

“The Extension Service is not an Integration Agency”: The Idea of Race in the Cooperative Extension Service

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This article is an institutional history of the development of race policy within the federal Cooperative Extension Service. It demonstrates that the popular belief in African-American inferiority and pragmatic political compromises aimed at creating a bureaucracy serving the nation’s agricultural constituency and ensuring its longevity, led to a conscious marginalization of African-American interests within the program. Federal extension officials not only tolerated, but actively supported, discrimination within the southern branches of the service. African-American leadership protested against the adverse effects of racial policies in the Extension Service from the very beginning. While there were some limited positive gains in the number of staff and availability of services for rural African Americans, these changes did not challenge the suzerainty of whites over the program. In the post-World War II era—especially after 1950—African Americans confronted white extension leadership. Extension officials hid behind a bureaucratic façade and a flawed interpretation of the federal-state cooperative agreement to delay institutional restructuring. Political appointees pushed the service toward policies of racial justice; however, extension leadership continued to move slowly on fundamental transformation. As a result, the adjustments did not lead to a fundamental re-thinking of race policy in the service and ultimately contributed to the disappearance of the African-American extension force to a significant degree.

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ALTHOUGH SCHOLARS HAVE DOCUMENTED discrimination against African Americans in extension programs, they have not yet fully analyzed the ways in which the idea of race directed federal and state policy. Discrimination resulting from racial prejudice is implicit in analyses of African Americans in extension work. Color has been *sine qua non* when speaking of racism and discrimination against African Americans. However, race in the federal Cooperative Extension Service was not merely a matter of color. Race was embedded with meaning informed by the drive for scientific agriculture. Late nineteenth-century racial pseudo-science further shaped its meaning by asserting that races had immutable traits of character and intelligence.¹

A connection between race and the ability to comprehend and apply scientific agriculture became the foundation of crafting extension policy for African Americans. Thus, invoking race gave organizers of progressive agricultural programs the rational grounds to marginalize and exclude African Americans. Such programs resulted from the union of reformist impulses, growing bureaucracies, and the development of scientific agriculture. Progressivism—the application of state power through bureaucracy to solve societal problems—was the result of both radical and reform movements of the nineteenth century. Scientific agriculture also derived partly from the same mid-nineteenth-century reformist impulse combined with a desire to increase farm profitability. It was fostered by the establishment of state land-grant colleges, federalized under the Morrill Act of 1862. The use of observation, experimentation—including strategies such as crop rotation, introduction of natural and, increasingly, chemical fertilizers—and technological developments such as plows and tractors formed the basis of agriscience. By the late nineteenth century, agriscience had become embedded in these land-grant colleges and was supported by federal research grants such as the Hatch Experiment Station Act of 1887. In 1914 the Smith-Lever Act encouraged further dissemination of scientific agriculture with the formal establishment of the Cooperative Extension Service in the USDA.²

The idea that African Americans had no proper role in scientific agriculture predated the establishment of the Extension Service. Seaman Knapp, accepted as the institutional father of extension work, believed that the best thing for southern agriculture would be to eradicate African-American farm labor altogether. Knapp recognized that this

was impossible, and, in his demonstration work, advised that African Americans should be “co-operators” who farmed under white agents’ guidance. Reflecting the drive for efficiency embodied in his age, Knapp also believed that since African-American agents could only work with African-American clients, precious funds would be needlessly wasted if they were employed at all. Rather, Knapp instructed white agents to enlist African-American farmers in demonstrations, and many of the white agents did carry on demonstrations with them of their own volition. He also believed that African-American demonstration work should progress at a slow rate and that the sentiments of local whites should determine when or if an African-American agent would be employed in an area. Despite his misgivings, Knapp employed two African-American agents (one from Tuskegee and the other from the Hampton Institute) in 1906 at the behest of the General Education Board (GEB) that funded his work. But these appointments did not alter Knapp’s thinking about the capacity of African-American farmers or agents to benefit from extension-type programs as he revealed in a speech to agricultural agents in Macon, Georgia, in 1910:

In attempting to raise the condition of the colored man we frequently start too high up and in talking of the higher progress talk right over his head. When I talk to a negro citizen I never talk about the better civilization, but a better chicken, a better pig, a whitewashed house. Of the 150 negro schools, seminaries, colleges, etc. in the South three years ago very few were carrying out fully, to my mind, their proper mission. Many of them were trying to teach Latin and Greek, which would be of very little use to most of them. . . . they were teaching every child that knew anything at all to get away from that country. They were not influencing the people on the farm or helping them at all. . . . I said: “You are doing a great wrong. Why don’t you get at the people themselves and teach them something practical?”³

Practicality formed the centerpiece of Knapp’s agricultural philosophy. He became the first professor of practical and experimental agriculture at Iowa State College when the position was established in 1879. Knapp was one of several professors who, according to his biographer Joseph Cannon Bailey, “advocated strongly, ‘a science in agriculture as

distinct from sciences related to agriculture.” The curriculum for the new Bachelor of Scientific Agriculture degree included instruction from a practical point of view in “the anatomy of domestic animals, applied botany, climatology, dairying, farm drainage, diseases of plants, injurious insects and stock breeding and feeding. Missing from the new curriculum, were Latin, drawing, and the mechanics of solids, liquids, and gases—subjects that occupied so large a portion of the old.” In addition, Knapp believed that basic finance and citizenship training should be emphasized. He also called for practical training for rural women in “household arts and economics’ . . . Nutrition and dietetics, human physiology and physical education.” The target of the scientific agricultural curriculum was “the intelligent owner or manager of a farm.” In Iowa, where he formulated his ideas, it was almost certain these farmers would be white. These persons clearly would learn more than how to breed better livestock and whitewash their homes. While there is no evidence to suggest that Knapp shared the deep-seated racism against African Americans of many Southerners, he did believe that African Americans were unsuited for either progressive agricultural or intellectual pursuits. His view comprised part of the basis of the arguments to exclude African Americans directly from the benefits of the Smith-Lever bill.⁴

For seven years prior to the Smith-Lever Act, African-American colleges and rural schools collaborated directly with the GEB, which paid the salaries of African-American agents who instructed rural African Americans in improved agricultural and living practices, eradication of disease, and strengthening their communities economically. These services bypassed local white control by funding programs through Seaman Knapp’s Bureau of Plant Industry and probably caused many white Southerners consternation. African-American agents paid by the board earned salaries equal to those of whites doing similar work. Therefore it is no surprise that the Southerners who sponsored and supported the “progressive” Smith-Lever bill wanted to minimize the influence of both the federal government and organizations like the GEB in extension programs.⁵

The bill prohibited private groups from outside a state, like the GEB, from funding extension work. As passed in the US House of Representatives, the bill granted state legislatures sole authority to select which state colleges would receive and expend federal funds. The House act

threatened African-American extension programs. The restriction on private funding meant that if no legislature designated an African-American college as a cooperating institution—an almost certainty in the South—they would be unlikely to receive extension services. Additionally, persons hired through this program would become federal government employees. In southern states, demagogues were working feverishly to remove African Americans from all positions of public service with the federal government. In this atmosphere it was unlikely that African Americans would directly participate in operation or implementation of the program. Southern congressmen and senators sought to use African Americans to their advantage much in the way that their ancestors had with the three-fifths compromise. While they insisted that the numbers of African Americans must be counted as a basis for the apportionment of funds, they were equally insistent that African Americans did not need to receive direct appropriations to benefit from Smith-Lever.⁶

Recognizing the negative implications of the bill, members of the fledgling National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) mounted a campaign to secure some benefit from the program for African Americans. The bill had already passed the House, so they campaigned for modifications with senators. NAACP leaders argued that the extant version of the bill would not benefit African-American citizens if the money was disbursed at the sole discretion of southern legislatures. They emphasized that whenever federal legislation lacked racially specific provisions (such as those in the Morrill Act of 1890) African Americans were typically excluded from the benefits of any federal appropriations. Under the Morrill Act of 1890, land-grant colleges could only receive federal funds if they admitted African-American students or if their state housed a separate segregated school for them. Before its passage, ten southern states already had established segregated land-granted colleges. Six additional institutions were established after 1890. To amend the Smith-Lever bill the NAACP enlisted the aid of Senators Wesley Jones of Washington and Albert Cummins of Iowa. Jones proposed an amendment that would provide a direct appropriation to the black land-grant colleges, and Cummins seconded Jones's efforts.⁷

W. E. B. Du Bois, editor of *The Crisis*, and Chapin Brinsmade, the

NAACP's attorney, not only drafted the language of the amendment that Senator Jones introduced, they provided him with data proving that when no specific provision was made for African-American agricultural colleges in federal land-grant college appropriations, white agricultural colleges benefitted almost exclusively. The Hatch Experiment Station Act of 1887 and supplemental land-grant acts in 1906 and 1907, for example, made no mention of any racial division of funds. As a result, all the monies allotted for extension research and teaching in most southern states went to white land-grant colleges. Jones pointed out that none of the thirty thousand dollars distributed to colleges in twelve states under these acts went to colleges attended by African Americans. Du Bois and Brinsmade also marshaled statistics on African-American agricultural college attendance and the value of farmland tilled by African-American farmers, documenting the vital role they played in southern agriculture. Dividing the fund, as the Jones amendment would have required, was warranted in their view.⁸

The NAACP's vigorous public relations campaign included a letter from the Chicago branch to Secretary of Agriculture David Houston protesting "the adoption or extension of a segregation policy" for civil servants, another letter from the New York branch was read into the *Congressional Record* by Senator Jacob Gallinger of New Hampshire, and a third letter from the northern California NAACP chapter was entered into the record by California Senator John D. Works. The arguments the NAACP and its supporters made confronted racist assumptions of African-American achievement. Yet, they acknowledged the reality that statistics aside, African Americans would be excluded from the benefits of the program for their skin color and the inherent prejudice of southern whites who held legislative power. Arguing for segregated appropriations while arguing against segregation may seem paradoxical. However, the request made legal sense as the Extension Service had developed during the era of "separate but equal" inaugurated by the Supreme Court's ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson*.⁹

The legislative debates confirm the meaninglessness of statistics for hardliners who wanted to exclude African Americans from working as extension agents at any cost. Southerners insisted that their opposition to the idea of segregated appropriations was not, or should not be, about race. Senator Furnifold Simmons of North Carolina suggested that the

issue of race was an “unnecessary diversion.” Senator John Sharp Williams of Mississippi argued that the central issue for those opposing the division was the supposed low productivity of African-American farmers. Yet he and other southern senators spent an inordinate amount of time assailing African-American character, while brushing aside statistical evidence to the contrary. Mississippi’s other senator, the virulent racist James K. Vardaman, asserted that African Americans were “imitator[s] . . . devoid of the initiative . . . [with] no power of origination.”¹⁰

In what was a circular argument, race became the centerpiece for a single appropriation. Racial traits were brought to bear on the question of whether segregated funding led to inefficiency; inefficiency was linked to the supposed dearth of intellectual capacity in African Americans for scientific agriculture. Those who opposed divided appropriations—southern white politicians, college officials, their pro-states’ rights congressional allies, and some federal extension officials—argued that hiring African Americans as extension agents would doom extension work in the South. They resurrected Knapp’s proposal of enlisting African-American farmers to serve as model clients whose improved farms and homes would serve as an inspiration to their neighbors, which would enable them to end the African-American agent program. One of the most ironic arguments the southern faction put forth was that a segregated system of disbursement led to a lack of economy in program administration. Yet Southerners were more than willing to enforce this lack of economy in their schools to the detriment of education in the region.¹¹

Southern senators were not above exploiting their states’ racial demographics when it served their purposes. On the issue of allocation of the appropriation among the states, the senators advocated the need for better trained African-American farmers. Mississippi senators Vardaman and Williams opened this line of argument by asserting that states with a “large percentage of whose population consisted of a backward, uninitiated, unintelligent, incapable black race,” needed more funding than states with progressive majority-white rural populations. Using Georgia’s demographics, Hoke Smith soon entered into the fray pointing out that nine hundred thousand of the state’s 1.1 million African Americans lived in rural areas and that “the large majority of negroes in the State still need the stimulus and the training that may induce them

to work for more than is necessary to meet their immediate wants.” Smith asserted that African-American farmers had benefited from the current extension program in Georgia in which they observed white agents conducting demonstrations mainly on the land of white farmers. While Smith’s argument supporting disproportionate funding for southern states hinged on the need to train black farmers, other comments he made seemingly suggested that such an effort would be futile. He stated that African Americans could not benefit directly from scientific farming education. Smith argued that “no graduate of Tuskegee Institute had ever been sufficiently trained to be a scientific farmer.” He insisted that “few [blacks] have been helped by learning from books. . . . The large majority of negroes are incapable of anything but manual labor and many taught from books spurn labor and live in idleness. . . . The negro school to be useful needs less books and more work.” Senator Moses Clapp of Minnesota asked Smith about the conditions of African Americans in Georgia, turning Smith’s arguments about Georgia’s racial progressiveness back on him. Smith, while admitting that a white board controlled the state’s black land-grant colleges, referred to white students as the “real students of agriculture in Georgia.” In a series of rhetorical questions, Smith declared that it was students at Georgia’s (white) state agricultural college who were doing soil analysis, soil surveys, and plant analysis.¹²

Smith and Vardaman claimed that African Americans were too degenerate to understand scientific agriculture. They suggested that establishing extension programs at African-American colleges meant that states were discriminating against African-American farmers by denying them access to the best agents, those trained at white land-grant colleges. White Southerners refused to accept African-American success and African-American preference for teachers and professionals of their own race, even when confronted with evidence. Some non-southern members of the Senate were willing to accept southern senators’ dismissal of evidence contrary to their espoused opinions. One senator appealed for respect of local authority in the administration of government funds, arguing that white Southerners understood the “race question” far better than those who did not live among African Americans and who had no first-hand knowledge of their character. Senator James

H. Brady of Idaho argued that local sentiment should prevail and therefore supported the southern point of view.¹³

After two days of vigorous debate, Senator John Shafroth of Colorado offered an amendment to the bill. The amendment required that the selection of the colleges that would receive the benefits of Smith-Lever be made jointly by the governor of each state in concert with the secretary of agriculture rather than by state legislatures alone, as required in the original wording of the bill. In a subsequent vote, the Senate defeated the Jones amendment to split the money and adopted the Shafroth amendment. Additionally, the Senate voted for an amendment by Gilbert M. Hitchcock of Nebraska stating that there would be no racial discrimination in demonstration work.¹⁴

Thus, the NAACP campaign to modify the Smith-Lever bill in the Senate was somewhat successful. However, because the House bill was markedly different, there would have to be a resolution. Neither the Shafroth nor Hitchcock amendments survived resolution of the House and Senate versions. The original provision that legislatures in states having more than one land-grant college could designate which colleges would receive the federal disbursement prevailed. This is not surprising given the composition of the resolution committee. Four of the six members of the conference committee appointed to resolve the differences between the House and Senate bills were southern Democrats: Senator Hoke Smith and Congressman Gordon Lee of Georgia and Senator Ellison "Cotton Ed" Smith and Congressman Asbury F. Lever of South Carolina. Of the two remaining members, Republican Senator James H. Brady of Idaho was a staunch supporter of the southern position on the basis of localism. Congressman Gilbert Nelson Haugen of Iowa was the "one friend" the NAACP had in the conference committee.¹⁵

When called to account for the lack of a hard line by the senators in the conference, Hoke Smith informed his colleagues that "it is my firm conviction that unless the Senate recedes from the amendment we shall have no legislation." House conferees, he reported, insisted that the state legislatures should decide on distribution of funds. Cummins and Jones were irate and led a crusade that resulted in the recall of the bill from the House. Ultimately, Cummins and Jones's effort to reconsider the bill was defeated. The parties reached a compromise that the NAACP called "a triumph in prejudice." The compromise gave state leg-

islatures the authority to designate colleges to receive Smith-Lever funds; however, any plan for extension work had to have the approval of the secretary of agriculture. President Woodrow Wilson signed the bill into law despite receiving entreaties from Jane Addams, Moorefield Storey, Oswald Garrison Villard, Joel Spingarn, and others who pointed out the legislation's discriminatory effect. Given Wilson's tolerance of expanding segregation in the Washington bureaucracy, this was not unexpected.¹⁶

Despite the failure to achieve segregated appropriations, the compromise legislation did contain clauses that could subvert local control in favor of African Americans if they were invoked. Section two of the act reads in part, "this work shall be carried on in such a manner as may be mutually agreed upon by the Secretary of Agriculture and the State agricultural college or colleges receiving the benefits of this Act." Section six included the proviso that the secretary of agriculture must approve states' plans of work before extension funds would be released. During senate debate, Hoke Smith had insisted that the secretary of agriculture could refuse to accept plans of work if injustice was done to African Americans to argue against the Jones amendment. Only Republican Senator Thomas Sterling of South Dakota expressed alarm. He noted that section two "gives [the secretary of agriculture] the power to demand as a condition precedent to the right of a State to share in the fund that he . . . be permitted to originate and initiate the plans to be followed . . . in . . . farm demonstration and home economics work." His concern was not for racial equity, but that the bill would subordinate state power to that of the federal government. Hoke Smith defended the provision. He did not foresee—at least not with Democrats in power—the possibility that funds might be withheld if there was a disagreement over personnel. He expected that the state agent would select the local agents and noted that there seemed to be a general understanding of that fact as the Senate had voted against changing the language of section two to state that extension work would "be carried on in a manner and by such agents as may be mutually agreed upon."¹⁷

Smith was wrong in his assumption. Secretary Houston made it clear to southern states that they would have to continue to employ some African-American agents for their funds to be released. Houston was true to his promise of expecting states to employ black agents, even

when that required a protracted showdown with state officials as it did in the case of South Carolina. One of Seaman Knapp's former employees, William Williams Long, directed the South Carolina Extension program operated through Clemson Agricultural College. He initially appeared to favor continuing the employment of agents already in the ranks in counties with high rates of African-American landownership while avoiding areas with high rates of sharecropping, where white landlords would likely "resent negro agents interfering with their tenants." He even met with James B. Pierce, an African-American special field agent for the Upper South, to discuss the placement of agents. It appears that Long may have been overruled by others at Clemson. The college's president, Walter M. Riggs, wrote to Bradford Knapp (Seaman's son and successor) that he expected the federal extension office to continue its supervision of African-American extension work as the Clemson officials "preferred not to undertake [it]."¹⁸

Clemson officials later proposed a plan modeled on Seaman Knapp's philosophy of using African Americans solely as cooperating farmers. In that proposal, Long revived the pejorative images of rural African Americans. In a letter to President Riggs, Long wrote of the need for extension work with "ignorant tenants, most of them negroes." White agents, Long claimed, had "been deterred from taking up the work with the negro farmer as we feared to do so would injure the work with a certain class of our white people." He suggested a "radical change in . . . policy," that white extension agents enroll fifteen African-American tenants—about one-half of 1 percent of the state's total African-American population—in their counties as demonstrators who would manage their farms under the agents' instructions. Long insisted to Bradford Knapp that white agents were willing to run these projects "provided there are no negro agents."¹⁹

This proposal directly contradicted the policy Houston had mandated. Clearly federal officials believed that African-American agents were to be a token force, but they perhaps believed that it was necessary to employ the agents to protect the act that had languished for two years before its passage. H. E. Savely, the field agent whose territory included South Carolina, advised Long that the "wisest thing to do is to keep a few negro agents in each state in territories where they can do the most." Bradford Knapp described African-American agents as "supernumer-

aries to do definite types of work in definite territories.” Clemson officials, however, rejected even token participation of African-American agents. President Riggs informed Robert Shaw Wilkinson, the president of the state’s 1890 college, South Carolina State, that Director Long would be unwilling to accept African-American agents “for fear of doing more harm than good.” Riggs thought that if African-American agents were employed, “demagogues in opposition to our getting the State to make appropriations to meet the Lever Bill” might use that fact to prevent the General Assembly from providing matching funds for extension work.²⁰

The South Carolina case illustrates the complexity of race in the formative years of the Extension Service. In a political sense, race signified a threat to white dominance. Long expressed concern that “the time is not yet with us when we can risk negro agents as a general proposition.” But for the federal government, the time had arrived. Riggs and Long met with Secretary Houston, after which they proposed to him that they should employ six agricultural agents to work with the African-American population. Why Houston would insist on hiring the agents is unclear when his boss, the president, was permitting the exclusion of African Americans from other opportunities in federal employment. Correspondence between Bradford Knapp, who oversaw southern extension work, and Riggs offers one possible clue. Knapp suggested to Riggs that if a Republican administration were to come to power in Washington, questions might arise over the exclusion of black agents and might even result in a revision to the act.²¹

What happened not only in South Carolina but throughout the South was the creation of an African-American extension service that reflected the proposed limits articulated by Savely and Knapp. The small number of workers employed reflected the South’s grudging acquiescence to the presence of African-American agents. Only forty-nine men and seventeen women were employed throughout the South in 1915, a loss of thirty-seven agents since the year before Smith-Lever went into force. These numbers represented an average of two agricultural agents and slightly over one home demonstration agent per state. While the number of black agricultural agents had increased to sixty-six by 1917, the number of black home demonstration agents stood at seven. The fact that there were any African-American home demonstration agents

Table 1. Land-Grant Colleges that Received Funds for Segregated Cooperative Extension Work between 1900 and 1965

State	Institutions
Alabama	Alabama A&M Tuskegee University
Arkansas	University of Arkansas–Pine Bluff
Delaware	Delaware State College
Florida	Florida A&M University
Georgia	Fort Valley State College
Kentucky	Kentucky State College
Louisiana	Southern University
Maryland	University of Maryland–Eastern Shore
Mississippi	Alcorn State University
Missouri	Lincoln University
North Carolina	North Carolina A&T University
Oklahoma	Langston University
South Carolina	South Carolina State University
Tennessee	Tennessee State University
Virginia	Virginia State University
West Virginia	West Virginia State University

NOTE: The institutions are referred to by their contemporary names.

SOURCE: Harris, ““A Ray of Hope for Liberation,”” 103, Table 2: Negro Agricultural and Home Extension Agents in the Southern States and in South Carolina, and note 130; “Historically Black Colleges and Universities,” National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, <http://www.nasulgc.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=714&srcid=254> (accessed Feb. 15, 2007).

at all is remarkable. In his effort to persuade Clemson officials to hire African-American agents, Bradford Knapp suggested that it would be impossible for a white woman to visit an African-American woman’s home to serve her as a client. This argument was unsuccessful.²²

This stagnation in the development of African-American extension work while white extension work grew nationwide confirms Joel Schor’s argument that Smith-Lever represented an attempt “by southern politicians to secure local control over demonstration work and reduce or eliminate a small, but growing program of African American agents.” In large measure, the Southerners succeeded. Abetted by the unwillingness of subsequent secretaries of agriculture to use the powers they held under the Smith-Lever Act to withhold approval of operational plans for

extension programs, southern states hired so few African-American agents that in no state could their employment be referred to as anything more than tokenism. More importantly, race as translated into limited ability in scientific agriculture during this era delineated a limited professional domain for African-American agents that persisted for decades and became canonized in federal extension policy.²³

Initially race was euphemistically embedded in the service through professional titles. In South Carolina, for example, white agents were referred to as “county agents” and African-American agents as “local agents.” It was not long before some states began to add race to the titles of African-American personnel. For example, Benjamin Hubert, professor at South Carolina State College, was appointed the assistant state supervisor for “negro work” in 1915. His title distinguished him from the white assistant state supervisors whose titles bore no racial designation. This practice of marking African Americans by race eventually became part of federal policy. The use of racial titles was a firmly established practice by 1923. In a memorandum on field titles, Clarence Beamon (C. B.) Smith, the new federal chief of extension work, recommended the continued use of racially identifiable titles for accounting purposes because it would “clearly show the expenditures for agricultural agents, home demonstration agents, club agents, and negro agents.” Appointment papers sent to African-American agents two years later included a racial designation as part of their title. Those of South Carolina agents Willie Mae Thompson and Jesse J. Wilson serve as examples. Thompson’s official title was “Negro Home Demonstration Agent”; Wilson’s was “Negro Agent.” The appointment form included the underlined sentence, “Do not use any title other than that indicated in the above address.” Although Smith seemingly aimed at efficiency by using these categories of identification to account for expenditures, the policy also resulted in marking limits of opportunity for African-American agents. The enforcement of racially identifiable titles reflected a process further shifting African-American extension workers to the margins of the extension program.²⁴

In the subsequent history of the Cooperative Extension Service, the place of African-American extension workers seemed stalled in the contradictions of the Progressive Era. In the historical memory of the institution, it appears to have become generally accepted that African-

American extension workers signified a political compromise rather than an integral part of the program. While employing African-American agents was useful in mollifying politicians and racial activist groups, these agents were not encouraged to transform black farmers into viable market players. Although the Extension Service as an institution adjusted its programs to changes in the larger society, its responses to the operation of its “Negro” extension programs remained frozen. White extension administrators refused to adjust their programs to changing meanings of race in the larger society. African-American requests for equality of opportunity and treatment did not inspire extension bureaucrats to re-examine their programs but to craft defenses of established policies.

Over the next two decades, African-American agents labored to improve the lives of their clients with limited rewards and professional opportunities. Program employees ignored evidence of a lack of equity for African-American programs and entreaties by the presidents of the 1890 colleges. While there clearly existed both segregation and unequal opportunity in the extension programs offered to whites and African Americans, both federal and state officials took great pains to obscure this fact. One of the members of the southern extension directors’ Committee on Negroes in 1940, South Carolina’s Director of Extension D. W. Watkins, described the marginal role of African-American extension work in the larger program. In a letter to Reuben Brigham rebuffing African-American college presidents’ desire for more autonomy for extension work, Watkins suggested that the service “ought to avoid the appearance of putting on racial programs.” Watkins’s correspondence with Brigham later that year, however, makes it clear that the programs were indeed racially divided. Watkins insisted that African-American extension work had been developed as a “*supplement*” to the extension program “to provide special consideration for the group of people who might otherwise not get attention in proportion to the need. Neither Congress nor the founders of the Negro branch of Extension work have ever thought of making the Negro Extension work a *substitute* for the general extension program nor has it been regarded as a *parallel* service along racial lines.”²⁵

African Americans continued to agitate for equality within the system of extension work, but it was an uphill struggle. During the 1950s

political appointees of the USDA began to raise questions about the Extension Service's racial policies. Federal extension officials took advantage of political appointees' reliance on their bureaucratic expertise to persuade the appointees that desegregation was too dangerous for the program. Their arguments reveal the longevity of the racial doublespeak that thwarted efforts to secure direct extension work appropriations for the 1890 land-grant colleges. Opponents to change continued to question African Americans' ability to understand and apply scientific agricultural methods. For example, extension bureaucrats convinced Eisenhower's secretary of agriculture, Ezra Taft Benson not to desegregate the 4-H camps, arguing that African-American children could not compete with white children in 4-H programs. Assistant Extension Director Paul V. Kepner recognized that the Extension Service's policy of tracking program participation and other data by race provided ammunition to their critics. In a memorandum, he observed that the 1951 federal report included fifty-one pages on white programs but only devoted two pages to African-American programs. He wondered whether racial identification suggested segregation and proposed ending discussion of programs by race.²⁶

Some in the public had begun to notice the divergence between the service's racial policies and its assertions that its programs were integrated. Constance E. H. Daniel, formerly an employee in the Information Division of the Farmers Home Administration, wrote to Maxwell Rabb, Eisenhower's informal advisor on minority issues, that the administration's farm policy was "making us no friends." She noted that she had recently seen "a page of pictures of the Department's top 35 administrative officers," all of whom were white. Daniel suggested that the racial make-up of staff was problematic in light of the fact that there were "half a million Negroes in the 'farming business.'" She repeated a concern of Tuskegee Institute President F. D. Patterson that racial preference for whites was re-emerging in the USDA.²⁷

The Extension Service was also criticized in the African-American press, and black extension employees appealed to the service to modify its policies relating to African-American programs. In the *Pittsburgh Courier* Revella Clay reported that there were no African Americans at the policymaking level headquartered at the USDA. Nor were there any African-American state directors of extension. Clay pointed out salary

inequities and the lack of assistant county African-American agents. Thomas Campbell, a federal employee who worked out of Tuskegee, Sherman Briscoe of the Washington office, and Ernest Neal, the director of extension work at Tuskegee, all tried to address the issue of funding equity. Neal wrote to Secretary of Agriculture Charles Brannan seeking a more equitable distribution of extension funds. In 1954 John W. Mitchell, the African-American field director for the Upper South, wrote to Extension Service administrator, C. M. Ferguson to recommend a political appointment for an African American with an agricultural background as a special assistant to the secretary, arguing that such a person could discuss federal policies with African Americans that civil service employees could not. "The absence of such a person prevents the Nation's 580,000 Negro farmers, and millions of colored citizens, who now live in towns and in cities, North and South, from being fully informed on agricultural matters." The result, Mitchell asserted, was uncertainty of the effect of farm legislation on their lives and a "neutraliz[ation of] a segment of the population that might be active in helping to promote a sound agriculture. . . . His very presence on the Secretary's staff would indicate a recognition of Negro farmers in line with that given Negroes by high level appointments in the departments of Commerce, Labor, Defense, Health, Education and Welfare, and the Housing and Home Finance agency."²⁸

The Extension Service stood firm in its policies despite public scrutiny and conducted its programs for African Americans much as they always had. Kepner weighed in against Mitchell's recommendations, dismissing the idea that Mitchell's concerns were truly his. "This represents a type of pressure which has been prevalent for a long time and which will probably never subside, *at least as long as most of us around here will be concerned about it.*" If it was true, he argued, that African-American agents were not getting needed information to farmers, "we should fire all our Negro extension workers plus some of the whites." After challenging the necessity of such an appointment, Kepner said that he could not judge at the "higher policy level of whether or not such an appointment is either essential, feasible, or politically wise."²⁹

Early in January 1955 President Eisenhower issued Executive Order 10590 establishing the President's Committee on Government Employment Policy, which prohibited discrimination against qualified appli-

cants and federal employees on the basis of “race, color, religion, or national origin.” According to historian Robert Burk, the committee, which replaced former President Truman’s more aggressive predecessor, exercised almost no real authority. It could not use Civil Service staff to investigate claims of discrimination nor could it bypass agency heads to complain directly to the president. In effect, agencies were responsible for policing themselves. The Department of Agriculture also enacted Kepner’s 1951 recommendation and ceased using race as a category in its statistical collections. This decision successfully obscured continued differences in the opportunities of white and African-American extension programs.³⁰

The federal government was careful to acknowledge no discrimination. When Montana Senator James E. Murray, chair of the Land and Public Welfare Committee, queried the USDA in 1958 regarding racial inequity in the Extension Service, the initial response by E. C. Betts Jr. recognized some problems. Betts verified the factual accuracy of a report on extension work in the southern states, stating “it certainly points to racial discrimination in the County Agent set-up.” He laid the blame for segregated practices on local conditions in the southern states, but also observed that since African-American agents were covered under the federal retirement system, “in a sense, we are condoning the discriminatory practices of state and local governments.” The official response to Murray, however, from Assistant Secretary of Agriculture E. L. Peterson, included none of Betts’s observations about the federal service tacitly approving discrimination. Rather, Peterson offered a historical explanation for the discrimination against African-American extension workers. Salaries for African-American agents were lower because of “differences in training and in workloads,” as well as differences in funding by local governing entities. Peterson also suggested that their lower salaries were a result of agents receiving training from the “Negro-land grant colleges,” which “we are advised, offer less adequate training.” Peterson also suggested the difference resulted from African-American agents’ failure to pursue post-graduate training.³¹

The historical memory of the origins of African-American extension work, and the belief that racial complaints fell within the realm of politics and nothing more, made it difficult for African-American agents to receive a fair hearing when they made charges of discrimination. Inter-

nal policing gave policymakers who were hostile to claims of racial discrimination sole authority to review civil rights complaints. Research on complaints was conducted in the Washington offices of federal agencies rather than in the field. Investigators often relied on the opinions of those charged with discrimination gathered during the course of the investigation rather than conducting independent reviews with other knowledgeable persons. Plaintiffs were not allowed to see the information gathered in reports, and they were denied access to records that might help them make their case. The result was that much of the discrimination against African Americans continued as federal officials followed the lead of local white extension leaders.³²

In 1961 President John F. Kennedy signed an executive order that outlawed discrimination on the basis of race, creed, or color in “upgrading, demotion or transfer; recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection of training and apprenticeship” of federal employees. Kennedy ordered that “immediate and specific action be taken” to prevent executive department or agency offices that practiced discrimination from using the name, facilities, or sponsorship of federal agencies. Kennedy’s order also created a President’s Committee on Equal Opportunity to deal with allegations of discrimination. The order required “all executive departments and agencies” to examine their current practices to determine whether there was discrimination—intentional or otherwise.³³

That same year, E. T. York, the administrator of the Extension Service, told the southern directors that “pressure in Washington is building up and being directed toward [Agriculture] Secretary Freeman.” In preparation for a lawsuit to equalize the salaries of African-American and white agents, the states had been required to make salary data available to NAACP lawyers. To prepare their response to the lawsuit, extension officials created a committee consisting of P. H. Stone, a retired extension director from Georgia, and Dr. Edward B. Evans, president of Prairie View College, an African-American land-grant college in Texas. Stone and Evans compiled a list of concerns of black extension workers. It included salary differences, the lack of African-American specialists, the “objectionable” use of “Negro” in the titles of agents, the lack of suitable office space, office furniture, and clerical help; problems

in distribution of materials; limited opportunities for training; and separate training and congresses for 4-H youth.³⁴

Some progress was made. Luke M. Schruben, an assistant administrator in the federal Extension Service, sent a memorandum to the Office of Personnel Policies and Procedures Division in mid-1962. He reported that salary equalization was progressing despite some problems. In 1963 he announced that salaries were “completely equalized” in nine states, citing instances in which salaries of agents in “comparable positions,” were equal. In these instances, African-American agents had received raises of three hundred to seven hundred dollars more than those of white workers. What these figures did not often show was that county supplements often perpetuated higher salaries for white workers.³⁵

Office segregation, convening of segregated meetings, and the use of racially identifiable titles continued despite Kennedy’s order. According to Schruben, these situations had been discussed with extension directors who were not aware of the problems, but when they were informed of them, they demonstrated a “desire on their part to do everything possible to resolve them. The records show that there has been far more progress in the last year in this area of eliminating conditions which *might be considered discriminatory* than in all previous history of the Extension Service.” Outside the old guard extension leadership, however, Schruben’s rosy statements were not taken as indicative of significant change. According to a publication by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights regarding African-American extension work in the early 1960s, there were only three hundred fifty African-American extension agents in the South (an average of twenty-three per southern state), and use of the title “Negro County Agent,” the standard practice of making African-American agents subordinate to whites and giving them lower pay and less “material assistance,” and the lack of such agents in counties with “significant Negro populations” continued.³⁶

Lloyd Davis, acting administrator of the federal Extension Service, disagreed with these findings. He stated that he did not know the number of African-American agents employed, but “had reason to believe” it was higher than 350 since a count of titles before the elimination of race identification showed 887 African-American agents. He reported that seven states had removed the word “Negro” from agents’ titles and

insisted that African-American agents were not subordinate to white county agents, but rather to their “supervisor.” He noted that in counties with racially combined services the senior white agent was designated county leader. Davis apparently used Schruben’s 1962 statistics repeating the assertion that salaries were “completely equalized in nine states” and adding that the income gap had been narrowed in four others. He also insisted that the working conditions for African-American agents were improved and, in some cases, equal to those of white agents.³⁷

Extension Director York vehemently argued that “over the past several years, much progress has been made by the State Extension Services in eliminating circumstances *construed* to be discriminatory. The State Extension directors have moved with *more than deliberate speed* in setting up employment and office arrangements designed to house the total extension staff of the county be they Negro or White.” When African-American employees of the South Carolina Extension Service charged the program with failing to provide equal opportunity, an extension official declared that “the Extension Service is *not an integration agency*. We are the education agency of [the] USDA for Agriculture, Home Economics, and Youth and related programs.” As the remarks of York and this official show, the belief that race matters were not a concern of the Extension Service was a central idea in extension policy at both the federal and state level. The perception that African-American extension work was an adjunct to the overall program remained the prevailing opinion. It was a political expedient created to satisfy race activists, put in place so that the “real mission” of extension work could be accomplished. While the federal Extension Service adjusted its general programs to meet the challenges of modernization in American society, on the issue of race-based extension programs it remained committed to the bargain made by legislators a half-century earlier and to maintaining the “triumph in prejustice.”³⁸

NOTES

1. I am grateful to Stephen Lowe for his reading of this manuscript. In the thirty years since Earl William Crosby completed a doctoral dissertation on the obstacles that African Americans in the Cooperative Extension Service faced, scholars have begun to seriously examine such discrimination. This is a new dimension in the study of the program where celebratory narratives of the service’s accomplishments, such as those by bureau insiders like Wayne Rasmussen and Alfred Charles True, assigned the African-American experi-

ence largely to a footnote. Gladys Baker's discussion of "The Negro County Agent" describes in matter-of-fact prose the behavioral expectations for "Negro" agents. These narratives fail to take into account the complex relationship between African Americans and the federal branch of the Cooperative Extension Service. Among USDA historians, only Joel Schor wrote critically of the detrimental effects of the policies of the Extension Service on African Americans. Explicit in the work of Schor is the argument that racial prejudice placed African Americans at a disadvantage within the extension system in opportunities and services.

Earl William Crosby, "Building the Country Home: The Black County Agent System, 1906–1940" (PhD diss., Miami University of Ohio, 1977); Joel Schor, "The Black Presence In The US Cooperative Extension Service Since 1945: An American Quest For Service and Equity," *Agricultural History* 60 (Spring 1986): 137–53; Carmen V. Harris, "Blacks in Agricultural Extension in South Carolina, 1900–1932" (master's thesis, Clemson University, 1990); Melissa Walker, "Home Extension Work Among African American Farm Women In East Tennessee, 1920–1939," *Agricultural History* 70 (Summer 1996): 487–502; Jeannie M. Whyne, "Black Farmers and the Agricultural Cooperative Extension Service: The Alabama Experience, 1945–1965," *Agricultural History* 72 (Summer 1998): 523–51; Mary Amanda Waalkes, "Working in the Shadow of Racism and Poverty: Alabama's Black Home Demonstration Agents, 1915–1939" (PhD diss., University of Colorado–Boulder, 1998); Jeannie M. Whyne, "The Segregated Farm Program In Poinsett County, Arkansas," *Mississippi Quarterly* 45:4 (1992): 421–38; Gary Zellar, "H. C. Ray and Racial Politics in the African American Extension Service Program in Arkansas, 1915–1929," *Agricultural History* 72 (Spring 1998): 429–45; Debra Ann Reid, "Reaping a Greater Harvest: African Americans, Agrarian Reform, and the Texas Agricultural Extension Service" (PhD diss., Texas A&M University, 2000); T. Robert Hart, "Something Lost: The Black Farmer and the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service Before, During, and After Integration," *Southern Historian* 22 (Apr. 2001): 55–65; Carmen V. Harris, "'A Ray of Hope for Liberation': Blacks in the South Carolina Extension Service, 1915–1970" (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 2002); Debra Ann Reid, "African Americans and Land Loss in Texas: Government Duplicity and Discrimination Based on Race and Class," *Agricultural History* 77 (Spring 2003): 258–92.

Monographs on the history of extension work by USDA personnel are, in chronological order, Alfred Charles True, *A History of Agricultural Extension Work in the United States, 1785–1923* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1928); Gladys Baker, *The County Agent* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939); Wayne D. Rasmussen, *Taking the University to the People: Seventy-Five Years of Cooperative Extension* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1989); Joel Schor, "The Black Presence in the US Cooperative Extension Service to 1983: A Profile, An American Quest for Service and Equity," 1983, unpublished MS, in possession of author. Rasmussen said of his job, "the federal historian must become indispensable to his agency, working to improve the institutional memory of his agency and giving historical perspective to current problems." See, Wayne D. Rasmussen, "A Federal Historian's Happy Lot," *OAH Newsletter* 15:4 (1987): 2–3, 20. In "The 1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities: A Centennial Overview," *Agricultural History* 65 (Spring 1991): 168–72, Rasmussen concedes that "discrimination [against these southern, black institutions] still exists but efforts are being made to end it." Schor's manuscript is probably unknown to most scholars. I visited Schor in 1988. When I arrived at his office, he handed me a copy of a five hundred-page manuscript, which he told me that the USDA

would not publish. Schor's work is a synthesis of scholarship to that point. Some of his chapters rely on Crosby's work heavily, but he also draws on federal sources and works published by African-American extension workers from the South.

The above sources all address discrimination. To those should be added the dissertation of Lynn Vernice Riskedal, "A Critique of the Ideologies of the Cooperative Extension Service" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 1994). In her abstract, Riskedal states that 1890 colleges did not receive extension funds. While this is an accurate statement, she appears to conclude, mistakenly, that they were not involved in the Extension Service. On the issue of race, Riskedal focuses on constructions of whiteness. She writes: "The 1890 institutions did not receive funding for African-American agents. Racism went deeper: progressive leaders were concerned about the degeneration of the white race and its effect on agriculture. Leaders feared that farmers that were not from northern European countries, seen as less capable and less intelligent, would not be able to produce sufficient commodities to sustain the country. Native Americans and immigrants are given little or no acknowledgement in the histories of extension." I share with Riskedal the concern for how "progressive leaders" intellectualized the issue of race as it related to African Americans, which was the most contentious issue in extension work.

2. On Progressivism, especially in its southern cast, see, Jack Temple Kirby, *Darkness at the Dawning: Race and Reform in the Progressive South* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1972), 131–54, on African Americans in agriculture, see, 158–76. David B. Danbom discusses scientific Progressivism in his book, "*The World of Hope*": *Progressives and the Struggle for an Ethical Public Life* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987). Danbom argues that the public was expected to recognize the "superior intelligence" of professionals. Clearly this would be a barrier to the southern acceptance of African-American agents. See, Alfred Charles True, *A History of Agricultural Experimentation and Research in the United States, 1607–1925* (1937; repr., New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970) for the development of agriscience. A more recent account is Wallace E. Huffman and Robert E. Evenson, *Science for Agriculture: A Long-Term Perspective* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1993).

3. Roy V. Scott, *The Reluctant Farmer: The Rise of Agricultural Extension to 1914* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970), 232, 234; The General Education Board, *The General Education Board: An Account of its Activities, 1902–1914* (New York: General Education Board, 1915), 54; Crosby, "Building the Country Home," 29–33; Earl William Crosby, "The Roots of African American Agricultural Extension Work," *The Historian: A Journal of History* 39 (Feb. 1977): 245; "Dr. Knapp Finds Another Scapegoat Place for the Negro," *Colored American Magazine* 12 (1907): 329–30. The General Education Board was a philanthropic organization organized by John D. Rockefeller in 1902 to support improved educational opportunities. Board members had a special interest in the problems of the southern states. The history of the board is discussed in The General Education Board, *The General Education Board*, 3–14; its activities in pre-Smith-Lever extension work are discussed on pages 18–70; work with African Americans is discussed on pages 54–57. Seaman A. Knapp, "The Mission of Cooperative Demonstration Work in the South," USDA, *Circular No. 33* (Nov. 1, 1910): 4.

4. Seaman A. Knapp, "Science in Agriculture," in *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Iowa State Improved Stock-Breeders' Association*, ed. Iowa State Improved Stock-Breeders' Association (Des Moines: G. H. Ragsdale, State Printer, 1880), 38 and Knapp,

“The Limits of Education, Under the Law, at Our Agricultural Colleges,” USDA, *Miscellaneous Special Report No. 9* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1885), 163–68, quoted in Joseph Cannon Bailey, *Seaman A. Knapp: Schoolmaster of American Agriculture* (1945; repr., New York: Arno Press, 1971), 79, 88–89, 107.

5. The operation of pre-Smith-Lever programs among African Americans in South Carolina is discussed in Harris, “A Ray of Hope for Liberation,” 46, 67–68, 105–108.

6. “An Act to Provide for Cooperative Agricultural Extension Work Between the Agricultural Colleges in the Several States Receiving the Benefits of an Act of Congress Approved July Second, Eighteen Hundred and Sixty-Two, and of Acts Supplementary Thereto, and the United States Department of Agriculture,” (hereafter the Smith-Lever Act) Section 3, *United States Statues at Large* 38 (1915); US Congress, Senate, *Hearings, Report and Debate: Smith-Lever Act of 1914* (Blacksburg: Virginia Agricultural Extension Service, 1959), 3145.

7. “The Smith-Lever Bill and Other Work of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,” *The Crisis* 7 (Mar. 1914): 247–48. This report also notes that the Pennsylvania Abolition Society supported an amendment by Senator Wesley Jones of Washington State that called for separate division of the funds. The secretary of the society was also a member of the Philadelphia branch of the NAACP. US Congress, *Hearings, Report and Debate*, 2906, 3145, 3191, 3194–95.

8. “The Smith-Lever Bill and Other Work of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,” 247–48.

9. Edward Osgood Brown (and eleven others) to Hon. David A. Houston, Sept. 12, 1913, Folder: General Correspondence, Negroes, Box 1, Entry 17 AE, RG 16, National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, Md. (hereafter NARA II); US Congress, *Hearings, Report and Debate*, 3063, 3146.

10. US Congress, *Hearings, Report and Debate*, 2905–2906, 3193, 3293–94.

11. *Ibid.*, 3063, 3146, 3241–42. See, also, “An Act to Apply a Portion of the Proceeds of the Public Lands to the More Complete Endowment and Support of the Colleges for the Benefit of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts Established Under the Provisions of an Act of Congress Approved July Second, Eighteen Hundred Sixty-Two,” Section X, *United States Statues at Large* 26 (1891): 417. Scott, *The Reluctant Farmer*, 232, 234; The General Education Board, *The General Education Board*, 54; Crosby, “Building the Country Home,” 32–33; Crosby, “The Roots of African American Agricultural Extension Work,” 245; “The Smith-Lever Bill and Other Work of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,” 248. South Carolina’s service struggle with the issue of employing black agents exemplifies the concerns of white Southerners. See, W. W. Long to Walter M. Riggs, June 22, 1914, Folder 101, Riggs Presidential Records, Special Collections, University Libraries, Clemson University, Clemson, SC (hereafter Riggs Presidential Records).

12. Schor, “The African American Presence in the US Cooperative Extension Service to 1983,” 34–35; Louis R. Harlan, *Booker T. Washington: Wizard of Tuskegee, 1901–1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 210; “Hoke Smith’s Gubernatorial Address, 1907,” in *Major Problems in the History of the American South, Volume II: The New South*, ed. Paul D. Escott and David R. Goldfield (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1990), 2:229; US Congress, *Hearings, Report and Debate*, 2904–2907, 3064–65. For Smith’s description

of African-American agricultural education in Georgia, see, Congress, *Hearings, Report and Debate*, 2749.

13. US Congress, *Hearings, Report and Debate*, 2906, 3145, 3191, 3194–95.

14. *Ibid.*, 3241–42; “The Smith-Lever Bill and Other Work of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,” 248.

15. US Congress, *Hearings, Report and Debate*, 8016–22; “The Smith-Lever Bill and Other Work of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,” 247–48; “The Smith-Lever Bill and Judge Terrell,” *The Crisis* 7 (Apr. 1914): 283–84; Chapin Brinsmade, “Our Legal Bureau,” *The Crisis* 7 (Apr. 1914): 291–92; “Congress. Smith Lever Bill,” *The Crisis* 7 (Apr. 1914): 291–92; “The Smith Lever Bill,” *The Crisis* 8 (July 1914): 124.

16. US Congress, *Hearings, Report and Debate*, 8016–22; “The Smith-Lever Bill and Other Work of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,” 247–48; “The Smith-Lever Bill and Judge Terrell,” 283–84; Brinsmade, “Our Legal Bureau,” 291–92; “Congress. Smith Lever Bill,” 291–92; “The Smith Lever Bill,” 124.

17. *Smith-Lever Act*, 373; Baker, *The County Agent*, 195; US Congress, *Hearings, Report and Debate*, 3243–44, 3065–66.

18. W. W. Long to Bradford Knapp, Mar. 16, 28, 1914, Folder: South Carolina 1913–1914, Box 4, Entry 3, RG 33, NARA II. For other illustrations of Long’s involvement with the African-American program, see, W. W. Long to Bradford Knapp, Jan. 6, 1914, Folder: South Carolina 1913–1914, Box 4, Entry 3, RG 33, NARA II; Walter M. Riggs to Bradford Knapp, Dec. 15, 1914, Folder 109, Riggs Presidential Records.

19. W. W. Long to Walter M. Riggs, June 22, 1914, Folder 101, Riggs Presidential Records; W. W. Long to H. E. Savely, Jan. 13, 1915, Folder: South Carolina 1914–1915, Box 7, Entry 3, RG 33, NARA II.

20. Bradford Knapp to W. W. Long, Feb. 3, 1915; H. E. Savely to W. W. Long, Jan. 19, 1915, Folder: South Carolina 1914–1915, Box 7, Entry 3, RG 33, NARA II; Walter M. Riggs to Robert S. Wilkinson, July 27, 1914, Folder 49, Riggs Presidential Records.

21. W. W. Long to Bradford Knapp, Jan. 29, 1915, Folder: South Carolina 1914–1915, Box 7, Entry 3, RG 33, NARA II; W. M. Riggs to W. W. Long, Nov. 28, 1914, Folder 108; Bradford Knapp to W. M. Riggs, Dec. 22, 1914, Folder 109; W. M. Riggs to Sec. D. F. Houston, Apr. 5, 1915, Folder 115; D. F. Houston to W. M. Riggs, Apr. 5, 1915, Folder 115, Riggs Presidential Records; Clemson University Board of Trustees, Trustee Minutes, Apr. 7–8, 1915, 955, Series 30, Clemson University Board of Trustees Records, 1888–1991, Special Collections, University Libraries, Clemson University, Clemson, SC (hereafter referred to as Clemson Trustee Minutes); W. M. Riggs to Bradford Knapp, Apr. 14, 1915, Folder 115, Riggs Presidential Records.

22. Harris, “A Ray of Hope for Liberation,” 103, Table 2: Negro Agricultural and Home Extension Agents in the Southern States and in South Carolina, and note 130; Bradford Knapp to W. M. Riggs, Dec. 22, 1914, Folder 109; Bradford Knapp to W. M. Riggs, Jan. 27, 1915, Folder 110, Riggs Presidential Records.

23. Schor, “The African American Presence in the US Cooperative Extension Service,” 34–35; US Congress, *Hearings, Report and Debate*, 3196; Harris, “A Ray of Hope for Liberation,” 103, Table 2.

24. Harris, “A Ray of Hope for Liberation,” 132; “Memorandum for Assistant Secretary Pugsley RE: Field Titles,” Mar. 10, 1923, Folder: Extension Work, Box 983, Entry

17 E, RG 16; Form 41 for Miss Willie Mae Thompson and Jesse J. Wilson, May 30, 1925, Folder: Director South Carolina, 1924–1925, Box 154, Entry 3, RG 33, NARA II.

25. See, Doxey A. Wilkerson, “The Participation of Negroes in the Federally-Aided Program of Agricultural and Home Economics Extension,” *Journal of Negro Education* 7 (July 1938): 331–44. In 1940 Wilkerson wrote *Agricultural Extension Services Among Negroes in the South*, which was published by the Conference of Negro Land-Grant College Presidents in 1942. This document included statistics on funding disparities. Wilkerson documented some cross-racial service between African-American agents and white clients such as when African-American agents were called upon to provide menial tasks such as vaccinating hogs against cholera, see, p. 9. For an example of direct response from the presidents of these colleges, see, R. B. Atwood, “Report of Study on the Organization and Administration of Cooperative Extension Work Among Negroes with a Recommendation,” reproduced in *Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Conference of the Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges*, Nov. 15–17, 1937, p. 69; D. W. Watkins to Reuben Brigham, May 20, 1940, Folder: Dir SC 1–40 [to] 6–40, Box 696; D. W. Watkins to Reuben Brigham, Dec. 19, 1940, Folder: Dir SC, 7–40 [to] 12–40, 1 of 2, Box 769, Entry 3, RG 33, NARA II. The letters Watkins describes were not in the Extension Service files.

26. Gene Cohen to Maxwell W. Rabb, Apr. 20, 1954; C. C. Lang to Frances Bolton, Apr. 23, 1954, Folder: 4-H Clubs 8–11, Box 201; E. W. Aiton to P. V. Kepner, Nov. 8, 1954; P. V. Kepner to C. M. Ferguson, Oct. 25, 1954; Sec. Benson(?) to the president, Nov. 30, 1954, Folder: Camps-Camping 2–1, Box 241, Entry 1002, RG 33, NARA II.

27. Constance E. H. Daniel to Maxwell W. Rabb, Oct. 30, 1954, Folder: Personnel, 19-2, Box 2468 E, Entry 17 Q, RG 16, NARA II.

28. Revella Clay, “Investigation Discloses National 4-H Clubs With Discrimination from Top to Bottom,” *Pittsburgh Courier*, Dec. 15, 1951, 4; USDA, Correspondence Reference Form, Sec. Charles Brannan to Ernest E. Neal, Feb. 10, 1950, Folder: Appropriations, Box 3, Entry 17 AE; John W. Mitchell to C. M. Ferguson, Feb. 11, 1954, Folder: Programs-Projects-1, Box 264, Entry 1002, RG 33, NARA II.

29. P. V. Kepner to C. M. Ferguson, Feb. 18, 1954, Folder: Programs-Projects-1, Box 264, Entry 1002, RG 33, NARA II, the emphasis is mine.

30. Exec. Order # 10590, *Federal Register*, vol. 20, no. 13, Jan. 19, 1955, 409–11; Robert Frederick Burk, *The Eisenhower Administration and African American Civil Rights* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 73.

31. E. C. Betts Jr. to Mr. Roberts, Jan. 9, 1958; E. L. Peterson to James E. Murray, Jan. 16, 1958, Box 3101, Entry 17 R, RG 16, NARA II.

32. William Peters, *The Southern Temper* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1959), 244, cited in Burk, *The Eisenhower Administration and African American Civil Rights*, 73.

33. John F. Kennedy, Exec. Order # 10925, Establishing the President’s Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, Mar. 6, 1961, press release included in Folder: Legislation, Box 56, Entry 1002, RG 33, NARA II, the full text is located at <http://www.uhuh.com/laws/donncoll/eo/1961/EO10925.TXT> (accessed Feb. 15, 2008).

34. Minutes of Meeting of Southern Directors, Sept. 11–13, 1961, Folder 1, Box 21, p. 8–10; E. T. York to George B. Nutt, June 30, 1961, Folder 7, Box 70, Series 32, Cooperative Extension Service, Administration, 1918–1987, Special Collections, University Libraries, Clemson University (hereafter CES); Biographical Summary, E. T. York, <http://>

www.ag.auburn.edu/adm/comm/agillustrated/Winter06/lifetime.html (accessed Apr. 10, 2007).

35. Luke M. Schruben to Policies and Procedures Division Office of Personnel, May 24, 28, 1962, Folder: Organization and Management, Box 67; Luke M. Schruben to William M. Seabron, July 3, 1963, Folder: Reports and Statistics, Box 75, Entry 1002, RG 33, NARA II.

36. Luke M. Schruben to Policies and Procedures Division Office of Personnel, May 28, 1962; Luke M. Schruben to William M. Seabron, July 3, 1963. The emphasis is mine.

37. Joseph M. Robertson to Lloyd H. Davis, July 8, 1963; Lloyd H. Davis to Joseph M. Robertson, July 10, 1963, Folder: Criticism and Complaints, July–Sept. 1963, Box 72, Entry 1002, RG 33, NARA II. Politicians also recognized the elimination of racially descriptive titles as a possible “shell game.” In 1965 Fay Bennett, executive secretary of the National Sharecroppers Fund, wrote Lloyd Davis, that while eliminating race-based titles was a step in the right direction, there remained a “serious imbalance in the number of Negro agents,” particularly in areas of high African-American population. Bennett encouraged “rapid implementation” of Title VI to deal with the issue. Fay Bennett to Lloyd Davis, Jan. 4, 1965, Folder 11, Box 31, Series 32, CES.

38. Jacob Javits to Sec. Orville L. Freeman, Apr. 19, 1963; E. T. York to Joseph M. Robertson, Apr. 30, 1963, Folder: Personnel, Box 74, Entry 1002, RG 33, NARA II; Bernard Anderson, “Employment of Negroes in the Federal Government,” 1225. The emphasis in this quotation is mine. Responses to various issues raised in the Penn Center Report, 1, Folder 5, Box 29, Series 32, CES. The emphasis is mine.

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