Original Article

Beyond hegemony: Reappraising the history of philanthropy and African-American higher education in the nineteenth century

Received (in revised form): 2nd October 2010

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ABSTRACT This historiographic essay urges a reappraisal of the revisionist view of philanthropy and African-American higher education in the nineteenth century as hegemonic by adopting agency as a theoretical framework to excavate the institutional histories and other primary sources on the northern black colleges – specifically Wilberforce University – for examples of active fundraising and benevolent giving by African Americans themselves. It concludes by offering lessons from history for advancement practitioners at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). *International Journal of Educational Advancement* (2010) 10, 148–165.
doi:10.1057/ijea.2010.15

Keywords: history; African-American philanthropy; agency theory

INTRODUCTION

During the past 35 years, the dominant historiography on philanthropy and African-American higher education in the nineteenth century has almost exclusively depicted relations between the two as hegemonic.¹ With emphasis on black colleges founded after the Civil War,

this literature has viewed philanthropy as a controlling force that had devastating consequences for this unique set of institutions. It presented philanthropy as something that northern whites *did* to southern blacks, sometimes out of seemingly genuine concern for the educational uplift of the largely illiterate former slaves struggling to make sense of the post-Emancipation South, but mostly out of paternalistic, condescending, self-aggrandizing and hegemonic motivations. So, the white northern

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Christian missionaries who flocked to the Reconstruction South to start schools were viewed as patronizing and supercilious because of their proselytizing agendas and dubious public versus private stances on race (Brazzell, 1992; Gasman and Sedgwick, 2005). And the northern industrial magnates were said to have used their philanthropy to protect their economic self-interest and preserve the social order by acquiescing to the South and urging for an oppressive industrial curricula over classical liberal curricula (Peeps, 1981; Anderson, 1988; Watkins, 2001; Finkenbine, 2005).

Now, this kind of interpretation of philanthropy is not unique to African-American higher education. Sociologist Robert Arnove (1980) proposed a similar view for understanding philanthropy and education more broadly. He focused on the functioning of philanthropic foundations in the maintenance of social order or creation of social change in the twentieth century. Calling them 'a corrosive influence on a democratic society,' he lambasted foundations for their unregulated and unaccountable promotion of causes and agendas that often ran counter to the needs and interests of particular groups, such as minorities and the poor, or particular societies, in the case of developing countries (pp. 1–2). Arnove anchored his analysis in the theoretical framework of cultural imperialism and Gramscian ideological hegemony. According to his view, the former accounted for the colonialist spread of foundation values and programs beyond American shores. The latter captured the intellectual, political and economic control foundations

commanded owing to their wealth and autonomy. His volume included numerous essays by an array of scholars, from different institutions and fields, who examined philanthropic influence – read as domination – in diverse areas such as social work, intelligence testing, medical education, and social and behavioral sciences. Regardless of the specific case examples, the chapters were tied together through the theme of education because Gramscian theory acknowledged the importance of schools in maintaining social order. Not surprisingly, a then up-and-coming James D. Anderson wrote one of the chapters entitled 'Philanthropic Control over Black Private Higher Education' as he was beginning the process of translating his dissertation into what would become – nearly a decade later – the revisionist classic, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860–1935*.

Joan Roelofs (2003) extended this Gramscian analysis to the realm of philanthropy and public policy. Acknowledging the influence of Arnove on her thinking, Roelofs combined hegemony with other political theories to critically assess foundations' use of civil society to 'produce consent without resort to force' in the creation of governmental public policy (p. 1). In an effort to encourage uninterested political scientists to engage philanthropy as a relevant topic of inquiry, she wrote that 'Hegemony now operates on a global scale, facilitating the globalization of both political and civil society ... Foundations provide an institutional basis for the hegemonic function ... [and] elicit consent by the production and dissemination of ideology that

appears to be merely common sense' (pp. 1–2). According to Roelofs, foundations exerted themselves through think tanks, the Academy, the media, and used their power to advance, neutralize or reform public policy on a variety of issues related to civil rights, abortion, education and the legal system. She wrote that foundations also supported and stunted a range of social change movements and organizations in the United States of America, and influenced non-governmental organizations abroad.

Now, these kinds of interpretations have great value and made tremendous contributions to the historical narrative by challenging prevailing thinking and sparking debate.² They offered a critical stance that was a welcome revision to the rash of uncritical treatments that often lauded the philanthropic work of the wealthy and their foundations, and were frequently written or funded by the 'philanthropoids' themselves (Whitaker, 1974).³ In the specific case of African-American higher education, this revisionism broadened our understanding of the dynamics, operations and philosophies of individual and institutional philanthropists. In addition, it provided insight into the perpetual questions that occupy educational historians surrounding the purpose of education, the social role of higher education and the politics of curriculum. But is hegemonic manipulation and control the only accurate and viable model for interpreting and explaining philanthropy in this historical and educational context?

This historiographic essay urges a reappraisal of the revisionist view of philanthropy and African-American

higher education in the nineteenth century by adopting agency as a theoretical framework to excavate the institutional histories and other primary sources on the northern black colleges – specifically Wilberforce University – for examples of active fundraising and benevolent giving by African Americans themselves. Although the revisionist history has advanced our understanding of the dynamics of African-American education, it is my contention that it has created a one-sided, static view of philanthropy as hegemony that is insufficient and debilitating. I will argue that three historiographical trends and flaws have maintained this static view for quite some time, and that responding to them by asking new questions and looking to neglected sources can move us beyond hegemony to a more nuanced and complex view of the functioning of philanthropy in black colleges specifically, and in the development of American higher education more broadly.

THE BROADER PROBLEM: THE ORIGINS OF THE STATIC VIEW OF PHILANTHROPY AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

Judith Sealander has warned that both critical and uncritical treatments of philanthropy can be 'grossly overdrawn' and concerns over philanthropic power greatly exaggerated (1997, p. 2). Hopefully, such caution would inspire new questions, shifts in thinking and exert greater demands upon the extant historiography on philanthropy and African-American higher education. But it is difficult to make these kinds

of adjustments given the prevailing and accepted historical narratives about black institutions. Just as historians Douglass Sloan (1971) and James McLachlan (1978) have argued that serious flaws in historical reasoning and methodology have created misinterpretations and misunderstandings about the nineteenth century liberal arts college, there are trends and flaws in the historiographies on higher education, black education and philanthropy that perpetuate a limited hegemonic view of philanthropy and African-American higher education.

First, there is a mainstream history of higher education literature that is nearly indifferent toward black colleges or perpetuates depictions of deficiency without introducing any new questions, sources or viewpoints. Jesse Brundage Sears' 1918 dissertation presented the first analytical study of philanthropy and higher education. Searching for an elusive theory of educational endowments to explain the rationale for and role of philanthropy in colleges and universities, he settled upon an economic model to literally document the plethora of philanthropic transactions that supported and sustained higher education across three centuries of development. He lauded the 'great educational foundations' of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, particularly those that funded black education, but did not include black colleges in his analysis (1990). Frederick Rudolph (1990) located black colleges in the epilogue of *The American College & University* and delivered a brief, limited overview of black higher education. He viewed most of the institutions as being undeserving of the title 'university' and

called foundation philanthropy a strengthening force for the colleges. Historians Merle Curti and Roderick Nash (1965) dedicated a chapter to black colleges in their investigation of philanthropy in higher education. They called the first black colleges 'token attempts ... to provide higher education for the Negro' and stated that 'nearly all the philanthropic support of his higher education had to come from Northern whites' (p. 168). They also wrote about the industrial philanthropists but stopped short of a hegemonic analysis by acknowledging the 'liabilities inherent' in white control of black higher education through philanthropy (p. 174). Rudolph gave slightly more depth and breadth to his coverage of black colleges though he still referred to them as 'academies' (1977, p. 148). After calling the white missionary founders of some black colleges an 'occupying force,' Rudolph mentioned the founding philanthropists' politics of curriculum and their inherent tensions with the educational aspirations of the black community (p. 149). But it was still a very static and hegemonic-focused treatment of philanthropy and black higher education. Similarly, Lucas (2006) echoed the refrain that these institutions were not collegiate before following the traditional plot involving the industrial philanthropists. His nearly 400 page work devoted little more than 12 pages to substantive discussion about black colleges, which is surprising for a synthetic text given the surge in scholarship on black higher education during the past twenty years. Predictably, Lucas did not engage the topic of philanthropy in any new way and did not move his

analysis beyond the traditional depiction of black colleges as 'underfunded and impoverished' (p. 169). John Thelin (2004) was perhaps the first historian with a firm understanding of philanthropy to engage a new comprehensive narrative history of higher education since Curti and Nash. Compared to the aforementioned historical texts on higher education, black higher education was much more prominent in Thelin's work, including his use of pictures of black undergraduates. He, too, focused on the southern colleges and recalled the familiar industrial philanthropist hegemonic narrative noting that 'large-scale philanthropy from the North tended to favor segregated black institutes and colleges whose curricula offered preparation for skilled crafts and trades' (2006, p. 102). But he also approached black colleges with a hybrid lens that included an agency orientation. He explored the efforts of Howard University and Fisk University in resisting philanthropic pressure over curriculum, but later noted the hegemonic relations spawned by a strong foundation presence on their boards. But just when it seemed he would take a nuanced view, he followed the traditional narrative by upholding the less than collegiate view of black colleges, and stated that even well into the twentieth century they educated black cohorts in 'a largely undistinguished fashion' (p. 306). So, there is a sense in this literature that black colleges are historically unimportant because they were not 'colleges' to begin with – even though most, if not all, colleges started during the same time period had such developmental periods because the

K-12 pipeline did not fully exist yet, not to mention the legal prohibition against black learning – and at best they were token institutions developed and controlled by whites with certain motivations. This mainstream telling of history has continued unchanged for nearly 50 years, despite the growth of studies on historically black colleges and universities that has developed during the same period.

Second, the view of philanthropy in the history of black education literature is obstructed because of that field's own motivations and priorities. This literature views philanthropy as just a lens through which to consider the primary subject of education, much in the way that Laurence Veysey and Frederick Rudolph were historians who used higher education to explore historical themes important to them, but had no primary commitment to higher education itself. Revisionist black education scholars like James D. Anderson had no commitment to understanding philanthropy on the whole, and were satisfied with a hegemonic picture of it because it affirmed and confirmed their worldview of black education and the realities and absurdities of black life in the nineteenth century. That said, agency is not a foreign concept to him either. Anderson (1988) did acknowledge the impact of the financial support of black Christian denominations in sustaining and insulating some private black colleges against external control. He also identified missionary philanthropy, Negro philanthropy and industrial philanthropy as three components of philanthropy and black higher education. Although he spent most of his research examining the first and the

last of these three, he did document the double taxation many southern blacks submitted to in order to fund schools for their children and the hefty fundraising campaigns executed by black communities to build Rosenwald K-12 schools. In many ways, the historical literature on black K-12 education is more focused on the philanthropic agency of African Americans than the black higher education literature. Scholars who have investigated the Rosenwald schools have pointed out the vigorous fundraising efforts of southern black communities which raised 16 percent of the total cost to build the schools – which was more than allocated by the Rosenwald Fund itself and other white donors – and amounted to nearly \$5 million over an 18-year period (1988, p. 155; Hoffschwelle, 2006). In addition, Walker (1996) and Walker and Tompkins (2004) deployed agency frameworks after assessing the kind of education that was taking place inside the dilapidated and under-resourced Jim Crow-segregated southern schools for blacks that had been summarily dismissed as inferior in every way by most previous research. Instead of focusing on resources, or lack thereof, they honed in on relations between the black teachers and their students, uncovering a vibrant, thriving academic life and social commitment that was not seen by previous researchers. A focus on the assets of these schools identified a kind of interpersonal caring that characterized teachers' commitment to their students; fulfillment of multiple roles (counselor, benefactor, encourager and racial cheerleader) to fully support the physical, emotional, social and academic development of black children; and an

institutional caring that reflected a strong curriculum, a complete extracurriculum (often personally funded by the teachers themselves), robust parental involvement and community support, and a homeroom cohort model that strengthened teacher–student relationships from entry to graduation. Walker successfully used an agency perspective to illuminate black schooling of this period because all of this occurred amidst pronouncements of the inferiority of the segregated schools' facilities, budgets, curricula, teachers and students. But this approach toward or view of African Americans has not fully made its way upward into the black higher education or philanthropy literature.

Finally, philanthropic studies and other fields that have examined philanthropy have contributed to the problem due to the limited definitions of philanthropy applied to research. Andrea Walton (2005) has argued that the 'problem of conceptions' has skewed historical research on philanthropy for some time. The tendency to construct philanthropy as the substantial monetary gifts of the wealthy has narrowed the boundaries defining what counts as giving and raised only certain acts and actors to the fore while marginalizing and excluding many others. She argued against this trend by calling for an expansion of the definitions of both philanthropy and education – to include large and small gifts of time, talent and treasure as well as formal and informal education – in order to thoroughly materialize the ways in which multiple social groups have exerted agency through giving throughout history. For Walton, doing so illuminated the presence and agency

of women from diverse backgrounds. This is also applicable to African Americans, who, in addition to being viewed as outsiders in philanthropy because of the 'problem of conceptions,' have also been marginalized because of race and class (Bielke, 2005). In research and in the public imagination, African Americans tend to be studied and perceived as only recipients of philanthropy rather than agents of or actors in it (Gasman and Sedgwick, 2005). In addition, African-American philanthropy is misunderstood and undervalued. Emmett Carson (1993) has described it as being comprised of three strands of activities: (1) self-help; (2) humanitarian aid; and (3) social change. Much attention has focused on the self-help component, which may have contributed to its discounting or neglect as philanthropy. But self-help is just one piece of African-American philanthropy which is 'a complex blend of charitable impulse and political, social, and economic activism ... [that is] distinguished by a persistent emphasis on education, both formal and nonformal, and ranging from basic literacy to advanced professional education' (Bielke, 2005, pp. 9–10). Consequently, it is essential 'to consider the role of Blacks in shaping their own institutions and communities ... [because they are] active participants in philanthropic and fundraising processes' (Gasman and Sedgwick, 2005, p. 1).

MOVING BEYOND HEGEMONY: NEW QUESTIONS AND NEGLECTED SOURCES

The three trends and flaws in the historiography need not continue

unabated and can be navigated by the posing of new questions. For instance, the mainstream history of higher education literature needs to be challenged to reexamine its own view of black colleges in consideration of the very unique context of their founding and unique needs of their students. Rather than continuing to perpetuate viewpoints of inferiority and insignificance, this literature can step back from the southern black colleges and reconsider the examples of the northern colleges – which are often brushed over – for a fresh examination of curriculum, governance, funding, organizational structure and campus life. Three of the first five black colleges on record were all founded in the North and are still in existence: Cheyney University (1837) in Cheyney, Pennsylvania; Lincoln University in Chester County, Pennsylvania (1854); and Wilberforce University in Xenia, Ohio (1856). They offer unique contexts for deep investigation as Cheyney was founded by white Quakers, Lincoln by white Presbyterians and Wilberforce by black Methodists who took control a few years after the initial founding by white Methodists. Their archives contain sources that can speak to the 'big' questions of the history of higher education and enable scholars to conduct their own Rudolphian-like analysis of black college curriculum and other issues. Black colleges and universities are indeed important and it is time for mainstream research to reflect their significance in the history of higher education and philanthropy beyond notions of control and inferiority.

The historical literature on black education can find fertile ground in the northern black colleges that predate

the hegemonic foundations which dominate its narrative. The case of Wilberforce University offers the example of a black owned and operated institution which illustrates the very definition of agency. The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church founded and maintained several colleges, and yet there have been few investigations into institutions like Wilberforce. On the specific issue of philanthropy, black educational scholars should be challenged to ask how African-American philanthropy influenced and shaped black education. During the past decade some scholars have begun to pose such questions, but have not followed through with them fully. In a nod toward an agency perspective, William Watkins (2001) made a distinction between the self-help oriented educational agenda of African Americans versus the curricula and institutions funded by the white industrial philanthropists. He also labeled the hegemonic benevolence of the industrialists as 'race philanthropy' in acknowledgement of their desire to preserve the oppressive southern social order (p. 19). But that was the extent of his analysis. Had he pursued it further he could have distinguished between the philanthropy invested *in* black education (by others) versus the philanthropy used and invested *by* blacks in their own education and opened up a new line of inquiry. Eric Anderson and Alfred Moss, Jr went a bit further in stating that 'the full story of philanthropy and black education cannot be written from the perspective of the philanthropists' (1999, p. 2). Even though this is a hopeful pronouncement, it is sadly anchored in the same assumptions that

conceptualize philanthropists as only white. But they quickly redeemed themselves by writing 'It is inaccurate to think of southern blacks as mere receivers of charity' and by recognizing that blacks contributed millions of dollars toward their education (p. 3). They also described the institutional philanthropy of black denominations such as the AME Church. However, these were deviations for the bulk of their text focused on the industrialists because they argued for a more nuanced view of them as pragmatic rather than exclusively racist. Marybeth Gasman and Katherine Sedgwick ventured the furthest in pursuing an agency perspective of African-American philanthropy and education by stating that 'the history of philanthropy and African American education is more complex than a story of unselfish giving versus manipulation' (2005, p. 3). Their edited volume presented numerous examples of black philanthropy through financial contributions and service. In the process, they raised major questions about who can be a philanthropist and how philanthropy has served African Americans throughout their tumultuous social experience.

Finally, philanthropic studies and other disciplinary investigations into philanthropy need to be reminded that philanthropy can have diverse expressions and 'multiple and shifting meanings' (Friedman and McGarvie, 2005, p. 6). Singular views of philanthropy will not serve this budding field well nor improve our understanding of the phenomenon. Consequently, historical inquiry must be open to the power, meaning, and purpose of small financial gifts and

service in searching for African-American philanthropy in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Hine, 1997). This will help enable the question of African-American agency through philanthropy to be more thoroughly explored. As 'philanthropy is a social relation of giving and getting between donors and recipients,' the long-standing hegemonic view of philanthropy and African-American higher education must be deconstructed (Ostrander and Schervish, 1990, p. 68). This would require scholars to reexamine the hegemonic relations between the industrial and missionary philanthropists and black colleges and search for what else occurred. The social relations approach to philanthropy states that recipients gain empowerment and esteem along with any material support that is part of the philanthropic exchange. Therefore, scholars would have to look for the recipients' agenda. But this analysis also requires an additional distinction in education between recipient as beneficiary and recipient as provider. The prevailing analyses have examined African Americans as recipient beneficiaries, that is, the students who ultimately 'benefitted' from the philanthropic investments of the industrial philanthropists. But we must also look at African Americans as recipient providers of education, that is, the administrators and faculty who received philanthropic investments and used them to educate their students. This requires a fundraising orientation. When philanthropy is viewed as a social relation, fundraising occurs from a position of strength not weakness. To date, fundraising by black colleges has been depicted in historical

literature as a weakness. It is described as nonexistent, unsuccessful, constantly thwarted by white racism or insignificant because of small gift sizes (McPherson, 1970; Enck, 1980; Harlan, 1983; Gasman, 2002, 2007). The early years of the northern black colleges present prime opportunities to explore the dimensions of fundraising in absence of the massive funding streams that flowed during and after Reconstruction.

On the whole, the black colleges founded in the North provide a new point of departure for an alternative viewing of the role of philanthropy in shaping black higher education. Of particular interest is Wilberforce University, an African-American controlled institution in Xenia, OH, USA. Its early experiences can help scholars take a fresh look at the cadre of black denominationally controlled institutions and what they can tell us about philanthropy and black higher education just as Johnetta Brazzell's (1992) study of a single institution shed light on missionary-founded institutions after the Civil War.

AFRICAN-AMERICANS AS FUNDRAISERS AND DONORS: THE CASE OF WILBERFORCE UNIVERSITY (OH, USA)

'Gentlemen, in the name of God, I purchase this property for the African Methodist Episcopal Church to be consecrated forever to the sacred cause of Christian education' (Greene, Jr, 1960, p. 320). With this spirited declaration – made in the spring of 1863 during a contentious board meeting of the Methodist Episcopal (ME) Church of Cincinnati, OH, USA focused on selling a financially failing

collegiate institution founded 8 years prior by the white denomination to educate blacks – Bishop Daniel Payne committed to purchasing the physical plant of Wilberforce University. He had no money. He had not consulted the other leadership of the AME Church. All he had was his faith in God (Gerber, 1976). He saw an opportunity, and he took it. In that moment, he made history as Wilberforce University became one the very first institutions of higher education for African Americans, and the first to be owned and operated by African Americans.

The wherewithal and influence of the AME Church enabled him to stake such a claim. The AME Church was among the largest black Christian denominations in nineteenth century America, and began in 1816 after black worshippers were violently removed from a prayer service at the all-white St. George's Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania because of their race. From its inception, the AME Church valued education and used its financial resources during its first century to support the establishment and development of 12 higher education institutions to uplift blacks and prepare them for Christian service (Greene, Jr, 1960).

Before the AME Church's control of the institution, Wilberforce actually started in 1856 when the all-white Cincinnati Conference of the ME Church established it to provide education for blacks in Ohio. Having abolished slavery in 1802 and serving as a prime destination on the Underground Railroad, OH, USA had a substantial free black population in the middle nineteenth century. One

estimate put 50 000 free black Methodists in the Miami district of the Methodist Church, which was located in just the southwestern portion of the state (McGinnis, 1941). This strong presence provides the context for the founding of the institution. There was a supportive sentiment amongst some white Ohioans for black education which was represented in Western Reserve University and Oberlin College's admission of blacks in the 1830s and the state's passage of legislation in 1854 to provide public schools for blacks (1941). Ohio clearly had a different climate than many other parts of the country, but there were racial tensions present as extensive race riots exploded against free blacks in the 1820s, 1830s and 1840s and these tensions periodically flared up thereafter (1941).

The Ohio Conference of the AME Church passed resolutions in the 1830s and 1840s that stressed a commitment to education. Ministers were required to preach about education several times per year and to continue learning themselves. In 1847, as an extension of this policy, the Ohio Conference of the AME Church established the Union Seminary outside of Columbus, Ohio to promote education (1941). The seminary offered a manual labor program for youth, but it barely lasted ten years, as it quickly suffered from competition from an all-black private school started in a church basement in the city of Columbus by Reverend J.M. Brown in the same year (1941). Reverend Brown's program consisted of 'primary studies' and 'higher studies' departments. The school quickly filled to capacity and, over time, pulled enrollments from the seminary as well as the local public

schools that were established by state law. Union Seminary ultimately closed in 1858. With this closure, which could be interpreted as a referendum on blacks' view of manual-industrial training, the Ohio Conference of the AME Church transferred its educational interests over to the newly founded Wilberforce University (1941).

By 1860, Wilberforce had 207 students who were mostly the mulatto children of southern and southwestern farmers and slaveholders who were sent to the north to become teachers. And while it started with an elementary curriculum, Wilberforce soon began offering classical studies, higher level mathematics and theology. Because most of the students came from the South, the start of the Civil War created problems for the new institution. The slaveholder parents began shifting their financial resources to support the war. Tuition dollars shrunk and the school faced collapse (1941). This led the Methodist Episcopal Church to close the institution and put the property up for sale; thus giving Bishop Payne the opportunity to take over control of the property on behalf of the AME Church. This is the historical context that gave birth to the Wilberforce University of today. And while it has always had white faculty members, it has been an institution largely run by African Americans; thus presenting an interesting site for inquiry into the questions of philanthropy and higher education.

Bishop Daniel Payne is an important figure for understanding the philanthropic agency of African Americans as it relates to higher education. He was the first black

individual to become a college president (1941). He has been written about extensively as a bishop, but his historical significance as a president has not made it into higher education literature. And yet he has left behind important sources that explain his life and worldview, including a memoir that has been digitized by the University of North Carolina (Payne, 2001). Born in Charleston, South Carolina in 1811, Payne was a young child when his parents died. According to his memoir, he was subsequently raised by an aunt and educated in a special school created by free blacks in Charleston. He was a very curious child and reportedly taught himself to speak Latin, Greek and Hebrew. He felt called by God to be a minister as a young child, but did not formally pursue it until a teenager under the tutelage of the ME Church. He would continue to develop in the church and also serve as a teacher. His sense of ministry and passion for education led him to believe he was divinely ordained to serve his people. He received theological training at a seminary in Gettysburg, PA, USA and thereafter began his ministry which eventually led him to the bishopric.

As president of Wilberforce, Bishop Payne provides sources for exploration of African Americans as fundraisers and donors. He traveled widely throughout the north, visiting both churches and individuals to raise money for the institution. His travels also took him to Europe where he gained audiences with numerous people. In his memoir, he wrote extensively about these travels and how he laid Wilberforce's claims before many prominent citizens. In response, he noted that 'From many

I received courteous but evasive replies; from some flat denials. Some had no time to listen to me; some had no means at hand for our cause; some were pledged to other causes; some gave a few dollars grudgingly; some gave with little solicitation; some gave kind and sympathetic words; many were engaged in helping our people through other channels' (Payne, 2001, p. 168). From these remarks, a picture emerges of a confident and bold individual who asked for financial support from a position of strength not weakness. He also added that 'some regretted inability [to give but] admitted our needs and added that our institution ought to be aided, because "it is the seed of the future"' (p. 168).

Payne also initiated many fundraising activities during his presidency which ran from 1863 to 1876. He created the College Aid Society to engage female students with married women from the local community in mutual aid and community projects. He established the Wilberforce University Endowment Association comprised of ministers from Ohio, Kentucky and Pennsylvania to raise money for the institution. In addition, the AME Church had financial agents that were raising money as well (McGinnis, 1941). Bishop Payne was widely known and was able to gain audiences with many prominent Americans such as presidents Tyler and Lincoln. But his fundraising abilities have yet to be fully explored.

Through Bishop Payne and the AME Church we can also observe African Americans as donors. As an institutional donor, the AME Church levied assessments on its membership churches and used that money to fund

education (Jacqueline Brown, 2008, personal communication). In addition to church assessments, members were also assessed between 2 cents and 1 dollar per year in order to provide relief to traveling pastors, widows, orphans and funding for Wilberforce (Smith, 2001). These interesting approaches to funding suggest not only a value for education, but a sense of responsibility for funding and providing it. There were also individual African-American donors who supported Wilberforce. Scholarships, such as the Paul Lawrence Dunbar Fund and the Walter Hall Stewart Fund were started by African Americans to support Wilberforce students (Jacqueline Brown, 2008, personal communication). Theophilus Gould Stewart, an AME bishop from New Jersey, funded the Hall Stewart Fund which was named for his son. The Wilberforce University Library maintains an archive that includes the original copy of the Book of a Million Names, which was a fundraising campaign launched by Wilberforce around the turn of the century in which it sought to engage one million people in giving. Although this participation goal was not reached, many did give and gifts are reported to range from \$1 to \$5 (Jacqueline Brown, 2008, personal communication).

Another person of interest in the matter of Wilberforce's fundraising and philanthropy is Hallie Quinn Brown (1937). She was a native of Pittsburgh, PA, USA who graduated from Wilberforce in 1873. While a student, she served as the elocutionist for the Wilberforce Grand Concert Company that traveled the country

performing to raise money for the school. She later wrote numerous books, taught at the institution and travelled to England to raise money to build a women's dorm which was erected. Brown's papers are located in the Hallie Quinn Brown Memorial Library on the campus of Central State University in Xenia, OH, USA which began as Wilberforce's normal training department but separated in the 1940s to become its own institution due to funding constraints from the State of Ohio which supported the department. Brown's travels are recorded in the collections and she has yet to be viewed from a philanthropic standpoint (Sheila Darrow, 2008, personal communication).

So, there are some overlooked sources available that can be examined in order to answer questions about the philanthropic agency of African Americans at institutions like Wilberforce University as well as the evolution of African-American higher education in general.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

For the past several decades a revisionist interpretation that views philanthropy as a hegemonic force in African-American higher education has dominated the historiography. Although it has some validity and made important contributions to our understanding, it is time to raise new questions and consult neglected sources in order to move beyond hegemony to see philanthropy and African-American higher education in their totality. Exploring the agency of African Americans through philanthropy can help with this challenge.

Wilberforce University and other northern or denominationally controlled black higher education institutions can provide new avenues for investigation into the philanthropic agency of African Americans as fundraisers and donors in higher education and the evolution of American higher education, more broadly. By reconsidering black colleges as locations for their analyses, historians of higher education can gain new insights into their guiding questions by exploring different institutional and cultural contexts. By shifting toward an agency perspective, black educational scholars can uncover new ways of using philanthropy to shed light on the educational aspirations and agenda of African Americans. Scholars of philanthropy can truly delve into the complexity of their subject which, rather than being writ large in the behemoth sized gifts of the elite, may actually be hovering in the subtleness of the widow's mite.

When we move beyond hegemony in juxtaposing the history of philanthropy and African-American higher education, we enable 'a revision of history to include and highlight those whose stories have been ignored or marginalized' (Strickland, 2007, p. 105). This can help advancement professionals at majority institutions overcome myopic views about who gives and who counts as philanthropists, and encourage an extension of greater and broader outreach to constituents never considered or overlooked for engagement in institutional life. But beyond reinforcing the notion that African Americans have a history of being donors and fundraisers and not just recipients of other peoples'

philanthropy, what does this historical essay portend for the current status of advancement at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs)? There are at least five important lessons for contemporary practitioners.

First, HBCUs must broaden their cases for support to attract more supporters. Research has shown the importance of racial uplift to HBCUs' traditional case for support (Holloman *et al*, 2003). However, because of economic, social and technological developments among African Americans in the twenty-first century, racial uplift can no longer serve as the core component of the HBCU case for support. African-American philanthropy is asserting itself by looking beyond the confines of race for giving opportunities. While HBCUs used to be the only viable option for African-American higher education, now they are not. This is keenly illustrated in the fact that America's first black president (as well as the African-American advisors in his inner circle) has an elite Ivy League education and few, if any, ties to HBCUs. Emmett Carson (2005) has argued that while African Americans still share a common skin color, they no longer necessarily possess identical experiences, homogenous viewpoints or racially circumscribed interests. He asserts that the growth of the black middle class (of which HBCUs have played an important role), diminished racial discrimination in America, decreased sense of racial obligation, and expansion of giving beyond the Black Church has caused Black philanthropy to '[more likely be] driven by individual interests rather communal needs' (p. 9). Because the individual donor's interests, values and

needs are important now more than ever, we can no longer presume the effectiveness and utility of the historical narratives that previously worked well. Consequently, while advancement practitioners at HBCUs may still allude to the historical importance and role of their institutions, it is most important to discuss current needs and opportunities and paint a picture of a desired future. As an example, Lincoln University of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, my own alma mater, has long promoted itself as the first HBCU and relied upon stories of its great alumni, like Langston Hughes and Thurgood Marshall. Although these historical connections are still important to the institution and a point of pride for many alumni, Lincoln now focuses increasing effort on promoting its use of the liberal arts and sciences to prepare students for a global and highly technological society and has set a goal of becoming a top nationally ranked institution in the next several years. The institution has increased its advancement efforts and is reporting slow but steady increases in alumni engagement.

Second, this essay's example of Wilberforce alumna and instructor Hallie Quinn Brown, who raised money for the school, emphasizes an important point. Strengthening ties between faculty and alumni and engaging alumni to solicit alumni is critical because HBCU alumni affinity for alma mater is wrapped up in relationships with favorite faculty and classmates as well as memories of experiences and events that occurred on the yard, in dorms, in convocations, and at ball games. Although it has a role to play, the

development office is not the site of alumni affinity (Gasman, 2004). Therefore, increasing efforts must be made to engage faculty and alumni in fundraising with alumni and other prospective donors.

Third, Wilberforce's example of the College Aid Society which engaged female students in mutual aid and community projects reinforces the importance of pre-alumni activities in developing a culture of philanthropy within any institution. Such activities are staples amongst majority institutional practices. And while Drezner (2008) has shown that pre-alumni efforts are not foreign to HBCUs, greater investment must be made in this area to create expectations for giving and develop future generations of donors.

Fourth, HBCUs must continue to invest in their advancement infrastructure and make it a priority in order to develop alumni giving and other private philanthropy (Gasman and Drezner, 2010). HBCUs can and should reach out beyond the African American and corporate communities, but this will require increased staffing and budget lines for advancement. As a former fundraiser in higher education myself, my largest major donor was not an alum or even a college graduate, but rather a high school graduate who wanted to ensure opportunities for others that he did not have. HBCUs can make their case to a broadened constituency because education is second only to religion in generating philanthropic support (Giving USA Foundation, 2009). Education is an extremely important philanthropic value among US donors and increasingly among donors

abroad. Given that many HBCUs have historical connections to Africa as well as internship and study abroad programs, advancement offices must look for non-traditional donors with such interests. Indeed, Wilberforce President Daniel Payne travelled to Europe in the late nineteenth century in search of philanthropic dollars, and today's HBCUs can similarly look far and wide to reach expanded audiences who value their niche disciplinary expertise or programmatic excellence, but they need the resources to do so.

And finally, African-American philanthropy is undergirded by faith and trust in institutions as well as relationships (Gasman and Anderson-Thompkins, 2003). Consequently, HBCUs must be sure they are earning the trust of current students and retaining and growing the trust of alumni and supporters. Advancement practitioners have an important role to play here through their communication channels. HBCUs must continue to assure their supporters that they are worthy of continuing support, are meeting the needs of current students, and are still relevant to their surrounding communities and the broader society. The visibility and engagement of the HBCU president is critical in this effort because he or she represents the vision, vitality and hope of the institution. Without trust in the leaders of these institutions and confidence in their current trajectories, alumni and other supporters may feel giving is not prudent and can wait until a leadership or other significant change occurs. Constituent relations and management should be a top priority of HBCUs as they assert their academic missions and seek to

understand their stakeholders' philanthropic values, interests and needs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Dr. Andrea Walton of Indiana University for her direction and support of this research as well as Wilberforce University archivist Jacqueline Brown and Central State University archivist Sheila Darrow.

NOTES

- 1 See Allen and Jewell (2002); Anderson (1988); Bullock (1967); King (1971); Nieman (1994); Peeps (1981); Watkins (2001).
- 2 For an alternate view on the power and influence of elite philanthropy see Karl (1976); Karl and Katz (1981); Karl and Katz (1987).
- 3 Laudatory or descriptive works on philanthropy and foundations that preceded the revisions of the latter half of the twentieth century include Embree (1949); Fosdick (1962); Hollis (1938); Lester (1941); Lindeman (1936).

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