benin Empire (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Panels four through six are described by Bearden and Henderson (1993) in the following passage:

The fourth panel shows parallels between African and pre-Columbian, Native American, and Oceanic art forms, considering all of them basic forms of human expression. The fifth panel demonstrates the influence of African Art on modern painting and sculpture, as reflected in the art of Modigliani, Picasso, Lipchitz, Henry Moore, and others. The sixth portrays the important black artists of history, starting with the cave artists of Africa and including older African-American artists, such as Tanner, Bannister, and Robert Duncanson as well as such contemporaries as Alston, Jacob Lawrence, and Richmond Barthe. (p. 212)

This mural was well ahead of its time, for no public mural spoke more forcefully to the connection of the ancestral legacy of Black artists to Africa yet also acknowledged African cultural influence as foundational to Western civilization. Powell and Reynolds (1999) comment on the cultural and historical merit of one of the panels:

This painterly retort of Woodruff's ... brilliant mixture of history, theory, figuration, abstraction, territorially, and universality ... From the little known, pre-modern artisans of Africa, to the contemporary artists Charles Alston, Jacob Lawrence, Haitian intuitive painter Hector Hyppolite, and others. Woodruff enacted in *Muses* a visual "roll call" of black artistic greats, but framed within the entire mural cycle's painted history of acknowledged traditions, social disruptives and cross cultural exchanges. (p. 121)

From panel to panel Woodruff's styles vary. He employs a more primitive style alluding to abstraction to more realistic depictions in later panels. This mural was indeed developed as a teaching tool for students, to bring into question culture values and to develop historical and political awareness. These murals simultaneously represent the importance of both one's ancestral past and the need for evolution in the name of cultural and aesthetic progress. Both of these notions are reflected in Woodruff's expanded pedagogy. Woodruff demonstrated on many occasions in his paintings the power of knowledge and talent to eradicate racial barriers as he employs historical representations of African and European cultures sharing and learning from one another. Woodruff contrived these murals with precision and historical accuracy. Although he did not teach these histories in the classroom, he extended his pedagogy by involving his students in the process of such an undertaking on various levels through painting, assisting, and modeling.

Although Douglas was a genius in capturing the likeness of his sitter, his murals were symbolically charged with African references. He describes his use of symbolism in his mural entitled *Songs of the Towers*:

As the song is the most powerful and pervasive creative expression of American Negro life, it is a natural instrument for representing all of the other arts as well as a perfect vehicle for conveying all of our various moods and conditions of life.

(Douglas, n.d., # 7, ¶ 1)

Bearden and Henderson (1993) describe the style of Douglas's murals:

Douglas's murals are related in style to his decorative black-and-white designs. His mural style is also indebted to Reiss and to Art Deco's stress on vertiginous, curvilinear forms. In his mural Douglas first arranged a series of concentric circles expanding from a fixed point, much like the reverberations from a pebble thrown into a still pond. He then superimposed figural elements over the circular design. To compensate for the dynamic optical rhythms of the circles, he painted the figure in flat silhouettes, avoiding an eye troubling concatenation of form and color ... No attempt, however, was ever made to capture the realism that characterized his portraits. (p. 130)

Douglas, who was also an avid student of African art, had several publications that featured Egyptian art in his collection. He described the Egyptian influence in his illustrations and murals:

The head was in perspective in a profile flat view, the body, shoulders down to the waist turned half way, the legs were done also from the side and the feet were also done in a broad ... never toward you ... perspective simply because at that you don't understand things, we don't view things that way. We understand if I present my hand to you that way, you wouldn't understand that it was a hand. It's

only when its done this way, when the fingers spread out that you understand ... I use that all the time. I got it from the Egyptians. (Kirschke, 1995, p. 77)

His most ambitious and well known mural entitled *Aspects of Negro Life* (1935) is featured on the wall of the New York Public Library, now the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and like Woodruff's murals provides a multi-panel historical overview of the African-American's struggle and triumph from Africa through slavery to the New Negro Movement (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

The power of art to carry a pertinent social and historical message was evident in many of Douglas's and Woodruff's murals. These murals continued to provide the public—Black and White alike—with creative and historical insight for generations to come. Those students who studied under Douglas and Woodruff at Fisk and Atlanta University had the benefit of learning from living legends of the New Negro Movement, during a time when much of the art created held a specific social or political message. Although all of their teaching did not emerge from cultural or political convictions, their murals and their presence alone was a testament of hope that their students could also earn a place in history. Witnessing successful African-American artists teach empowered these students through the example of possibilities. Knowledge of their achievements can serve as a valuable resource to future generations.

CHAPTER FIVE
DOUGLAS AND WOODRUFF:
FORMAL INSTRUCTION VERSES EXPANDED PEDAGOGIES

In this chapter I reexamine some of the questions and concerns, which emerged from my initial archival research, with a particular focus on comparing the instructional influence of Douglas and Woodruff with their expanded pedagogies. It is apparent that the academic art training in which Douglas and Woodruff received both in the French academies and in the universities in the United States, promoted specific ideas regarding what knowledge and skills aspiring artists were expected to possess (Kirschke, 1995; Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 13, 1973). Douglas and Woodruff perpetuated this academic curriculum through their own instructional practices without incorporating the knowledge of racial expressions they acquired during the New Negro Movement.

Despite the social and political climate in which Douglas and Woodruff taught, they both placed emphasis on traditional Western techniques and Western-centered art history over content that embraced the cultural and political history of African-Americans. Apparently Douglas and Woodruff were conscious of the reality that African-American artists would still have to depend largely on White patronage and believed that working within a European-American framework would earn the favor of Whites, hence promote racial uplift through opportunities for African-American art students. In many cases their efforts simply served to add African-American achievements to a pre-existing White-American framework. Notions of connecting with one's African ancestral legacy,

which reached the height of popularity during the early artistic careers of Douglas and Woodruff, did not have a major impact on their classroom pedagogy.

It is possible that the constraints of what could be taught within the university hindered Douglas's and Woodruff's ability to extend a racially conscious message through their formal instruction. However the influence of their artwork transcended the boundaries of universities, galleries, and museums. Their murals and illustrations especially reached audiences whom might not otherwise interact with original works of art. The profound message of struggle, perseverance and rich African-American history within their works has been studied and are still a marvel to many today.

Douglas's and Woodruff's expanded pedagogies also extended beyond their own students. Through their professionalism, talents, and sharp intellect they dispelled many of the racist notions, which brought into question the convictions, discipline, intelligence, and seriousness of African-Americans. Douglas exemplified the qualities of a tenacious, passionate, and eager artist and educator through his interactions with administrators, peers, and arts organizations. Douglas maintained contacts with the Harmon Foundation, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and The College Art Association but also lectured regularly at universities throughout the United States (Douglas 1949, 1959).

Woodruff was active in the Atlanta community but also made a national impression. In addition to making a strong impression on a diverse group of artists in the Atlanta area—including French artist, Jean Charlot, Lamar Lodd, of the University of Georgia, Ben Shute, of the Atlanta College of Art, and Lewis Skidmore of the High Museum of art who all spoke favorably of Woodruff—he lectured on a variety of subjects around the country (Dodd, 1977; Shute, tape-recorded oral interview, November 25,

1976). On two occasions he lectured for diverse audience at the National Art Education Associations (NAEA) annual convention (Stoelting, 1978). Lecturing throughout the United States gave Douglas and Woodruff the opportunity to have an influence outside of the structures of the university system. Through their successes in the visual arts they traveled Europe, Africa, and Mexico. In doing so they dispelled many racist assumptions through their convictions, artistic ability, and eloquence. They represented artists who were not going to allow their race be a hindrance to their progress or the progress of their students (Shute, tape-recorded oral interview, November 25, 1976).

Although both Douglas and Woodruff admired and studied African art and embraced Black content, they wanted foremost to instill the importance of form and composition rather than the importance of an ancestral legacy and content with social relevance (Bearden & Henderson, 1993; Douglas, tape recorded oral interview, July 16, 1971). The curricular demands and expectations of Fisk and Atlanta universities likely mirrored those of mainstream institutions. Since Douglas and Woodruff taught in segregated southern cities, one might speculate that their art students would be expected to go on to serve as teachers and professional artists in segregated Black communities of the South. It would seem that restoring the historical, cultural, and political foundation of these young African-American artists, as Black leaders during the New Negro Movement were so intent in doing, would be an integral component of the instruction they received but this was not emphasized by Douglas or Woodruff. However their expanded pedagogies contested the limits their academic curriculum placed on students.

According to Neville and Sandiata (1988), “Eurocentric educational hegemony is mainly cultural therefore cultural knowledge derived from the world wide African

experience is the foundation for an African-centered pedagogy” (p. 448). Fortunately the expanded pedagogy, which many of Douglas’s and Woodruff’s students testified to be so pivotal in their development, was situated in the daily struggles of African-Americans. Only through their expanded pedagogies were Douglas and Woodruff able to successfully instill social responsibility and racial consciousness.

These accomplished African-American artists brought a breath of experience to Fisk and Atlanta universities. They additionally contested and testified to the daily realities of enduring the segregated south as professional African-American artists. Through their expanded pedagogies Douglas and Woodruff also shared the importance of culture and history, especially in their murals. All of the public murals executed by Douglas and Woodruff were created to share specific historical events or to honor specific African-American historical figures. However, I found little evidence of African content or Black identity in their formal instruction. Seemingly, Douglas and Woodruff offered a mainstream art education to African-American students with a focus on Western art history, formalism, technique, and process (Kirschke, 1995; Stoelting, 1978). This is evidenced in Woodruff’s testimonies and in Douglas’s curricular materials (Bearden & Henderson, 1993; Kirschke, 1995; Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

During the New Negro Movement surely Douglas and Woodruff had many opportunities to reflect on the historical and political issues revolving around Black content. Perhaps they consciously decided on a more integrationist approach to educating African-American youth. Kirschke (1995) describes the complexity revolving around the expectations of New Negro artists in the 1920s and 1930s:

The New Negro Movement was based on the assumptions of white European high culture, but it is impossible to imagine an alternative. The two cultures, Euro-American and African-American, were inseparable, as they remain today. The artist of the New Negro Movement, engaged in a new movement and a first effort among blacks to express a self-consciously African-American culture, could not have been expected to create art forms based entirely on non-Western standards. They had to work within an existing framework. (p. 133)

African-American artists were compelled to create works, which reflected their experiences and influences, within an existing European-American framework. The dominant art educational paradigms of the early 20th century also compelled African-American art educators to conform to traditional art training, which excluded Black content. Even Douglas and Woodruff did not look favorably at Black artists who ventured too far outside of Western academic traditions (Douglas, tape-recorded oral interview, November 18, 1973; Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

Douglas and Woodruff were pioneer Black art educators. Although there was perhaps an unprecedented discourse revolving around the styles, content, and social role of Black artists in the 1920s and 1930s, there was no educational model for teaching the visual arts to Black students. Even Woodruff's renowned *Painter's Guild*, which produced socially conscious works of art, was likely predicated on American Regionalism and Woodruff's training as an easel painter in France (Kirschke, 1995). As he wrote about his transition from painting in France to painting in Georgia, "The rugged terrain of southern France now became the soft, rich hillsides of red clay, swaying pines,

and, never forget, the eroded soil, abandoned and lost” (Woodruff, August, 23, 1977). He apparently connected his learning experiences in the French academies with his teaching in Atlanta.

Initially Woodruff used the landscape to explore his Cézanne-influenced Modernism and his interest in Georgia’s soil erosion. There was a great deal of technical knowledge to be gained from painting the landscapes surrounding segregated Black Atlanta but his abstract depictions of the desolate landscape evolved into an exploration of the economically eroding, distraught, and poverty stricken segregated Atlanta. While the landscapes evoked thoughts of infertility, hardship and desertion, his paintings and prints of Black Georgians in their home fronts, screamed of social injustice (Stoelting, 1978). Despite the political implications of Woodruff’s art of this period, and the works of his *Painter’s Guild* students, he maintained that he was painting the hardships of American life, not Black American life, during The Great Depression (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Woodruff, while employing sexist language, comments on the challenges of Black artists during The Depression years:

... He became a part of the new and vital currents that gave fresh meaning to American art. Any racial elements that might have identified his works were submerged in the mainstream of the general and specific qualities of all art produced in this period. His concerns were those of all artists produced in this period. ... His aspirations toward full integration in American life found expression in his art. This was, inevitably, as it should have been. (Kirschke, 1995, p. 281)

Seemingly, Woodruff felt that the circumstances many people, Black and White alike, shared during The Depression might serve to erase the hedge between Black and White artists. His statement also implies that he strongly advocated for the integration of Black artists and that racially specific elements, in art, could potentially be an impediment to this goal (Kirschke, 1995).

Woodruff had similar feelings regarding the place and purpose of African art in his life. He continued to collect, admire, and copy works of African art throughout his career. It is apparent that much of Woodruff's work since the 1950s was influenced by his interest and studies of African sculpture. He spoke passionately about the universal appeal of African art and eventually donated his extensive collection (more than 200 pieces) to the DuSable Museum in Chicago so that it may continue to influence and inspire others (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). One can only speculate as to why Woodruff decided to donate his collection to this venue rather than the Atlanta University gallery where Woodruff spent years building the university's collection. It is possible that he was persuaded or interested in supporting his friend, Chicago artist Margaret Burroughs who was then the museum's director or perhaps he believed that a northern museum in a major city would gain more exposure for his collection (Stoelting, 1978).

As a young teacher in Atlanta, Woodruff was comfortable teaching art history to his Black students, which was rooted in Rome and Greece, yet he described the idea of sharing his passion for African art and its history as an imposition (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Woodruff felt his interest in African art was personal and was cautious not to share his knowledge of African sculpture for fear that he might overly influence his

students. He believed that students needed to come to these sources of inspiration on their own (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Although Woodruff's artistic direction could have potentially lead to a more transformative method of teaching African-American art students, which could promote students to reexamine their place in history and their ability to define it, he was not audacious enough to disrupt the White-American art educational paradigm. However, Woodruff and his wife did often host students for dinner during the hardships of The Great Depression. It is likely that in this setting Woodruff's tastes, interests, and expertise in African art resulted in an expansive pedagogical influence. It's possible that in this intimate setting, over dinner, Woodruff shared his earliest encounters with African art, through the book *Afrikanische Plastik* he received as a gift and his collecting African art at the flea markets in France with Alain Locke as a young man in the 1920s (Stoelting, 1978). Classroom instruction and technical demonstrations cannot compare to his sharing his rich personal history.

Despite the fact the Woodruff and Douglas both describe their discovery of African sculpture as being pivotal to their development, neither artist spoke much about African art in the classroom outside of the context of its influence on Modernism. Ironically, Woodruff and Douglas both placed the history of the Greeks as foundational to their curriculum (Kirschke, 1995; Stoelting, 1978). They could have felt that placing more emphases on African art than Greek art history would have likely further isolated their students from mainstream educational practices. Perhaps Woodruff and Douglas believed their personal lives were enough to instill racial pride.

Overall it appears that Aaron Douglas's teaching also lacked any specific message of racial solidarity. Kirschke (1995) summarizes the data she collected on Douglas's teaching career at Fisk University:

Douglas considered it essential that young students have a true understanding of the history of art, including the development of the human figure, Renaissance perspective, and design. Douglas criticized prominent contemporary black artists such as Elton Fax and John Biggers because he felt their work was not adequately rooted in a strong understanding of anatomy. Study and discipline were essential for a young artist to succeed in the art world. One of his students recalled Douglas telling the class "one can't break the rules until they know what the rules are."

Douglas believed that the rules of art had to be learned thoroughly before the experimentation and innovation that occurred during the Renaissance could be attempted. ... His art lessons were always based in history and understanding of art history. (Douglas, tape-recorded oral interview, November 18, 1973, p. 130)

Based on Kirschke's (1995) observations, Douglas was a traditionalist who was committed to academic training. He advocated for his students to learn what he and many other traditional teachers believed was foundational to their artistic expression, discipline, practice, and the study of history. He was additionally critical of artists like Fax and Biggers who earned reputations for capturing the expression and condition of the Black experience through contorting the human figure. Seemingly, Douglas believed that Fax and Biggers did not earn the privilege to experiment with expressive modes of Black life.

Douglas believed in curricula rooted in a figurative tradition. In a 1973 interview, Douglas reflected critically on his own education before studying the figure at the Weiss school:

Of course I had not had as much of an actual education in art that I should, the few years I had had at the University of Nebraska didn't begin to be enough. ... Working with him [Reiss] gave me that sort of thing, the one thing we in art are concerned with is the undraped model, the undraped figure. I never had to deal with an undraped figure. Without that you aren't an artist. The human body is the most perfect thing in the world. Everything else goes from that. (Douglas, tape-recorded oral interview, November 18, 1973, p. 12)

Douglas believed an "actual education" should be centered on the human figure. He apparently felt that if one did not follow an art educational model that centered on the anatomical figure, "you aren't an artist." These rigid views are not of a youthful and naïve Douglas, but one who is reflecting on more than fifty years of art teaching and training. Douglas's traditionalist views shed light on why he might be reluctant to support the work of younger generations of Black painters such as Biggers, who were pursuing vehicles of Black expression outside the parameters set forth by White-American aesthetics and traditions.

Woodruff had similarly strong views regarding the transition of the painter William H. Johnson. He was seemingly perplexed when Johnson abandoned his academic foundation for flat vibrantly colored figurative paintings, which were clearly influenced by African sculpture and textiles (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). Although Johnson's shift could have easily been informed by his

travels to North Africa and his wife's textile work, Woodruff believed Johnson was following Modernist trends or jumping on the "Primitivist Bandwagon" (Powell, 1991; Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). Woodruff contends:

I could not support esthetically the works of William H. Johnson, that is this so-called conscious or pseudo- Primitivism as evidenced in his later works. They seemed forced. I had a feeling that he was trying to evolve into a folksy, unsophisticated manner of working, that would have a wide appeal. To me it was unconvincing in every way. (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973)

In contrast to Douglas's Western views about art education, Douglas was an avid student of history and urged his students to learn the history of their people (Kirschke, 1995). In the 1973 interview when Douglas was asked what he felt was his most significant contribution in his 29 years of teaching and service at Fisk he replied:

I still hope to involve people in outlook on things that so far hasn't emerged. Outlook on themselves, outlook their—what we call our people, and so on, that would transcend any artistic thing within, yet beyond mere matter of a piece of sculpture or painting. That hasn't noticeably emerged so I can't really—that's in the hopeful stage. Because what I am interested in more than anything else is that we are the art people. I'm not presumptuous that it can't be others. The place of black people in the world used to be a big thing!—big order. It isn't that matter of achieving any particular thing, the matter of realizing—realization of their place—what has been and what it is. Now, but it's just a matter of opening your eyes to it. We are—our eyes have been closed and I supposed they were closed

forcibly in 1916-1919. They were forcibly—we have never been able to get them open again ... But I am awful[ly] interested in this business of the background of black people. Not in the sense that I am going out there on the stump. ... but just to realize—open your eyes to where you came from—where we have the possibility of going. Not what we are going to do—what we have done. WE don't even know what we have done. So, it's—if that can be achieved, if you can only awaken a few to that, it seems to me to be one of the things that I am taken up with. (Douglas, tape-recorded oral interview, November 18, 1973, p. 31)

Douglas demonstrated his knowledge of the Negro's presence in world history.

He also spoke about racism in world history. He explains: “That we had a part in this Egyptian Civilization. Yet they read us out of all of that. They say that Egypt isn't in Africa—Good lord! That's not African—these Egyptians aren't African—what else are they?” (Douglas, tape-recorded oral interview, November 18, 1973, p. 34)

The fact the Douglas expressed his passion for instilling the importance of Black history and racial pride with such vigor gives reason for one to believe that Douglas's interest in history was also communicated informally in mentoring and studio sessions, through his expanded pedagogy. Douglas and Woodruff did not provide their students with what could be considered by any means an African or African-American centered art education, but they did teach art in an environment that was rooted in the Black experience. They provided their students with content and skills to build an appreciation for visual arts. Their art majors were provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to have professional careers in the United States during an era when European-Americans dictated aesthetics and art history.

Historical Orientations

Building on Marable's framework introduced in Chapter One, the final section of Chapter Five explores Marable's (1981) frameworks for interpreting, understanding, and teaching African-American art history and its importance to African-American art students. Through these frameworks, *The No History Approach*, *The Contributionist Approach*, and *The Transformationist Historian Orientation*, I address some of the more lingering questions and their potential implications for teaching predominantly Black populations as well as their potential to inform educators who teach in predominantly White institutions. As in the earlier discussion revolving around social progress, these three orientations are also determined by their ideological viewpoint and historical context. What denotes transformation or progress differs from one historical period to the next. Again the *No History Approach* and the *Contributionist Approach* are integral to arriving at the *Transformationist Approach*. There is also quite a bit of overlapping of these orientations. Therefore I will begin by discussing the merits of each.

"The No History" Historian Orientation

Art education, particularly that which is expected to serve African-American students at present, is still absent of curricular materials that focus on the history and traditions of African and African-American artists. Those African-American students who are not privileged enough to supplement their education or to culturally, politically, and historically re-educate themselves, are led to believe that they have no history or no history worthy of study (Stewart, 1992). African-American art students at present are faced with the additional challenge of creating works of art without the cultural and

political support, which previous generations established and maintained to a greater extent. During the perceived heights of oppression and creative production in the New Negro Movement and Black Arts Movement, African-Americans made major cultural, political, and historical contributions, which had a significant impact on the Black community. Despite remedial attempts, the Western canon is yet to fully acknowledge the African-American's place in U.S. history. Therefore, many students never realize African-American's artistic contributions to society.

If one is educated in a system that excludes his or her contributions and furthermore situates information outside of the cultural or political context of which the student is familiar, it does not serve the student's community (Shujaa, 1994). Some scholars argue that this is where the crisis of African-American education lies (Shujaa, 1994; Woodson, 1933/1990). Shujaa (1994) continues:

These problems are directly attributed to schooling founded on European-centered constructions of knowledge. The crisis in Black education will not be resolved until Black intellectuals achieve intellectual freedom and reconstruct Black education on an African-centered foundation. These are the preconditions to the real liberation of African races all over the world. (p. 41)

A major component of teaching African-American art history, or any history resulting from the African-American experience, is first informing students that there is such a history and then exploring if, how, and why this history was systemically distorted (Browder, 1992; Williams, 1987). Unlike Douglas and Woodruff who read *The Crisis* and *Opportunity* magazines, as high school students, and learned of the works and achievements of African-American artists like Scott, Tanner, and others; African-

American art students at present do not casually happen upon these influences. Not only are African-American art students not informed by the work of African-American artists of our time, they are also unaware of the great legacy from which African-American art has emerged.

In the 19th century, African-American artists made major achievements in an environment that did not accept the genius or talent of African-Americans (Driskell, 1976; Lewis, 2003). African-American artists such as Joshua Johnson, Edward Bannister, and Robert Duncanson earned a living by adopting the content and emulating the styles of White and European artists. Their works held transformative power in light of the hardships 19th Century African-Americans endured, although they were excluded from the mainstream histories. During their lives they were all highly respected by White patrons and artists of their time (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

African-American mentors and art educators of the early 20th century laid the foundation for a generation of African-Americans who made major contributions to the history of art. Their perseverance instilled hope in a new generation of African-American students from the late 1920s through to the 1960s (Powell & Reynolds, 1999). Many of their students went on to hold teaching positions in higher education at historically Black colleges and universities as well as in predominantly White institutions (Dover, 1969). A select few, including Richmond Barthe, Archibald Motley, and Henry Ossawa Tanner, were even well received by commercial galleries and museums. They shattered the race barrier by gaining mainstream acceptance. As a result, Douglas and Woodruff recognized the absence of the African-American artist in written history and the benefits of recording and supplementing history.

Douglas and Woodruff recognized their importance to history or their ability to change it and made major achievements and laid a foundation for African-American scholars and historians like Benjamin Brawley (1937), Alain Locke (1940), and James Porter (1943/1969/1992). The expanded pedagogies of Douglas and Woodruff are now available for educators and historians to examine, interpret, and record. Unfortunately, the contributions by these artists and art educators are not foundational to the education of African-American art students today. Their major contributions must be accessed through altering the definitions and structures, which have previously marginalized this history. They provided new insights into how their students might interpret history through hosting visiting African-American artists and scholars like Charles Alston, Romare Bearden, and Alain Locke who shared their personal histories as well as the history of African and African-American art (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973). Douglas expanded his pedagogy through informal discussion regarding the importance of history and Woodruff did so through collecting and sharing his collection of African and Mexican art (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

Douglas and Woodruff took a variety of approaches to addressing this historical void in their lives. They were both avid students of history and who read voraciously and study from museum collections. However it is likely that the structures and restrictions their institutions placed on them limited the kind of information Douglas and Woodruff dispensed through their formal teaching. For example while there is no data to support that Douglas discussed the history of the African-American artists at Fisk University, there is a great deal of evidence that proves he conducted several lectures of the history of

African-American art at universities throughout the south. Woodruff is probably the most influential person, outside of William E. Harmon, in promoting the breath of work produced by African-American artists in the first half of the 20th century. His efforts in organizing the *Annual Exhibition of Negro Painting and Sculpture*, (The Atlanta Annuals) reached a national mainstream audience (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Surely this proved that the uniqueness of African-American art and its history was worthy of study. One can only speculate that their knowledge and love for history was extended to their students through their expanded pedagogies but clearly their classroom instruction was influenced by other beliefs of what an art program should include in the early 20th century and the internal politics of the institutions Douglas and Woodruff represented.

The Contributionist Approach

During the early 20th century, Black leaders and artists worked diligently to dispel the global assumption that the African-American had not made and was not capable of making a significant contribution, despite the Eurocentric framework in which they worked (Brawley, 1937; Locke, 1940; Porter, 1943/1992). The *Contributionist Approach* to history can be simply understood as one that recognizes the historical voids and finds ways to fill these voids with contributions of the marginalized group, in this case African-Americans. Unfortunately these contributions were limited in scope because they were measured by the prevalent White American standards regarding content and style. The *Portrait of Daniel Coker* (1805) executed by 19th century African-American painter, Joshua Johnson serves as a poignant example. Within the portrait Johnson frames the upper torso of this well-dressed, fair-skinned young man, with neutral shades of

maroon and gray. This painting does not deviate from the conventions of 19th century self-taught limners and stands its ground next to any of the works of well-received White portraitists of the early 19th century (Bearden & Henderson, 1993; Patton, 1998). There are several portraits executed in this style which are attributed to Johnson (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

While Johnson could be considered a contributionist because he sustained himself as an artist and earned the favor and support of White patrons in the Baltimore area in the early 19th century, other interpretations indicate that his works could have even more expansive pedagogical impact and transformative power. Johnson painted in an era when the prevalent representations of African-Americans depicted racial stereotypes, which serve to undermine and dehumanize African-Americans (Bearden & Henderson, 1993; Harris, 2003). Johnson could be considered a transformationist because his depiction of this dignified African-American male, Coker, countered those images. Johnson's painting also promotes African-American history through his portrait of Daniel Coker who was an active member of the Black community and one of the founding members of the African Methodist Episcopal church. A transformation of history takes place as this image is captured and preserved by an African-American for someone to later discover its historical relevance to African-American history (Patton, 1998). Through the initial support of the abolitionists a few African-American artists were able to build careers in the arts. Because of their political impact, much of the work African-American artists such as Joshua Johnson, Patrick Reason, and Edmonia Lewis produced for the abolitionist cause held transformationist power (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

While self-sustaining African-American artists were rare in the 19th century, Black-directed publications afforded African-American visual artists of the early 20th century many opportunities to share their political struggle and cultural production and make contributions to the field (Reynolds & Wright, 1989). In many ways these publications served to compensate for the lack of exposure Black artists received in mainstream. Since *Opportunity* and *The Crisis* magazines were not art journals they also shared the achievements and talent of Black artists with a more diverse Black audience. *The Negro World*, *The Crisis*, and *Opportunity* also promoted racial solidarity and gave support, financial and otherwise, for African-American artists. The New Negro Movement marked an era of self-determination of African-Americans who had a social and political agenda, which starkly contrasted with those of the 19th century. These publications informed a diverse Black audience on a subject that was of great concern for many Americans, the state of Black America. As a result, the African-American artists of the New Negro Movement were able to bring a unique cultural perspective to their work because they have had access to networks of African-American mentor artists, primarily from outside the venues in which traditional European techniques and artistic traditions are sustained.

The contributions of African-American artists through their expanded pedagogies was typically not recorded but there is a history of African-American art support networks extending from Henry Ossawa Tanner who hosted many African-American artists of the New Negro Movement in France in the 1920s. Hale Woodruff shares his earliest exposure to accomplished African-American artists Will Scott and Henry Ossawa Tanner:

The first contact I had with, let's say, a real live Negro artist was Will Scott—William Edouard Scott, who now lives in Chicago. But my meeting Scott was often in Indianapolis. At that time he had just come back from Europe and frequently talked about his having met and worked with Henry Ossawa Tanner. This was a great thrill for me. Scott and I used to talk a lot about painting. I was a student then in the John Herron Art School in Indianapolis and just a beginner, but people like Scott and Tanner thrilled me a great deal. So, a few years later when I went to Europe to study, one of the first things I did was to look up Henry Ossawa Tanner. At that time he was living outside of Paris, so I took a train to Etaples on the English Channel where he lived, and finally found him there in his studio. We spent a day together. He was a very hospitable man, and very elegant, and knowledgeable on the subject of art and its traditions. . . . He spoke about his early life in America, why he left there, after having been born in Pittsburgh and having studied under Thomas Eakins in Philadelphia—it was for the same old reason, prejudice. He was able to go to Paris and just live as an expatriate, with occasional trips back to the States, until he died. Tanner was a real inspiration (Woodruff, oral interview with Al Murray, November 18, 1968).

Undoubtedly Woodruff was “thrilled” that African-American artists were making such achievements in the arts. Woodruff apparently identified not only with the professional achievements of these artists, but also with the fact that they were accomplished *African-American* professionals. Woodruff seemed to communicate enthusiasm for meeting Scott as he describes him as “as a real live Negro artist.” This description implies that for young Woodruff, professional African-American artists were

of mythic proportions in the early 20th century. He was even more excited about his meeting with Tanner, who had earned a well-deserved international reputation as a painter. Despite all of the exchanges he and Tanner had, their discussions revolving around Tanner's racial hardships seemed to resonate most with Woodruff, some 39 years later. Woodruff had wanted to meet Tanner since he was a high school student who had dreams of becoming a professional artist (Woodruff, tape-recorded oral interview, November 11, 1973).

Perhaps for Woodruff, meeting Tanner provided him with the necessary image of an African-American professional artist to realize his own vision. Apparently the discussions between Woodruff and Tanner included technical, historical, and political dimensions of art. However, Tanner's image alone surely provided inspiration. The creative influence of an African-American artist, in itself, for young African-Americans outside of the scope of political discussions or formal teaching, had a profound impact. African-American Abstractionist Norman Lewis (1968) reflects on his initial impressions of sculptor Augusta Savage:

I looked in the basement and I saw this woman doing sculpture. And it fascinated me, just her ability to manipulate the clay with her hands. And one day I got up enough guts to go into the basement and tell her that I was interested and I would like to learn. She was a very open and she let me work in her shop and I started as a sculptor. ... The meeting of a black artist who, incidentally, that was a woman was quite a challenge. She was a very impressive personality and very encouraging but as an artist, I mean the whole rudiments of trying to become a painter or sculptor, there was little that she did. It was just my observation,

looking, seeing her work and feeling stimulated by a woman sculptor. Just the fact that she had a place where I could work was the most fruitful thing of our meeting. It was great, just meeting her and seeing a black woman create. Or even to see a black woman try to create out of herself was a tremendous encouragement to me because I had never known any one to do so. (Lewis, oral interview with Henri Ghent, July 14, 1968)

Despite the fact that Savage merely provided young Lewis with a role model and place to work, he was later able to interpret the social/political significance of her creative influence. Even though Lewis did not recall Savage discussing her political stance, Lewis identified with the African-American experience and made speculations on the hardships Savage must have endured. Later in Lewis's life he interpreted his experience with Savage through a cultural/political lens.

African-American painter Ernest Crichlow described how exciting the predominantly African-American Harlem was for him as a young man. It was his interest in studying with the nationally known sculptor Augusta Savage that led him to Harlem. The cultural exchange and the sense of community he found through Savage's influence was pivotal in his decision to pursue fine arts over commercial art. Crichlow (1968) reflects:

I remember getting out the subway in Harlem. First of all Harlem was like heaven to me because I lived in a mixed neighborhood and I always sort of used to dream about this place which was all—everybody used to talk about all these Negroes in Harlem. ... And this idea of going to Harlem and walking down on Lenox Avenue—when you hear this over the years it is just like a dream world.

You can't believe that you're actually going to be walking in this neighborhood where all this stuff comes from. So I walked around Harlem and I walked up to 135th Street where Augusta Savage was, you know. You read about this great woman sculptor who had traveled in Europe, studied in Paris, this is going to be a big thing. So I get to this address and I look in the registry—no Augusta Savage—and I am getting very nervous now and I finally found somebody and they said of course she lives here. She lives right downstairs. And this was the basement! Now I just couldn't get over this, you know, because after all this is a great goddess of mine now. A great woman who is a sculptor and here she is living in the basement and I have to go through where the coal chutes were. ... then you knock on this door and you are led into this room. And almost like magic, all of the temporary shame I had of having to go to see this woman in the basement was gone when this door opened and there was this room with books all over the place, bookshelves—which I didn't have at home and didn't see at any of my friends' homes—there were pictures on the wall. ... So these are the little things that sort of built up my need to realize that this is perhaps what I wanted to do. (Crichlow, oral interview with Henri Ghent, July 20, 1968)

It is likely that the content of the sculpture Savage produced—busts of influential African-Americans including W. E. B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, James Weldon Johnson, and Booker T. Washington also impacted these young African-Americans. Witnessing Savage create dignified portraits of African-Americans served to instill racial pride. The informal art classes Savage taught, out of her basement studio, had a profound impact on many African-American students who went on to earn professional reputations for

utilizing African-American content as well (Bidly, 1988). Apparently these artists learned things from Savage outside of the scope of the Visual arts. She observed her tastes, interests, and to some extent, indulged in her library collection. The expanded pedagogy of Savage had a profound influence of these young African-Americans.

In addition to influencing these students as teens, Savage also was politically active. She later taught at the Harlem Community Art Center and was involved in the Harlem Artist Guild, an organization that worked to get W.P.A. employment for Black artists (Bidly, 1988). She was instrumental in assisting Black artists find employment through the W.P.A. programs. It was Savage's influence that gained renowned African-American painter Jacob Lawrence employment at the Harlem Community Art Center (Lawrence, Oral Interview, October 20, 1968). Therefore, she was later able to share her political influence. Savage had a reputation for challenging the race bar as well as fighting for the rights and exposure of women (Bidly, 1988). These young African-Americans were awed by the reputations of their predecessors. A number of artists of the New Negro Movement made contributions to the American art scene. Although it was a segregated art scene they took control of their own representations and transformed the history of African-American art. Needless to say, the array of experience that Douglas and Woodruff brought to Fisk and Atlanta universities made a strong impression on the students and not only proved that there was room in history for African-American artists but proved they had the potential through their expanded pedagogies to create their own histories outside of the assistance or support of White America (Oubre, tape-recorded oral interview, June 29, 1977; Winslow, taped-recorded oral interview May 27, 1977). Their contributions exemplified the potential for transformation.

Transformationist Historian Orientation

The *Transformationist Historian Orientation* approaches history as something that can be transformed through human beings collectively making their own history (Stewart, 1992). As mentioned above Douglas and Woodruff contributions to the history of Modernism could also be considered transformationist since their efforts as African-American Modernist served to contribute to the discourse of Modernist aesthetics while embracing subject matter that preserved history (Powell, 1997). Although few Douglas's murals especially merged art deco, African, and Modernist influences yet pursued popular African-American historical themes like the slave trade, Harriet Tubman, The Reconstruction Era, and jazz music (Kirschke, 1995; Stoelting, 1978).

In addition to communicating to young African-American art students that African-Americans did in fact attain technical/formal skills and earned a "place in history" students came to understand how the content of African-American artists evolved throughout their lifetime. These artists taught how their content and life journey could inform the direction of their art. Although John Biggers, William H. Johnson, Palmer Hayden, and Archibald Motley were likely influenced by Modernism, they sought modes of expression, unique to African-Americans. Although in some regards these artists made contributions to the existing Modernist discourse in other ways African-American artists including Douglas and Woodruff transformed this discourse through embracing Modernist aesthetics yet sharing various expressions of their social/political views (Gibson, 1997; Powell, 1997).

Clearly the contributions of these African-American artists inspired and motivated artists to create in the same vein, but it was not until the 1960s and 1970s that African-American artists began to redefine their mission and their place in history as not only separate from the mainstream but in opposition to it. By some standards, (perhaps White and European standards) the works of AfriCobra, Dana Chandler, and many of those artists of the Black Arts Movement, place limits on their aesthetic development but focused on the social/political function and purpose of their work (Fine, 1971; Kia, 1990). However, they re-rooted their aesthetic and social philosophies to serve the needs of their people in order to have a more transformative impact on their community. Harris (2003) elaborates on how African-American artists like those of AfriCobra evolved from contributionists to transformationists:

Though artists during the New Negro era explored African imagery as well as black vernacular culture, AfriCobra added a political urgency and attempted to base the work on a relationship with everyday folk rather than on the integrationist ideas of a few intellectuals. This was a period when the connections between African American civil and human rights struggles and the liberation struggles of former colonies in Africa had become almost palpable. Artists began making journeys to West Africa rather than Europe. The Black Power movement and Black Nationalist thinking articulated self-determination more than assimilation.

One of the motivations behind the formation of AfriCobra was the idea that art could be a catalyst for social change. ... The style included certain formal

principles and social responsibility. Many of the early works included language so the message would not be missed by folk in the black community unfamiliar with the iconography, symbols, or representation of the history, aspirations, and cultural expressions of people of African descent. The intent was to empower people, not complain about their victimization. It was a part of a project by artist of the era to reimagine and redefine black identity visually. The work used intense color, rhythmic patterns, and cultural references to energize the imagery. The ideals of the group were firmly rooted in the center of black epistemological realities and vernacular cultural practices, and the artists had cast themselves as political activists engaged in a representational call and response dialogue with their community. (p. 228)

The style, content, mission, and process of AfriCobra could all be regarded as transformationists. They rooted their design sensibilities in African traditions and their content within the cultural political experience of African-Americans. They completely transformed their aesthetic and cultural/political mission to serve their community (Kia, 1990; Harris, 2003).

Between 1967 and 1972 more than fifteen hundred murals were erected in major metropolitan areas throughout the United States. The great majority of these murals were also deeply rooted in the predominately African-American communities in which they were produced (Patton, 1998). The African-American tradition referred to as call-and-response was employed in the creation of the murals. They were created by artists, students, children and other members of the community as well as passersby who would comment about the imagery and the design of the mural. Various people would generally

engage in a discussion about the work hence giving them first-hand feedback (Harris, 2003). These community members were validated and therefore empowered as the muralists took into consideration the views, interests, aesthetics, tastes, and values of the community. Harris (2003) recalls the creation of the *Wall of Respect* (1967) one of the major murals which inspired the outdoor mural movement in the United States:

This work, and much that followed during the next six years, had foundations in the center of African American aspirations, achievement, and identity. The work formed an outdoor gallery that was accessible to those for whom it was intended. It was not part of an effort to impress whites, prove black worthiness, or address any issue relative to the conflicts found on the periphery of black culture and identity. It did not focus on black victimhood, nor did it cast the artist as minstrels or tamed primitives. Instead, this type of work rooted itself in the center of black self-definition. (p. 226)

This mural and those that followed celebrated African-American culture, championed African-American heroes and sheroes but also resisted popular representations of African-Americans who were ridiculed or marginalized by the mass-media. Considering that these murals and the efforts of AfriCobra emerged outside of the dominant structures such as colleges, universities, galleries, museums or other White-controlled arts organizations all of their achievements can be considered transformationists and described as expanded pedagogies. While the murals served as an open gallery, the mission of AfriCobra was like that of an open school. AfriCobra continued to recruit members to join in their struggle for years to come (Harris, 2003). While Jeff Donaldson, one of AfriCobra's founding members, taught at Howard

University in Washington D.C., he continue to extend invitations for young African-American artists who shared their aesthetic vision (Harris, 2003).

Although their mission may not have been as radical, by the standards of the 1960s, through the *Painter's Guild* Woodruff founded at Atlanta University he created a platform where he could expose his students to American Regionalist painting, and expand his pedagogy yet maintain the support of the university (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). This informal environment of outdoor easel painting in the Atlanta area surely provided an atmosphere to hold discussions beyond painting techniques and landscapes. Expanded pedagogies were rich among early 20th century African-American artist collectives who met in their homes and elsewhere. While Aaron Douglas taught in Nashville, he maintained an apartment in New York. This location came to be a popular meeting place for African-American actors, artists, musicians, and writers. African-American artists like Charles Alston and Augusta Savage also hosted such events. However Woodruff formed the first official group, of this sort, within the university system. The *Painter's Guild* was an unprecedented model for teaching African-American painting students. Culturally the presence of young African-Americans painting on-site and under the guidance of Woodruff in segregated America also represented self-determination and seriousness of Woodruff's program. It was the transformative power of this endeavor that got the attention of the national media (Bearden & Henderson, 1993).

Another major transformation of the Atlanta arts community culture resulted from Woodruff gaining admission into the High Museum of Art for his students and himself. Previously, during segregation, African-Americans were forebade from attending events and exhibitions at the museum. However after Woodruff met with the museum's director

he successfully convinced the museum to admit he and his students. While leaving the meeting at the museum, Woodruff was stopped at the door by an elder African-American custodian who marveled at the fact that Woodruff was the first African-American, other than himself, to enter the museum. Woodruff responded confidently and assured the elder that he would not be the last African-American to enjoy the museums exhibitions and programs (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Woodruff's tenacity also convinced local African-Americans who previously had no faith in the possibility of changing the status quo. Before long the High Museum of Art began to offer admittance to the entire African-American community (Bearden & Henderson, 1993). Woodruff's expanded pedagogy yielded possibilities, which were seemingly unattainable in the 1930s and 1940s, which set a new precedent for African-American artists and art educators.

The Imposition of White Content: "Founding Father Pedagogy"
in a Pluralistic Society

Stories of struggle, perseverance, and triumph seem to resonate and provide hope for those who face similar odds and conditions (West, 1997). Many African-Americans have noted a transformative effect from their reading of autobiographies such as Richard Wright's *Black Boy* (1937), Claude Brown's *Manchild in the Promise Land* (1965/1999), and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1964) among others. Many Black leaders, scholars, and educators describe the writings of Black authors like Ralph Ellison, Langston Hughes, Zora Neal Hurston, and Richard Wright as pivotal to positive changes in how they perceived themselves and in motivating them to pursue their aspirations. However, African-American students are not likely to encounter these influences with

any regularity, save during Black history month. Works by major figures in African-American art are even more obscure in art history and art education.

Familiar stories, faces, and places compel students to connect with some content while they may detach from other unfamiliar but equally enriching histories. Under-represented groups grow tired of founding father pedagogy and content that affirms U.S. patriotism as White hegemonic positions. The expanded pedagogy as I describe it is a pedagogy that unintentionally resists or transcends the conventional, structured, and contrived instructional opportunities we typically associate with teaching and learning. The influences and content of multiethnic groups are chosen and championed by the dominant culture, which also restricts curriculum to serve its own political agenda (Becker, 1996). In order to support self-affirming educational experiences through sharing their lives as artists Douglas and Woodruff were compelled to step outside of the limitations of the university system. They shared their collections of African art, created lecture and exhibition opportunities for African-American artists on campus, and employed students to assist them on public mural commissions. Douglas and Woodruff expanded the cannon of teaching and learning to encompass content outside of hegemonic scope.

Learning of the achievements and historical contributions of European and White males increasingly disengages diverse learning societies. As a result there is little student interest, involvement, or critical inquiry. Art educator Ed Check (2000) states “excessive teacher control, student passivity, and content-restricted curricula create a classroom climate inhospitable not only to student inquiry but to self-expression itself” (p. 139). It is important that these students make personal connections through employing content,

which affirms their existence (Walker, 2001). Pedagogies that are most effective for marginalized groups, are those which typically expand beyond those we find in traditional curriculums (Shujaa, 1994). Because this kind of pedagogy does not gain the support of the dominant institutions it is not recorded with any consistency.

Revisiting and repairing these histories can serve to educate White educators who are genuinely interested in understanding and dismantling the dynamics of White dominance. The trials and tribulations of Douglas and Woodruff could provide a historical perspective that compels Whites to view their influence from the outside, hence providing a self-reflective lens regarding their own racial identity (Howard, 1999). African-American students can gain great benefits, early in their education, as teachers validate their histories to include the social, political and economic hardships African-American artists like Douglas and Woodruff overcame. Several accomplished African-Americans speak passionately about having been influenced by African-Americans in their field at an early age (West, 1997).

Unfortunately members of underrepresented groups who are interested in learning of their own histories must seek this information on their own, with minimum or no resources in the classroom to direct them to significant literary and visual artists with whom they might identify. Although it is now technologically possible for teachers to facilitate Internet searches for self-directed research of diverse student populations, localized curriculums are pressured to meet the expectations of state administered standardized tests. The results of these test scores, in many cases, affects teacher evaluations, salaries, and district funding. Hence teachers frequently teach to the tests and ask students to memorize dates and names with whom they do not identify (Kohn, 2000).

Although this limited historical scope is detrimental to all student populations, it is especially harmful to negate the history of African-American students who see few positive role models in the popular media. While exceptional teachers do work overtime and strive for social justice, in their efforts to add the achievements of women and minorities, the notion of these students being compelled to conceive of their own representations as alternatives or supplemental is in itself potentially detrimental (Howard, 1999).

One could argue that the exclusion of these students' history in some ways prepares them for further subjugation by mainstream America (Shujaa, 1992). In order to achieve academically and professionally many African-Americans are expected to ignore the injustices of the world. In disconnecting with the African-American's history of struggle and perseverance young African-American students don't aspire to serve the Black communities who are in dire need of leaders, entrepreneurs, and activists. It is critical that students discover people who share their cultural and political histories of perseverance and triumphs. They can be best nurtured by reinforcing histories and positive role models.

While earning my B.F.A. and M.F.A., I completed more than 18 credit hours of art history. From prehistory to Michelangelo, and from Pollock through Warhol, we covered the gamut with little or no mention of African-American, Hispanic, or Native American artists outside of the context of the "primitive," or women artists outside the context of stereotypes of women. While it is encouraging to witness an increase of African-American literature and reproductions of art produced by African-American artists in mainstream texts, interpreting these works outside of their social/political

context does the history of African-Americans an injustice. It is paramount that the lens for interpreting the lives of African-American artists is expanded in order to encompass their expanded pedagogies. The fact that their stories are so consistently marginalized does an injustice to the education of all students. These injustices are so deeply rooted in curricula, that many students are still apprehensive about diverse lessons or broadening their perspectives beyond those, which support hegemonic views (Shujaa, 1992).

Challenging Hegemony, African-American Content in Predominantly White

Classrooms: Exposing Wounds and Validating the Other

A few years ago I had a discussion with a group of elementary education students revolving around serving diverse populations of students. As an example, we discussed the possibilities of integrating the content of under-represented groups within predominantly White classrooms. For example, in one case we explored the possibility of including an African-American novel entitled *The Learning Tree* by Gordon Parks (1963) in the place of one of the “American Classic” novels by Mark Twain, or the like, for a sixth grade language arts class. The students felt that adding the requirement to read Parks’s book was at the expense of the time devoted to reading and discussing Twain’s novel. The outcome of our discussion revealed that many of this group of predominantly young Caucasian middle-class female pre-service teachers believed that one cannot empower one group of people without dis-empowering the other. Many students seemed to believe that content would simply change hands, but not be shared. They voiced that in integrating this unfamiliar content the majority of students would feel uncomfortable, then lose interest, and disengage.

Sadly, the hegemonic canon is so deep-rooted in the psyche of young people in the United States that there is little patience or tolerance for diverse perspectives. These education students, who were working to earn elementary teaching certification, were apparently too consumed by their own discomfort to consider the merit of this content to both European-American and African-American students in grades k-6. The idea of unfamiliar historical or cultural references challenged the perceived comfort zone of these pre-service teachers. They negated the benefits of validating another's cultural or political viewpoint because they perceived other views as being an assault on their own, and not worth it just to serve a few students (Shujaa, 1992). While it is possible for this content, which is typically excluded from history, to broaden perspectives, people regard it as being in conflict with the histories and structures people have been taught to accept.

Various debates have emerged revolving around the shape that multicultural curricula, now a loaded term, should take in the classroom. According to Burnett (1994), there are several categories for understanding the purpose and outcomes of multicultural initiatives. He lists them as follows: (a) *Content Oriented Programs*—whose “primary goal is to include content about different cultural groups in the curriculum and educational materials in order to increase students' knowledge about these groups” (p. 1), (b) *Student Oriented Programs*—which “are intended to increase the academic achievement of these groups, even when they do not involve extensive changes in the content of the curriculum,” and (c) *Content Oriented Programs*—“with socially-oriented and social activist goals. They emphasize pluralism and cultural equity in the American society as a whole, not simply within the schools” (p. 2). Although any of the above programs serve to disclose the historical contradictions that support racist superiority, in

order to truly validate the histories of underrepresented students, teachers must provide a platform for White students to partake in progressive discussions where they share the roots of their ignorance and are actively involved in pursuing social change. Through sharing the expanded pedagogies of Douglas and Woodruff, Black and White students can get a sense of the true hurdles of being an African-American artist in the early 20th century. Through involvement in content oriented programs these students can dispel their assumptions and teach others to dispel theirs (Burnett, 1994).

As an undergraduate student, I attended a predominantly White state university in northwestern Pennsylvania. I took a 20th century world history course. The professor, who also taught both sections of Black history, required all his students to attend a lecture, sponsored by the Black Student Association. An African-American entertainer, activist, and author—Sista Soulja, conducted the lecture. Although our school had a small percentage of African-American students, I took comfort in discovering that the auditorium was filled to capacity with a predominantly African-American audience. After the introductions, Soulja approached the podium and spent the next hour focusing on African and African-American centered views and values. She lectured on politics, economics, and the importance of Black student networks as well as Black family solidarity. Her oration was filled with passion, conviction, and comic relief. Many of her personal stories, jokes, metaphors, and euphemisms stemmed from Black vernacular culture. She extended her expanded pedagogy.

In looking around the room I took notice to the responses of the White students. They did not always follow or get the punch lines. They did not seem at ease and inspired like the African-American students. They did not know when to clap or when to laugh. A

question and answer session and a book signing followed her lecture. The same evening I returned to the ceramic studio to find some of my White friends and classmates, three males, two females, who also attended the lecture, at work. They expressed their discomfort and distaste for Souja's views. They all trivialized her position and described her as a "trouble maker." They shared that if we (African-Americans) would all just accept and embrace the U.S. for what it is we would all be better off. Apparently Souja's informal delivery or expanded pedagogy was not well received by these students who perhaps came from a completely different cultural educational background. Souja's lecture challenged so many of the assumptions, which they confidently brought into the lecture hall.

I was outnumbered as I patiently tried to verbalize the social economic hardships I endured as an inner-city African-American teen, in an attempt to evoke some hint of empathy for Souja's stance. It was unfortunately evident that there was a world between us, and that I could have just as well been trying to describe the atmosphere of planet Pluto. Seemingly, they had no reference point on which to build an understanding, hence this deterred communication.

A few days later I discovered a letter to our school's newspaper editor, from a White student who I did not know, responding to Souja's remarks and the overall climate of the auditorium. He went on describing how he did not think it was fair to be required to sit through this "Black-centered lecture." He felt that her lecture had little or no educational merit. He described the event as offensive and separatist. He had such difficulty tolerating one hour of African-American-centered content and was intimidated being in a crowded room full of African-American people. I related the discomfort he

must have felt with the discomfort I and some of the African-American students had adjusting to a White rural Pennsylvania university. I was, however, frustrated with this White student's lack of empathy and sensitivity. His letter was condescending and written as if the effort of the Black Student Association to create programming for Black students was an assault to his way of life. As a young college student I was myself insulted and thought it was audacious for him to write such a letter.

I continue to revisit this story over the years. As an educator I wondered if the speaker, Soulja, could have provided the non-Black members of her audience with anything to assist them in making their experience more beneficial. I definitely don't think that the intention of her remarks was to assault American Whiteness. But within their discomfort lays pedagogical merit. Surely many of the White students who came from similarly limited experiences shared the views of this outspoken young man. Unfortunately, the tone of his letter came across as a list of complaints in the aftermath rather than inquisition during the event. Perhaps the solidarity of the African-Americans was the primary concern of Soulja. Could she have offered some words to ease his discomfort or compel him to look critically at why he is feeling uneasy? Questioning why and sharing this uneasiness is where important dialogue about the effects of institution structures begins (hooks, 1995). Perhaps his remarks could have potentially been the beginning of an important public dialogue for mending the relationships of him and all of the students who shared his views with the African-American population who were aware of the racial tensions on campus but never saw it rear its head. Unfortunately, no one ever responded to his letter, therefore, we all missed a teachable moment.

As I presently reflect on this story it brings to mind some of the challenges one might face in trying to teach the importance of expanded pedagogies to predominantly White populations. It would be nearly impossible to teach the expanded pedagogies of Douglas and Woodruff without attempting to revise the histories so many come to understand as “truth” or offer critiques of the society in which we live. Exposing the wounds of the other and challenging dominant histories sometimes evoke feelings of guilt and defensiveness. It is ever challenging for African-American teachers to share these injustices without being accused of placing blame, therefore, it is important to maintain a platform for open dialogue.

Challenges African-American Students Face Today

As one who currently holds a position as an art educator at a historically Black university, I was shocked to discover that the plight of the African-American student has not changed significantly from those of Douglas’s and Woodruff’s students 70 years ago. Although the color-bar may not rear its head in the same manner, social and economic conditions place similar limits on the social, creative, and professional potential of these students. My students are no more active in the world outside of the Black community and their segregated college campus. They seldom partake in any event downtown that might otherwise contribute to their social and professional growth. Surely my studio presence is having a positive impact, but their values are in many ways defined by their social fears. Douglas and Woodruff literally took students along with them to exhibitions, lectures, on commissions, and to various cultural functions. Although my students and I

are not faced with the level of race hatred and segregation of the 1930s and 1940s, mass media culture is significantly impacting the identities of youth in the United States.

The cultural detachment of students is not only the result of social/economic disadvantages. Popular culture and the media perpetuate behaviors, which are devoid of social responsibility, critical thinking, or individual expression. Suzi Gablik (1992) describes this socially dominant paradigm that is shaping the mindset of young Americans.

We tend to pattern ourselves and our world view after our culture, taking as self-evident certain beliefs, values and behaviors; thus, if our model of culture is faulty or disordered, then we ourselves are disordered in precisely the same way. Since cultural conditioning strongly influences individual behavior and thought, to begin to move toward a different framework of assumptions that would change the basis of our experience is extremely difficult. (p. 3)

In my own experience as a student and as an educator I discovered that young people have a fear of difference. They are seemingly frightened by the idea of being distinguished from their classmates, peers, community, or society at large. Xenophobia is plaguing young people in the United States. Its effects are especially devastating to Black youth (hooks, 1990). The hunger and revolutionary spirit that has fueled generations of African-Americans who were destined to be distinguished and overcome the insurmountable odds against them is over shadowed by consumer culture (Kitwana, 2002). The students of Douglas and Woodruff were hungry for cultural, educational, and professional opportunities. Students that I teach do not exhibit such a strong ambitious drive.

Despite the fact that tolerance, tenacity, and perseverance are foundational to the opportunities available to young African-American students today, many have little knowledge of their history and do not have racial pride. Regarding this notion Bakari Kitwana (2002) wrote:

Our parent's generation placed family, spirituality, social responsibility, and Black pride at the center of their identity as Black Americans. They like their parents before them looked to their elders for their values and identity ... For the most part; we have turned to ourselves, our peers, global images and products and new realities we face for guidance. (p. 7)

Individuals, as well as distinguished collective groups, as in the case of the New Negro Movement, certainly exemplify the potential to evoke social change. However, xenophobia, fear of social isolation, and an overall lack of cultural and political support inhibit many young people from individual or collective growth. For much of today's Black youth, the spirit of the Civil Rights Movement and the protests of the Black Power Movement are but distant memories of their parents (Kitwana, 2002). The New Negro Movement and the Black Arts Movement took place in particularly tumultuous times for African-Americans, that produced various art forms which demonstrated the potential for social change.

One of the many things that distinguishes the climate of the New Negro Movement, The Civil Rights Movement, and the Black Arts Movement from other periods, past and present, from which African-American artists emerged, is that each of these eras promoted a critical platform where African-American artists could confront aesthetic, political, and philosophical difference. Conventional classrooms typically

promote an illusion that we are more alike than we are different. Complex issues like race, class, gender, and sexuality are flagged and veiled with content that fosters false notions of diversity. The structure of the conventional school in the United States is simply not conducive to eradicating the traditional roles of authority that place barriers between students and teachers as well as each other. Seemingly, revealing these differences uncovers pains and anxieties that many want to disassociate with educational development. Even outside of the context of education, the U.S. is still in denial and is reluctant to come to terms with its own diversity. The power of art and art education holds potential to heal this pain and celebrate difference (Becker, 1996).

It is no shock that an art curriculum designed to educate African-American students to teach in mainstream institutions, which marginalizes the contributions of African-Americans, would place little emphasis on the art history of African and African-Americans (Woodson, 1933/1990). I did, however, find that Douglas and Woodruff, who taught in Historically Black Colleges/Universities during segregation, did apply other strategies in educating African-Americans. Even if the history of the Black artist/educator/scholar has yet to fully be written and contextualized, it has been lived. The communally specific experience of being Black in America lends itself to an expansive pedagogy that exceeds imposed textbooks and mandated curricula.

I sympathize with the struggles Douglas and Woodruff must have faced as teachers in the segregated South with limited historical resources, or educational models from which to draw direction or inspiration. However their generation provided a foundation for teaching art to African-American art students. We now have a litany of Black artists, art educators, and art historians to contribute to this discourse and curricular

materials. Since Alain Locke's efforts to restore this legacy through his publications on the subject in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s, several scholars and artists have also invested their time and efforts researching and writing about the history of African-American art. James Porter (1943/1969/1992), Cedric Dover (1969), Romare Bearden (1972; Bearden & Henderson, 1993), David Driskell (1976, 1985, 1995, 2001), Samella Lewis (1978, 1984, 2003), Richard Powell (1997, 1999, 2003), Michael D. Harris (2003), and Sharon Patton (1998), among others, have made significant contributions to the discourse of African-American art on which we can now reflect and redesign curricula to support African-American students. Additionally, there are many African-American education historians to support this endeavor as well.

We now have an extensive written history, major art collections, and archives to explore in providing African-American students with the necessary foundation for learning histories and techniques of African and African-American artists on which educators can continue to expand (Grigsby, 1977). Even today expressions or reflections of African-American identity and social responsibility toward the African-American community are mainly shared and taught through expanded pedagogy. Institutional structures and standardized curriculums compel educators to make compromises in content, agency, and identity within the classroom site but notions of expanded pedagogy continue to broaden one's understanding of the history of African-American art and art education.

Expanded pedagogies reveal the untold history of African-American art education. This should be foundational to current strategies of empowering and educating African-American youth. The social responsibility of the Black artist/educator is partly

fulfilled when expanded pedagogy occurs. It is unfilled when there is complacency toward debased representations of African-Americans. Expansive pedagogy is another way of understanding recent writings on lived curriculum and public pedagogy. The content for learning current knowledge is expanded far beyond the contexts of the classroom, inhabiting life praxes, community, private events, and studio artmaking. The studio work of Douglas and Woodruff did not have to be racially specific, although it is, because the lives they led in the segregated United States and the challenges they faced were already so racially specific. African-American artists/art educators need to serve as role models and actively address the social responsibility of artists, both Black and White, toward a respectfully informed sense of intertwined histories.

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APPENDIX A CHRONOLOGY OF AARON DOUGLAS'S LIFE

- 1899 Born to Aaron and Elizabeth Douglas in Topeka, Kansas
- 1918 Enrolled in the University of Nebraska.
- 1922 Received the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Nebraska.
- 1922-1923 Taught visual arts at Lincoln High School in Kansas City, Missouri.
- 1925 Received scholarship to enroll in the Winold Reiss Art School, Illustrated "God's Trombones" by James Weldon Johnson.
- 1926 Illustrated *The New Negro* by Alain Locke, Awarded 1st prize for excellence in art by *Opportunity* Magazine, Married Alta Sawyer.
- 1927 Received Fellowship to study at the Barnes Foundation, Awarded 1st prize in art from *The Crisis* Magazine, Illustrated *Theater Arts* Magazine, and *The Emperor Jones* by Eugene O'Neal. Completed commission for the Ebony Club in Harlem, New York.
- 1928 Illustrated Countee Cullen's *Anthology of Poems*.
- 1929 Completed Fisk University library mural commission, Illustrated "Black Magic" by Paul Morand and *Plays of Negro Life* by Alain Locke and Montgomery Gregory
- 1930 Completed mural commission for the Sherman Hotel in Chicago.
- 1931 Sailed to Europe on Von Staeben of the Hamburg American Line for a years study in Paris.
- 1934 Completed murals at New York Public Library "Aspects of Negro Life" Solo exhibition at the Caz-Delbos Gallery, New York.
- 1935 Exhibited: Brooklyn Museum, Artists Congress
- 1936 Exhibited: Findlay Galleries, New York City- "Thirty American Artists." (Only Black Artist in exhibition).
- 1940 Enrolled in M.F.A. program at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York
- 1942 Earned M.F.A. Teachers College, Columbia University, Solo Exhibitions- Community Art Center, Topeka, Kansas; Joslyn Memorial, Omaha, Nebraska; University of Nebraska; University of Kansas; Municipal Gallery, Topeka, Kansas, exhibited at St. Louis Gallery, Missouri.
- 1948 Received Rosenwald Fellowship (Worked in the Southern United States and Haiti) Solo Exhibition: Chabot Gallery, Los Angeles, California.
- 1951 Received a Carnegie grant-in-aid for improvement of teaching project.
- 1955 A reception honored Douglas at the formal opening of the Carl Van Vechten Gallery at Fisk University on November 20, 1955.
- 1956 Traveled in Europe and Africa visiting Lisbon, Dakar, Accra, Lagos, Rome, Florence, Madrid, Barcelona and London.
- 1963 Attended the Centennial celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation at the White House at the request of President Kennedy.
- 1966 Retired from Fisk University with the rank of Professor Emeritus after 29 years of teaching and service.

APPENDIX B CHRONOLOGY OF HALE WOODRUFF'S LIFE

- 1900 Born to George and Augusta Woodruff in Cairo, Illinois.
- 1919 Woodruff moves to Indianapolis, Indiana.
- 1920 Woodruff gets part-time job illustrating political cartoons for local Black newspaper *The Indianapolis Ledger*. He later enrolls in the Herron Art School.
- 1923, 1924, & 1926 Woodruff exhibits at The Herron Art Museum.
- 1927 Exhibits paintings at The Art Institute of Chicago and with the Harmon Foundation. He is awarded \$100 prize money from the Harmon Foundation for artistic excellence. The award earns Woodruff nation recognition. Woodruff sails for Paris
- 1928 Writes article for *The Indianapolis Star* as a foreign correspondent. He befriends artists and Harmon Foundation award winner, Palmer Hayden, in France. Shares small home in Malakoff-sur-Seine, a suburb of Paris, with three other American artists including Forrest Wiggins, Charles Law, and Robert Miller. Travels to Etaples to visit Henry Ossawa Tanner.
- 1931 Returns to the United States to accept a teaching position at Atlanta University, creates the first art department in the Atlanta University system.
- 1934 Woodruff travels to Mexico to study under Diego Rivera.
- 1935 Woodruff organizes students in a group, the "Painter's Guild", to further creative interests.
- 1938-1939 Works on *Amistad* Murals at Talladega College.
- 1943 Receives the Rosenwald Foundation Award to paint in New York City for two years.
- 1945 Returns to Atlanta to teach.
- 1946 Leaves for New York to accept a teaching position in art education at New York University where he remained until retirement in 1967.
- 1948-49 Woodruff and Charles Alston work on the murals for the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company in California.
- 1950 Woodruff begins *Art of the Negro* murals for Atlanta University.
- 1952 Completes and installs Atlanta murals
- 1962-65 Joins *Spiral*.
- 1967 Retires from NYU as professor of the art department.

Vita

Sharif Bey

Education

University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, NC Master of Fine Arts	2000
Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania, Slippery Rock, PA Bachelor of Fine Arts	1998
Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava, Slovakia	1994-1995

Experience

Winston Salem State University Assistant Professor/Art Education program coordinator/Student teacher supervisor	2005-Present
The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA Instructor	2002-2005
Manchester Craftsmen's Guild, Pittsburgh, PA Youth Development Program-Ceramics Studio Coordinator	2000-2002

Presentations and Lectures

National Art Education Association Annual Convention Seminar for Research in Art Education Presentation: "Aaron Douglas and Hale Woodruff: The Social Responsibility and Expanded Pedagogy of the Black Artist"	Spring 2007
California University of Pennsylvania, California, PA Lecture: "The Black Academy: Identity, Politics and African-American Art Education"	Spring 2007
Teachers College Columbia University, New York, NY Presentation: "Aaron Douglas and Hale Woodruff: The Social Responsibility of the Black Artist" 2 nd Annual Graduate Research in Art Education Conference	Fall 2006
National Association of African American Studies, Baton Rouge, LA Presentation: "The Social Responsibility of the Black Artist: A History of Resistance"	Spring 2006