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University Men, Social Science, and White Supremacy in North Carolina

By GREGORY P. DOWNS

IN NOVEMBER 1898, AS NORTH CAROLINA'S DEMOCRATS COMPLETED their violent campaign against African American Republicans and white Populists, a young Carolinian mischievously asked if white supremacy leaders were happier that the "Democrats won in the election" or that "Chapel Hill beat Virginia" in a football game. In a similarly light-hearted moment, newly elected legislator Henry G. Connor, already at work on the state constitutional amendment that would disenfranchise African Americans, teased his son Robert, a senior at the University of North Carolina (UNC) in Chapel Hill, that university president Edwin A. Alderman "had better be good to you" now that the father was on the winning side. Their joking references to the overlap between the campus and the white supremacy campaign touched on a connection that went well beyond social networks and into the world of ideas. Alderman called Henry Connor's white supremacy leadership "an act of citizenship not less heroic than going to war," and the president worked for months to lure the self-educated Henry Connor to Chapel Hill, first to give a commencement address and then, in an effort that failed, to convince him to accept a new professorship in law and political economy. In the spring of 1899, UNC's *University Magazine* published an essay titled "The Negro in the South" that used history and anthropology to justify the state's movement on the grounds that Anglo-Saxons were a "predominant race wherever they have gone." At the end of the school year, Robert Connor and his classmates on the school yearbook signaled the interaction between campus and state by dedicating the *Hellenian* to Frank Winston, an alumnus and trustee who in 1898 had directed the state's white supremacy clubs, helped Henry Connor author the disenfranchisement amendment, and "by loyal service to his State and University . . . shown himself to be a statesman and alumnus worthy of our esteem."¹

¹ Annie to Dear Mother, November 26, 1898, Box 3, Craven-Pegram Family Papers (Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University, Durham, N.C.) (first and

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It was no wonder that a white supremacy legislator claimed, “I owe all that I have in this world to the University and to the Democratic Party.” For many white supremacy leaders in North Carolina, their effort to topple the South’s strongest biracial political movement was as much a social and intellectual effort as a political one. Despite scholarly portrayals of its roots in crass ambition or personal neuroses, North Carolina’s white supremacy was in fact a mandarin moment led by a newly self-conscious group of public intellectuals. These men were participants, if not leading or systematic ones, in a global project, one in which social scientific theories of progress, race, reproduction, and degeneration inspired new waves of statist reform programs across Europe and the United States. Although their ideas were colored by their particular experiences in North Carolina, they were part of a broad current of what sociologist Edward A. Ross called “selectionist” thought. This statist approach to governance celebrated the role of educated leaders in selecting the proper aspects of society to reproduce in order to drive the nation toward progress and away from degeneration. By placing these intellectual networks at the center of the formation and dissemination of North Carolina white supremacy, this article traces the roles of ideas and of the University of North Carolina in the formation of this thinking class.²

Viewing white supremacy from the realm of campus debates seems peculiar next to the now-iconic images of the campaign drawn by scholars like Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, Eric Anderson, and Helen G. Edmonds: jostling and then bloodshed on the streets of Wilmington, vio-

second quotations); Henry Groves Connor to Robert D. W. Connor, November 10, 1898, Folder 8, Box 1, R. D. W. Connor Papers #2427 (Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; hereinafter SHC) (third quotation); Edwin Alderman to Henry Connor, November 18, 1898, Folder 40b, Box 3, Henry G. Connor Papers #175 (SHC) (fourth quotation); “The Negro in the South,” *University Magazine*, February 1899, p. 158 (fifth quotation); *Hellenian*, 10 (1899), 4 (sixth quotation); Kemp P. Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina* (2 vols.; Raleigh, 1912), II, 563–64. I want to thank Steven Hahn, Stephanie McCurry, Sheldon Hackney, Barbara Savage, Sven Beckert, Elizabeth Sanders, David Sellers Smith, Daniel Amsterdam, Bruce Kuklick, John Dittmer, David Nord, Eric Taylor, Erik Mathisen, Joanna Cohen, Sarah Manekin, Jonathan Blum, Clifford Rosenberg, Andreas Killen, William S. Powell, Liz Varon, Peter Logan, Bryant Simon, the members of the Temple University Center for the Humanities 19th Century Forum, Laura Clark Brown and the staff at the University of North Carolina’s Southern Historical Collection, the University of Pennsylvania’s Faye Rattner Grant, and the anonymous reviewers for the *Journal of Southern History*.

² W. H. Carroll to Alderman, November 23, 1898, Folder 673, Box 20, University of North Carolina Papers #40005; hereinafter UNC Papers (University Archives, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) (first quotation); Edward Alsworth Ross, “Recent Tendencies in Sociology III,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 17 (May 1903), 441 (second quotation). On the idea of a “thinking class,” see Darren Staloff, *The Making of an American Thinking Class: Intellectuals and Intelligentsia in Puritan Massachusetts* (New York, 1998).

lent attacks at campaign canvasses in the eastern Second Congressional District (the so-called Black Second), and lurid and invented stories of rape in Josephus Daniels's newspaper, the *Raleigh News and Observer*. From Edmonds's pathbreaking 1951 *The Negro and Fusion Politics in North Carolina, 1894–1901*, through works by H. Leon Prather Sr., Eric Anderson, Janette Thomas Greenwood, Kent Redding, Paul D. Escott, Dwight B. Billings Jr., and especially Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, scholars have authoritatively replaced older, heroic accounts of white supremacy with increasingly nuanced narratives of its leaders' tactics. Although Gilmore connects white supremacy to broad, if vaguely defined, intellectual trends, scholars have at times lost track of John W. Cell's comparatively driven insight that the state's segregationist movement was deeply modern and even liberal. Too easily, in less-nuanced accounts, white supremacy leaders become carriers of cultural prejudice or warriors for thwarted ambition. This personalizing historiographical strand reaches all the way back to the same Robert D. W. Connor who exchanged congratulatory letters with his legislator-father in November 1898. Robert Connor, who studied under William A. Dunning at Columbia University, served as a professor of history and government at the University of North Carolina until 1934, when Franklin D. Roosevelt named him the first archivist of the United States. Connor's 1929 book *North Carolina: Rebuilding an Ancient Commonwealth, 1584–1925* described white supremacy through emphasis on a "small group" of leaders tied together by a "high civic duty" to drive the state toward their shared vision of its future. In overturning that judgment, and treating white supremacy not as honorable but as monstrous, scholars from Edmonds on have found themselves partly trapped in Robert Connor's own analysis, reversing his lens instead of replacing it. Instead of personal honor, white supremacy became in large part a story of personal failings. The role of ideas and of the campus as the center of many of the social networks is largely absent; without analyzing those ideas and networks, scholars have oddly defanged North Carolina's white supremacy, transforming a sweeping (and hardly anomalous) program for overhauling state and society into a vehicle for twisted or crass individuals.³

³ R. D. W. Connor, *North Carolina: Rebuilding an Ancient Commonwealth, 1584–1925* (4 vols.; Chicago, 1929), II, 465 (second quotation), 479 (first quotation); Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896–1920* (Chapel Hill, 1996), 61–66; Gilmore, "Murder, Memory, and the Flight of the Incubus," in David S. Cecelski and Timothy B. Tyson, eds., *Democracy Betrayed: The Wilmington Race Riot of 1898 and Its Legacy* (Chapel Hill, 1998), 73–93; Helen G. Edmonds, *The Negro and Fusion Politics in North Carolina, 1894–1901* (Chapel Hill, 1951); H. Leon Prather Sr., *Resurgent Politics and Educational Progressivism in the New South, North Carolina, 1890–1913* (Madison,

White supremacy was broader than the university, but the Chapel Hill campus offers a useful window into the doctrine's intellectual roots and branches. Examining the ties between classroom discussions and legislative debates casts the movement in a new light, even if it does not sum up the movement, which drew on a wide range of ideas circulating back and forth across the Atlantic. University men did not have a monopoly on the language of selectionist white supremacy, although they did have a disproportionate impact on its implementation. The movement gained power from its general association with an intelligent class, rather than parochial associations with Chapel Hill. Aside from the university, Carolinians could catch hold of the currents of selectionist white supremacy through expatriates in the North, especially in articles and reviews written by former Wilmington resident Woodrow Wilson, who described Darwinian organic metaphors as the "formula of the dominant thought of the age." Wilson published his articles in magazines like the *Forum* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, edited by Cary native Walter Hines Page, who in his autobiographical novel *The Southerner* described his evolution-inspired determination to organize "society to train a scientifically high-bred race." Some ideas circulated through the progressive pulpit, including widely reprinted sermons by Shelby native Thomas Dixon Jr., then preaching in New York City, on the "Anglo-Saxon race" as the "higher zoological period of the development of man." These swirling notions of progress, race, and social evolution caught on many branches, including some not affiliated with the university at all. Nevertheless, three core political leaders were classmates and close friends at the university in the late 1870s—future governors Charles B. Aycock (the movement's lead orator) and Locke Craig (the chief speaker in the mostly white, western part of the state) and future

N.J., 1979); Prather, *We Have Taken a City: The Wilmington Racial Massacre and Coup of 1898* (Rutherford, N.J., 1984); Eric Anderson, *Race and Politics in North Carolina, 1872–1901: The Black Second* (Baton Rouge, 1981); Janette Thomas Greenwood, *Bittersweet Legacy: The Black and White "Better Classes" in Charlotte, 1850–1910* (Chapel Hill, 1994), esp. 190, 208; Dwight B. Billings Jr., *Planters and the Making of a "New South": Class, Politics, and Development in North Carolina, 1865–1900* (Chapel Hill, 1979); Kent Redding, *Making Race, Making Power: North Carolina's Road to Disfranchisement* (Urbana, 2003); Laura F. Edwards, "Captives of Wilmington: The Riot and Historical Memories of Political Conflict, 1865–1898," in Cecelski and Tyson, eds., *Democracy Betrayed*, 113–41; Stephen Kantrowitz, "The Two Faces of Domination in North Carolina, 1800–1898," in Cecelski and Tyson, eds., *Democracy Betrayed*, 95–111; Paul D. Escott, *Many Excellent People: Power and Privilege in North Carolina, 1850–1900* (Chapel Hill, 1985); Andrew James Carlson, "White Man's Revolution: North Carolina and the American Way of Race Politics, 1896–1901" (Ph.D. dissertation, Brown University, 1993); Patrick Lynn Rivers, "Civilizing Tendencies: Miscegenation and Political Thought in North Carolina, 1889–1903" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1998); John W. Cell, *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South* (New York, 1982), 176–86.

lieutenant governor Francis D. “Frank” Winston (the organizer of the white supremacy clubs). Other adherents included Harvard University graduate George Rountree, self-taught lawyer Henry Groves Connor, and mostly self-taught editor Josephus Daniels, who were not at first intimately connected with the University of North Carolina but were over time drawn into its orbit of alumni and supporters. Not all white supremacy leaders were progressive or affiliated with the university. The titular head of white supremacy, reactionary future U.S. senator Furnifold M. Simmons, was a graduate of Trinity College (now Duke University); other orators, including future governor Robert B. Glenn, had attended Davidson College, and organizers like Congressmen Claude and William W. Kitchin had degrees from Wake Forest College. Without the influence of the UNC men, some form of white supremacy would still have prevailed in North Carolina. Probably, however, that white supremacy would have been a reactionary (and anti-state university) movement like Benjamin R. Tillman’s across the border in South Carolina, which Simmons and the Kitchins seemed to take as a model and the university men as a warning.⁴

Scholars underestimated the intellectual connections between the university and the white supremacy movement partly because a central connector was far offstage in November 1898. George Tayloe Winston, older brother of white supremacy club organizer Frank Winston, had taught his brother and their friends the first modern sociology and ethnology at the university in the late 1870s, worked with them as young graduates to transform the college’s alumni networks, and then rode their support into the presidency of the university in 1891. After a short, successful tenure as UNC president, George Winston decamped in 1896 for the University of Texas, which doubled his salary in making him its first president. He left Chapel Hill to his former protégé Edwin Alderman. Ironically, white supremacy’s success would bring George Winston back to Carolina, as in 1899 he slunk away from a disastrous

⁴ Arthur S. Link, ed., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson* (69 vols.; Princeton, 1966–1994), XXIV, 416 (first quotation); [Walter Hines Page], *The Southerner: A Novel, Being the Autobiography of Nicholas Worth* (New York, 1909), 99 (second quotation); Thomas Dixon Jr., *Dixon’s Sermons: Delivered in the Grand Opera House, New York, 1898–1899* (New York, 1899), 12 (third and fourth quotations); W. Fitzhugh Brundage, “Thomas Dixon: American Proteus,” in Michele K. Gillespie and Randal L. Hall, eds., *Thomas Dixon Jr. and the Birth of Modern America* (Baton Rouge, 2006), 23–45. University graduates also stood at or near the top of the political parties the Democrats opposed. The Populists were headed by university trustee and ardent Chapel Hill backer Marion Butler, while many leading Republicans were also University of North Carolina alumni. This article argues that the particular coherence of the classes of the late 1870s and early 1880s helps explain the role of ideas in shaping the movement, not that the crises of the 1890s were fought by university men against nonuniversity men.

stint in Texas to assume, with the help of his brothers and of Connor, the presidency of the college that would become North Carolina State University. Overwhelmed by family crises, including the illness of his daughter and the near-insanity of his wife, George Winston by the early 1900s was a shell of his former self. If he was irrelevant in 1898, his influence nonetheless had been massively important in training young men in the application of Darwinian ideas and cultural anthropology to the problems of North Carolina.⁵

Winston and his progressive ideas came to the University of North Carolina during one of its most regressive moments, the 1875 meeting of trustees to reopen a university that had been shuttered to keep it from Republican hands during Reconstruction. As the trustees appointed new professors, they followed the hoary tradition of appeasing Baptists and Methodists by naming men who belonged to those sects. Near the end of the meeting, joking that they would now appease the “heathen[s],” they appointed freethinking young Cornell University graduate George Winston to a lectureship in Latin. George Winston was well known to the college, having attended it immediately after the Civil War. Like most of his peers, he withdrew when Republicans took control of the state in 1868. George Winston moved first to the U.S. Naval Academy and then to ultramodern Cornell, where he served as a lecturer after graduating. In part George Winston’s return to Chapel Hill was a restoration of the old order. A Winston served on every board of trustees

⁵ George Winston is a shadowy figure even in studies of the University of North Carolina, much less of the state. In part this is the result of his careening career. Winston’s obscurity is shared by his brothers, who also narrowly missed chances at historical fame. While their friends Charles Aycock, Locke Craig, and Henry Groves Connor became the state’s most celebrated political leaders, and Edwin Alderman, Charles D. McIver, and James Y. Joyner its most famed educational backers, Frank and Robert Winston were stymied just shy of that type of worldly success. After a term as lieutenant governor, Frank Winston’s political career was cut short; Robert Winston, despite extraordinary financial success as an attorney and some popular acclaim as an author, found no enduring audience for his increasingly idiosyncratic racial theories. Along with their career paths, the Winstons’ obscurity also stems from the family’s apparent willingness to obey their sister Alice’s lead in “burning old letters + effects that the next generation will not understand.” Alice to Dear Bro., n.d., Folder 44, Box 3, Francis Donnell Winston Papers #2810 (SHC). Although Robert W. Winston left fourteen boxes of papers and Francis D. Winston about 1,800 letters to their beloved UNC, their papers are scant for the key periods of white supremacy in the late 1890s, as is true for many prominent North Carolinians. If the Winstons did purge the letters that future generations would “not understand,” they had a soft spot for their brother George. Hundreds of his mostly undated missives were maintained in separate family folders and provide key information on George Winston’s beliefs and on the family dynamics. The lack of attention to the Winstons at heart stems from simple lack of interest, however, not the gaps in their papers. Despite George T. Winston’s tenure as president of the University of North Carolina, one box of his papers at the university’s Southern Historical Collection had been left unprocessed for a quarter century because no one had ever asked to see it. I am deeply grateful to Laura Clark Brown and the staff at the Southern Historical Collection for processing those papers with remarkable speed in order to make them available to me.

but one from 1807 to 1941. His brother Frank Winston was by legend the first student to arrive at the university following its reopening, and he would serve fifty-four consecutive years as trustee (believed to be a modern record) at the university their brother Robert called “the Mecca of our family.”⁶

George Winston returned with his two younger brothers to a different university than he and his ancestors had attended. Prior to the Civil War, the university had drawn large numbers of students from across the South, but its first post-Reconstruction classes were tiny (ten other students graduated with Frank and Robert Winston in 1879) and composed almost exclusively of North Carolina natives. In the first classes at the reopened university, George Winston lived alongside the students in the South Building, driving them hard and also earning their respect. The group came to include his brothers Frank and Robert, as well as their cohort of lifelong friends, including future governor Aycock, future governor Craig (who graduated with Aycock and thirteen others in 1880), future state schools superintendent James Y. Joyner, future university president Charles D. McIver (who graduated with Joyner and twenty-nine others in 1881), future university president Edwin Alderman (who graduated with thirteen others in 1882), and, eventually, future philosophy professor Henry Horace Williams (who graduated with fourteen others in 1883). The ties between these boys were intense and long-lasting.⁷

On campus, the young George Winston quickly became a dominant figure, a bold and taciturn and sometimes brilliant teacher on a sectarian and conservative faculty. In a memoir written forty years after his student days at Chapel Hill, Harvard instructor James Lee Love called Winston “the best teacher—with a witty sarcastic tongue; always ‘getting off’ his ‘keens’ (sharp sarcasms) at some dull fellow’s expense.” Edwin Alderman, Winston’s sometimes-protégé and successor, described him as one of only two “real modern trained men” on the faculty and “a source of real inspiration to men of my generation, who saw in him a

⁶ Robert Watson Winston, *It’s a Far Cry* (New York, 1937), 75–76 (quotations); Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, II, 94–95. On the history of the University of North Carolina, see James L. Leloudis, *Schooling the New South: Pedagogy, Self, and Society in North Carolina, 1880–1920* (Chapel Hill, 1996); William D. Snider, *Light on the Hill: A History of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill* (Chapel Hill, 1992); and Louis R. Wilson, *The University of North Carolina, 1900–1930: The Making of a Modern University* (Chapel Hill, 1957).

⁷ Robert Winston note, “Winston File,” Archibald Henderson Papers #3712 (SHC); Thomas J. Jarvis to Clarence H. Poe and Robert D. W. Connor, May 4, 1912, Box 3, Charles Brantley Aycock Collection P.C. 50 (North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh; hereinafter NCSA); Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, II, chap. 4.

man of real genius.” No one “in North Carolina has lived a more useful life or left a deeper impression upon the intellectual and social life of his time,” Alderman continued. One of Henry Connor’s sons in 1891 likewise described George Winston as “by far the most complete man in the faculty.” At about the same time, the student body voted Winston the “ablest man” and second “best liked” professor. Winston’s “stimulating genius inculcates all the youth he touches with self-reliance and the audacity to undertake large tasks,” McIver wrote in his memoirs. “In my judgment he is the most powerful vitalizing intellectual force this generation of North Carolina has furnished.”⁸

Like his idol, Cornell president Andrew Dickson White, Winston shifted with the times from classics to the emerging fields of sociology, ethnology, and natural history. Inspired by “the scientific spirit of Cornell University,” Winston “in the classroom . . . was tracing the upward movement of the race, interpreting dead civilizations and explaining their collapse,” Robert Winston wrote. George Winston claimed he tried to make “*a New University*” on the basis of four key ideas: broad-mindedness, nationalism, science, and “evolution and humanity vs. devolution + ecclesiasticism.” As Winston’s phrasing indicates, evolution to him was more than a scientific theory about the role of natural selection and variation within species. It was a broader way of defining knowledge, proof about the limitations of religiously based views of life, an analogy to be applied to human society, and a new way of understanding the future. Attracted by evolutionism’s teleologies and by the comparison of species to human societies, Winston lectured to his students about change versus fossilization and extinction, and he helped them to move from individual to social notions of progress. Winston at first held his tongue in public and hid his books in a trunk in his private library, aware that support for human evolution had deposed Woodrow Wilson’s uncle from his theology post in South Carolina, perhaps blocked his friend Walter Hines Page’s appointment at the University of North Carolina, and at times threatened his

⁸ “Recollections Written in the Library of Congress, Washington D.C. by James Lee Love, 1920–1921, Memories—Random Records Recollections,” pp. 167, 176, volume 13, James Lee Love Papers #4139 (SHC) (first quotation); Edwin A. Alderman to Woodrow Wilson, April 21, 1908, Box 2, Edwin Anderson Alderman Papers, Accession #1001 (Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville) (second, third, and fourth quotations); George W. Connor to Henry Groves Connor, March 31, 1889, Folder 25, Box 2, Henry G. Connor Papers (fifth quotation); Cornelia P. Spencer to My Dearest, April 25, 1891, Folder 40, Box 4, Cornelia Phillips Spencer Papers #683 (SHC) (sixth and seventh quotations); “Autobiographical Information,” Folder 2, Box 9, Charles Duncan McIver Records, UA 2.1 (University Archives and Manuscripts, Walter Clinton Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro) (eighth and ninth quotations).

colleague William L. Poteat at Wake Forest College, who preached about the great hope he found in a dynamic nature “born again in the impact of the evolution idea” and was castigated by parents who complained their boys were “tainted + corrupted” by his Darwinism. But in class George Winston openly professed a version of evolutionary progressivism that drew from ethnological theories and natural history.⁹

George Winston followed many sociologists of the era in connecting social progress to early racial science. Although he sometimes spoke more harshly about African Americans than did his students, they all rejected polygenesis. Classifying societies and historical progression through stages from savagery to barbarism to civilization, George Winston and his students drew on the work of early anthropologists like Edward B. Tylor to define African Americans as a “child race,” far behind whites but not necessarily doomed to extinction. Influenced by legal and ethnological scholarship that traced national development back to racial traits, the university men deeply imbibed the celebratory view of the Teuton or the Anglo-Saxon as the most progressive and civilized race, but one that was also in danger of degeneration or reversion. For the university men and for ethnologically inspired thinkers across the country, the very notion of progress became inextricably bound to particular white attributes. Combining grand, teleological theories of historical development from sociology and philosophy with ethnological studies of race difference, George Winston and his students tied the progressive future, “the upward movement of the race,” to both white civilization and intense competition. These ideas, developed at Cornell, were clarified by a summer spent at German and British universities. This bleak Atlantic crossing of advanced racial science inspired Winston’s pamphlet *The Greek, the Roman and the Teuton*, a work he distributed across the state. “Among the races of men, there is endless conflict for dominion,” Winston wrote. “The victory is ever to the strong. There is no almshouse for decrepit and pauper races.” Irish and African Americans lost this race because of inherited weakness,

⁹ Winston, *It’s a Far Cry*, 111 (first and second quotations); George T. Winston to Edwin A. Alderman, April 21, 1908, Box 12, Subseries II, Papers of the President of the University of Virginia, Accession #RG-2/1/2.472 (Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library) (third and fourth quotations); William L. Poteat, *Laboratory and Pulpit: The Relation of Biology to the Preacher and His Message. The Gay Lectures, 1900* (Philadelphia, 1901), 32 (fifth quotation); Columbus Durham to William L. Poteat, June 17, 1895, Folder 104, Box 1, William Louis Poteat Papers P.C. 91 (Special Collections Department, Z. Smith Reynolds Library, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N.C.) (sixth quotation); George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief* (New York, 1994), 22–25; Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (New York, 1991); Randal L. Hall, *William Louis Poteat: A Leader of the Progressive-Era South* (Lexington, Ky., 2000), 22–102.

while Teutons thrived because of their “inborn qualities of courage and liberty, fidelity and reverence.”¹⁰

George Winston’s ideas mattered because they were sophisticated, relevant, and contagious. In the tightly constrained world of the university, Winston’s influence was immediately apparent. While many of the faculty were old, distant, or distracted by their duties as preachers, Winston became a mentor and friend to the boys, rewriting their essays, coaching them in society debates, and acting as a second father. Immediately, his first generation of students began to imitate and creatively reinterpret the things he said in class about the genius of Thomas H. Huxley and Charles R. Darwin and the application of their ideas to society. In a sign of the complexity of these discourses, his students remade Winston’s words to fit ideas that were not Winston’s. Winston remained a *laissez-faire* Spencerian and later called Herbert Spencer “the *greatest thinker that ever lived*. . . a compound of Lodge, Webster, Burke, Bacon, Shakespeare, Jefferson, Marshall, Franklin, Lincoln + Socrates . . . the marvel of all the ages.” Winston’s students, however, immediately tied evolution and ethnology to social reform, not *laissez-faire*. In this way, many of them moved quickly from being Spencerians to reform Darwinists. By the early 1880s, students deployed evolutionary metaphors in support of a wide range of social reforms, ranging from railroad regulation to antimonopoly legislation to progressive taxation to land conservation. When the young Edwin Alderman compared societies to organisms, individuals to cells, he did so not to suggest they could be automatically governed by natural law but instead to praise antitrust reform on the grounds that it promoted proper competition and fostered “that essential Teutonic principle, equality.” In speeches at their debating societies, Robert Winston and future governor Locke Craig quoted historian Wolfgang Menzel on the evolutionary advantages of the Teutonic “royal race” to oppose the “unjust and unequal distribution of wealth” among its descendants. Although Winston was himself drawn to utilitarianism and René Descartes (and the campus’s philosophy professor mostly taught Christian ethics), Winston’s students,

¹⁰ George T. Winston, “The Relation of the Whites to the Negroes,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 18 (July 1901), 115 (first quotation); Winston, *It’s a Far Cry*, 111 (second quotation); George T. Winston, *The Greek, the Roman and the Teuton: An Address by Professor George T. Winston, of the University of North Carolina, Delivered before Several Classical Schools of the State* (Greensboro, 1884), 3 (third and fourth quotations), 4, 6, 8, 18, 19 (fifth quotation); John S. Haller Jr., “Race and the Concept of Progress in Nineteenth Century American Ethnology,” *American Anthropologist*, 73 (June 1971), 710–24; George W. Stocking Jr., *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (New York, 1968), 241–52.

especially Horace Williams, also began to find inspiration in Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's theories of the stages of social transformation, the fulfillment of individual freedom in the *Geist*, and the celebration of the just state as an expression of human will.¹¹

The students' shift toward reform Darwinism also shows the influence of positivism, Auguste Comte's philosophy of the stages of social development. It is likely that George Winston's early lectures on sociology included either Comte or Lester Frank Ward, Comte's most important American disciple, although there is no explicit record of either being taught until the 1890s. While Comte's work was complex and at times bizarre, in American liberal thought it helped provide a grounding for reform and a bulwark against individualistic Spencerian laissez-faire. Ward rejected Spencer's characterization of government intervention as an artificial infringement on competition and instead treated the state as a natural part of human society, a positive factor in social evolution. In the so-called Washington School of anthropology, Ward and his fellow intellectuals in federal service like John Wesley Powell and W. J. McGee developed theories of bureaucratic management, a celebration of the human capacity to utilize "artificial" selection in order to guide their evolutionary destiny. Mocking Herbert Spencer's philosophy of "let alone," Powell claimed that it "confounds man with the brute" and "would cover civilization with a pall and culture would again stagnate. But science rends that pall, and mankind moves on to a higher destiny." This "higher destiny" was not guaranteed, however, and Powell and others emphasized the dangers that "antagonistic competition" or laissez-faire posed to human progress. Paying attention to environment and culture, Washington School ethnologists offered somewhat optimistic readings of the future of African Americans, treating them not as archaic survivals but as a child race in need of development. In obscuring the lines between culture and biology, however, and in defining progress through the features of white civilization, these ethnologists often transformed stereotypes about races into scientific

¹¹ George T. Winston to Robert Winston, November 9, 1914, Folder 25, Box 3, Robert W. Winston Papers #2369 (SHC) (first quotation); Edwin A. Alderman, "The Influence of Corporate Power," *University Magazine*, December 1882, pp. 100–103 (second quotation on 103); Locke Craig, "Wealth—Its Unequal Distribution," *ibid.*, April 1885, pp. 273–81 (third quotation on 281; fourth quotation on 273); "The Origin of Man," *ibid.*, April 1878, p. 54; Robert Watson Winston, "Chivalry," *ibid.*, September 1878, pp. 27–31; Charles Taylor, *Hegel and Modern Society* (New York, 1979), esp. 69–134. Although Michael Dennis did not include the University of North Carolina among his Progressive southern universities of this era, his analysis largely depends on the conservatism of Francis P. Venable, who succeeded Edwin Alderman and Winston as president. Michael Dennis, *Lessons in Progress: State Universities and Progressivism in the New South, 1880–1920* (Urbana, 2001), 2.

explanations for a race's economic or sociological status. A strong influence on later Progressives, especially Edward A. Ross and Herbert D. Croly, American positivism often resolved confusion over the meaning of progress—for them a term of art—by tying it to the fate of the most powerful societies on the globe, notably America, England, and Germany.¹²

As George Winston's students imbibed his ideas, they also moved beyond them in their approach to religion. Winston was himself an agnostic who scorned the Bible, but many of his students fumbled toward early forms of the Social Gospel. Most particularly this was true for Charles Aycock, raised a Primitive Baptist. While a student, the popular Aycock was baptized (along with his friend Joyner and perhaps thirty other students) by Amzi C. Dixon, later to be a founder of American Fundamentalism and coeditor of *The Fundamentals*. Aycock as a student creatively, if crudely, combined his Christianity and Winston's sociology. Like Winston, Aycock in his student speech "Vae Victis!" argued that "the century of progress" would emerge because "the race must be to the swift, the battle to the strong." But the devout Aycock leavened this struggle with a hope that Christian altruism would save the laggards from too much suffering, a concern that did not much trouble George Winston. Winston's students learned from him a language, not an ironclad dogma. Over the next decades, their unity would be fostered not by complete agreement but by a common set of metaphors and assumptions that they could use to debate their disagreements. Like any thinking class, they neither sought nor achieved unanimity, but the way they disagreed reinforced the connections between them.¹³

Ideas flowed freely among this small cohort of university men not only because of George Winston's dynamic teaching style but also because of the intensity of their personal connections. Theirs was an

¹² W. J. McGee, "The Science of Humanity," *American Anthropologist*, 10 (August 1897), 241–72, esp. 262–63 (first quotation), 269–70; J. W. Powell, "From Barbarism to Civilization," *ibid.*, 1 (April 1888), 97–123, esp. 97–103, 122 (second, third, fourth, and fifth quotations); Powell, "Competition as a Factor in Human Evolution," *ibid.*, 1 (October 1888), 297–323, esp. 319–21 (sixth quotation); McGee, "The Trend of Human Progress," *ibid.*, 1 (July 1899), 401–47, esp. 411–14, 446; Gillis J. Harp, *Positivist Republic: Auguste Comte and the Reconstruction of American Liberalism, 1865–1920* (University Park, Pa., 1995), esp. 121; Haller, "Race and the Concept of Progress in Nineteenth Century American Ethnology," 710–24; Adolph L. Reed Jr., *W. E. B. Du Bois and American Political Thought: Fabianism and the Color Line* (New York, 1997), 119; Stocking, *Race, Culture, and Evolution*, 241–52; Christopher Lasch, *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics* (New York, 1991), 13–14.

¹³ Charles B. Aycock, "Vae Victis!" *University Magazine*, November 1878, pp. 134–35 (quotations); R. D. W. Connor and Clarence Hamilton Poe, *The Life and Speeches of Charles Brantley Aycock* (Garden City, N.Y., 1912), 42–43.

intellectual project devised by well-educated, rational individuals to promote a social development they strongly believed in. Their selectionist program was not a psychological aberration; it was a sophisticated set of intellectual ideas conveyed through respect, admiration, and love. Throughout their lives, these graduates of the first classes of the reopened university would stand by and for each other in personal and political life, orchestrating each other's campaigns, sharing legal work, and risking their own reputations for their friends at crucial moments. Within this world of intense affection and chastened ambitions, George Winston's passion for evolutionary progressivism and white supremacy passed not as wound but as gift.¹⁴

Although these North Carolinians embraced a wide range of reform, their primary progressive commitment was, as scholars like James L. Leloudis and H. Leon Prather Sr. argue, to universal public education. Education was both the due of a citizen and the key factor in elevating more people into competition. Their support for schools drew on many sources. Nearly all of them taught after graduation; those who devolved from teaching into politics held lifelong friendships with more committed educators like Alderman, McIver, and Joyner and a class interest in promoting the professional status of pedagogues. Many also shared religiously based commitments to teaching, and some were social democrats. They also argued that education served reproductive and evolutionary purposes. Education inspired progress by fostering broad views of society and higher intellectual life, and schooling also prevented racial decay by training the masses to keep "free from contact with degenerate races" and by telling students about what Alderman called "the political genius of the Teutonic mind." Students in the early post-Reconstruction days argued that education should train the people to do their "duties as citizens" to maintain the purity of the Caucasian race and defend the "cause of civilization" by insisting the "white man *must*, the white man *will* rule." Education was the only "impregnable barrier against the perilous pressure of the strong tide of foreign ignorance and vice now flooding our shores," a student announced in an 1883 speech on campus. Education was

¹⁴ By emphasizing the "pathological vein," rather than the "pathological individual," in the construction of white supremacy, I follow Kathleen M. Blee's corrective to the overly personal and psychological studies in the best work on white supremacy by scholars like Gail Bederman and Joel Williamson. Blee, "Evidence, Empathy, and Ethics: Lessons from Oral Histories of the Klan," *Journal of American History*, 80 (September 1993), 595–606, esp. 601, 606; Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago, 1995); Joel Williamson, *The Crucible of Race: Black-White Relations in the American South since Emancipation* (New York, 1984).

“an absolute condition for progress” because it worked against reversion, what Alderman called “the weary path from barbarism back to barbarism.” Alderman, who would go on to become president of both UNC and the University of Virginia as well as Tulane University, believed degeneration was possible because he saw worrisome signs of it in his tour of country schools. In small towns he found “the direst ignorance” and “no spirit of progress” among white people who “shoot squirrels + eat fruit + work about 1/3 of the time” and are “isolated, ignorant, illiterate as a rule.” Even though they possessed some good inborn traits, he worried over their future. “The leopard’s spots are not more difficult to change than fixed tendencies + types,” he wrote.¹⁵

North Carolina’s selectionist thinkers were part of a transatlantic “biologically based movement for social reform,” or soft eugenics. Although professional eugenicists like American Harry H. Laughlin and England’s Karl Pearson often focused on sterilization, the influence of eugenics was far greater among reformers who applied it in broader and more liberal ways. Treating society as an organism, this politics of heredity made the state into its evolutionary physician and used evolutionary theory in support not of laissez-faire but of statist intervention. In German *Rassenhygiene* movements devised by Alfred Ploetz and Wilhelm Schallmayer, weaker but still important British Social Hygiene efforts that tied older sanitary reform to reproduction and social evolution, and especially a French “hygienic idealism” based on “homeopathic doses of welfare” delivered by hundreds of “medico-politician[s]” of the Third Republic, European intellectuals of the era backed biologically based reforms of working conditions, taxation, pensions, alcohol use, insurance, and segregated treatment of the feeble-minded and immigrants. Although American reproductive politics was, as Laura L. Lovett argues, in part a cultural “nostalgic modernism,” many American thinkers also supported European-style statist intervention. This was because many American thinkers of the 1890s were neo-Lamarckians who believed that acquired characteristics, not

¹⁵ Lee M. Warlick, “The Race Problem in the United States,” *University Magazine*, January 1885, pp. 14–16 (first, third, fourth, and fifth quotations on 16); Edwin Alderman, “Historic Awakening in North Carolina,” *Raleigh State Chronicle*, March 7, 1892, clipping in Folder 23, Box 1, Alderman Papers (second quotation); Zebulon Vance Walser, “What Will the Harvest Be?” *University Magazine*, April 1883, pp. 295–96 (sixth quotation on 295); Untitled article about Edwin Alderman’s May 1890 speech, *ibid.*, June 1890, pp. 259–61 (seventh quotation on 260); “On Teaching History,” 1886, Folder 13, Box 1, Alderman Papers (eighth quotation); Institute Statistics 1888–1890, Folder 15, *ibid.* (ninth through thirteenth quotations); Leloudis, *Schooling the New South*; Prather, *Resurgent Politics and Educational Progressivism in the New South*.

just inborn ones, could be transmitted. Partly on eugenic terms, many supported child labor laws, the minimum wage, widows' pensions, parks, clean drinking water, liquor prohibition, and safe food to protect Anglo-Saxon workers.¹⁶

A newly self-conscious class of thinkers in North Carolina carried these ideas into the state's intellectual life in the 1880s and 1890s. This group's emergence revealed how ideas flowed in a rural state without a real metropolitan area or "intelligent or cultivated society." Instead of a major city, North Carolina had a metropolis of the mind in its university. Its clubs, publications, and reunions brought together "the rich and the fashionable" to make what Sven Beckert in his study of New York's bourgeoisie called a "common cultural vocabulary" deployed to "transcend" localism and "their particularistic economic interests." Like other Progressive professionals, these lawyers and educators developed an ideology that reflected their class interests and expertise. Their evolutionary metaphors obscured the economic roots of their programs for industrial development while also serving as a signifier of their shared tastes. In their frequent trips to campus for the university's invigorated alumni lectures and banquets, these university men could look backward to the classrooms where they heard lectures on sociology, ethnology, and philosophy that laid the groundwork for their selectionist strain

¹⁶William H. Schneider, "The Eugenics Movement in France, 1890–1940," in Mark B. Adams, ed., *The Wellborn Science: Eugenics in Germany, France, Brazil, and Russia* (New York, 1990), 69 (first quotation); Jack D. Ellis, *The Physician-Legislators of France: Medicine and Politics in the Early Third Republic, 1870–1914* (New York, 1990), 2–5 (fourth quotation on 5), 180 (second quotation), 218 (third quotation); Laura L. Lovett, *Conceiving the Future: Pronatalism, Reproduction, and the Family in the United States, 1890–1938* (Chapel Hill, 2007), 11–12 (fifth quotation on 11); Christine Rosen, *Preaching Eugenics: Religious Leaders and the American Eugenics Movement* (New York, 2004); Michael Freedon, "Eugenics and Progressive Thought: A Study in Ideological Affinity," *Historical Journal*, 22 (September 1979), 645–71; Daniel J. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (New York, 1985), 64–77; Thomas C. Leonard, "'More Merciful and Not Less Effective': Eugenics and American Economics in the Progressive Era," *History of Political Economy*, 35 (Winter 2003), 687–712; Mark H. Haller, *Eugenics: Hereditarian Attitudes in American Thought* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1963); Donald K. Pickens, *Eugenics and the Progressives* (Nashville, 1968); Wendy Kline, *Building a Better Race: Gender, Sexuality, and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom* (Berkeley, 2001); William H. Schneider, *Quality and Quantity: The Quest for Biological Regeneration in Twentieth-Century France* (New York, 1990), 3–8, 28–48; Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895–1930* (Stanford, 1997), 3–8; Clifford Rosenberg, "Albert Sarraut and Republican Racial Thought," *French Politics, Culture and Society*, 20 (Fall 2002), 97–114; Andrew Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany* (Chicago, 2001), 57–87, 111–45, 215; Woodruff D. Smith, *Politics and the Science of Culture in Germany, 1840–1920* (New York, 1991), 91–103; Sheila Faith Weiss, *Race Hygiene and National Efficiency: The Eugenics of Wilhelm Schallmayer* (Berkeley, 1987), esp. 86; G. R. Searle, *A New England? Peace and War, 1886–1918* (New York, 2004), 305–85; Theodore M. Porter, *Karl Pearson: The Scientific Life in a Statistical Age* (Princeton, 2004), 97–102, 267–92; Greta Jones, *Social Hygiene in Twentieth Century Britain* (Wolfeboro, N.H., 1986), 2–45, 88.

of politics. Looking around at their fellows who flooded the new alumni banquets, they could see the men who would play important roles in the internal party fight against the older, stagnant generation of Bourbon Democrats and, in the bitter 1898 campaign, against Republicans and Populists. In the young students who spoke at these events, they could see forward to the state they wished to create and direct. The campus had become physical grounds for intellectual and political class formation among lawyers, educators, and publishers dispersed across the state but unified in the way they thought about white supremacy and Progressivism.¹⁷

Most concretely, the university extended its influence across the state because of railroad construction. Located twelve miles from the nearest railroad station in Durham, the campus had been difficult to reach, and the village of Chapel Hill was inward-directed, isolated, and “gloomy.” When university president Kemp P. Battle needed to go to the state capitol in Raleigh, it took him nine hours to travel the approximately thirty miles. For decades university backers had tried without success to fund a railroad line. They succeeded in the late 1870s with backing from several prominent alumni including Governor Thomas J. Jarvis, who arranged for the use of convict labor, and the State University Railroad opened in 1882. During the construction, two convicts died, one shot by a guard, another whipped to death; but Battle kept the cases quiet, and the construction was hailed as a success. At the opening ceremonies, students and alumni sang, “Farewell forever, / Old road to Durham, / Farewell forever; / We’ll travel now by train.”¹⁸

Quickly, the university used this new access to the state to bring more of its alumni back to campus. Like many colleges across the country in the 1880s, the University of North Carolina began to build a self-conscious base of alumni whom the school could tap both for influence and for donations that would free the institution from overdependence on the state government or religious denominations. Not coincidentally this campaign was also led by George Winston and his protégés, especially Alderman and McIver, and not surprisingly Winston and

¹⁷Cornelia P. Spencer to June [Spencer], October 24, 1880, Folder 11, Box 1, Spencer Papers, SHC (first quotation); George T. Winston to Cornelia Spencer, April 9, 1895, Box 2, Cornelia P. Spencer Papers P.C. 7 (NCSA) (second quotation); Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850–1896* (New York, 2001), 8 (third quotation), 11, 13, 240 (fourth and fifth quotations); Thomas L. Haskell, *The Emergence of Professional Social Science: The American Social Science Association and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis of Authority* (Urbana, 1977).

¹⁸Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, II, 247–52 (first quotation on 252; second quotation on 250).

his favored students performed their roles as sophisticated university men by telling the state about their new ideas. Winston led the campus outreach to newly formed alumni clubs and delivered in the 1890–1891 school year thirty-three different lectures to seventy-five different alumni and community groups on topics like Herbert Spencer, “The Greek, the Roman and the Teuton,” and public education. Even more important, Winston and his supporters opened the campus to visitors at an unprecedented rate. First, he helped establish the university’s annual alumni banquet in 1888. There students were “introduced to people worth meeting” and delivered speeches on the ideal world that would be created if Darwin’s theories were applied. In centennial commencements in 1889 and 1895 and in a gathering of young alumni in 1890, the university brought together many hundreds of dispersed graduates to hear speeches on “Science and Character,” “Science and Faith,” “The Color Line,” “Immigration, a Menace to Civilization,” the “Influence of Corporate Power,” “Evolution in Politics,” the “Safeguarding of Citizenship,” “The Conquering Race,” and “Manifest Destiny and Manifest Duty,” which celebrated “the Teuton” as “the noblest race that has existed” and “the most progressive.” In 1891 the alumni association broadened its efforts to unify the state’s elite by including non-graduates who were among UNC’s “staunchest friends,” a group that included newspaper editor Josephus Daniels, who had attended a summer law session but not the undergraduate program. By 1892 seventy-five of the four hundred members of the alumni association had never attended the university.¹⁹

Although Winston’s first students became the most important disseminators of these ideas, discussion of these topics on campus grew even more fervent in the 1880s and 1890s. In essays and speeches Winston’s students deployed early anthropology for a variety of causes. Racism supported the redistribution of wealth because “oppressed” white laborers were being denied the protection and encouragement that their Anglo-Saxon heritage demanded. Like many early environmentalists,

¹⁹ Winston, *Greek, the Roman and the Teuton*; Untitled article, *University Magazine*, July 1888, p. 280 (second quotation); Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, II, 449 (third quotation), 450 (fifth, sixth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth quotations), 451 (fourth and tenth quotations), 516 (seventh, eighth, and ninth quotations); Minutes, February 11, 1890, Volume S-8, Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina Records #40001; hereinafter Board of Trustees Records (University Archives, Wilson Library); Untitled article, *University Magazine*, new ser., 9 (No. 6, 1890), 343; Untitled article, *ibid.*, 277 (fifteenth quotation); Samuel Lee Davis, “The Evolution of Nations,” June 4, 1891, Series 2, Subseries 1, Box 2, Dialectic Society Records #40152 (University Archives, Wilson Library); Report of the Visiting Committee of 1894–1895, Subgroup 1, Volume 9, Board of Trustees Records.

the students connected ethnology, social progress, and conservation in a mutually constructing discourse that placed the forests at risk of “useless destruction” at the hands of “ignorant” immigrants and African American voters. Preserving the land, therefore, depended on preventing unprogressive races from voting. Numerous essays advanced the celebratory story of “our English blood,” “that pure Saxon freedom,” and the “germs” of “Aryan” civilization as prods not to stasis but reform. University of North Carolina students had long declaimed the virtues of Anglo-Saxon heritage, but the justifications for Anglo-Saxon superiority shifted during Winston’s tenure from chivalric literature to social science. Teutonic theory was not a sidecar to the reform impulse; it was an engine.²⁰

No one embodied the complex formation and ultimate success of the state’s thinking class more than Henry Groves Connor. Well known but self-educated, Connor learned about the new ideas in social science by reading and exchanging letters with a small number of close friends. He kept his distance both from the university and from elective politics in the 1880s and early 1890s. Forced to drop out of school at a young age by the death of his father, Connor was self-conscious and shy around intellectuals and consistently refused invitations to commencements at Chapel Hill because he felt “out of place” on a college campus. Nevertheless he sent his sons, including future historian Robert, to become “high minded men” at the university. As Henry Connor’s family became more closely associated with Chapel Hill, he slowly embraced it too, urged on by his sons and by his friend Robert Winston. Throughout the 1890s, the elder Connor corresponded about social progress, Christianity, and race with his lifelong mentor George Howard, a university trustee. By the mid-1890s, Connor was clearly thinking hard about the relationship of social science to state politics but was not yet fully aligned with the university men, even though he broke his self-imposed rule about appearing on campus in order to attend his son’s commencement. Curious and independent, Connor had come to these ideas on his own. By 1898, however, as the white supremacy campaign emerged from the core group of university men, Connor worked closely with university men both on the campaign trail

²⁰ J. T. Strayhorn, “The Patriot’s Hope,” *University Magazine*, June 1883, p. 151 (first quotation); “Senior Speakings,” *ibid.*, April 1885, p. 290 (second and third quotations); “Priceless Heritage of Our English Blood,” *ibid.*, 286–89 (fourth and fifth quotations on 288); Marion Butler, “Past and Present Phases in Teutonic Character and Literature,” Series 2, Subseries 1, Box 1, Dialectic Society Records (sixth quotation); Lucius P. McGehee, “The Civilization of the Ancient Germans,” *University Magazine*, January 1886, p. 79 (seventh quotation).

and on campus, sharing the podium at canvasses and judging with them debates at Chapel Hill. In 1899 the self-educated Connor would be offered (and turn down) a university professorship of law and social science.²¹

Along with networks of men, these languages traveled through reinforcing webs of women. In Goldsboro, a key site of white supremacy organizing, a group of prominent Chautauqua ladies—including the mother of feminist Gertrude Weil—discussed evolution, human progress, and social reform during the lead-up to the 1898 campaign. Many women and some men attended lectures there by eugenic feminist Charlotte Perkins Gilman on the “organic theory of social development,” “the whole progress of the world,” “the women’s movement,” “the child question,” and “the application [of progress] to individual character.” Around the same time, Sallie Southall Cotten, an active club organizer, lobbied state leaders to pay homage to Virginia Dare, the first Anglo-Saxon child born on the North American continent. For Cotten, the moment that convinced her that the Anglo-Saxon was the “dominant spirit of progress in the world” was the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where she wandered the exhibit and began to discard her customary racism for a more modern version. Later she argued that “real progress” depended on having “at last disfranchised the negro.” The key selective advantage Anglo-Saxons had over other races lay in their eugenic commitment to their women. In turn, white women encouraged progress by picking suitable mates.²²

As George Winston and his students sought to remake the state, they also remade the campus. In 1891 the university presidency came open. Although the spot had traditionally been reserved for a retired politician, Charles McIver and university “mother” Cornelia Phillips Spencer organized young alumni into a party to work on George

²¹ Henry G. Connor to My Dear Kate, May 18 (quotation), May 28, 1889, Folder 26, Box 2, Henry G. Connor Papers; Connor to Alderman, September 2, 1896, Folder 658, Box 20, UNC Papers (second quotation); Alumni Meeting, May 29, 1899, Series 1, Vol. S-22, Philanthropic Society Records #40166 (University Archives, Wilson Library).

²² Diary entries, May 20, 21, 1898, Vol. 38, Series VIII, Charlotte Perkins Gilman Papers #177, Mf-1 (Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.) (first through fifth quotations); “A National Training School for Women,” Folder 24, Box 3, Cotten Family Papers #3589 (SHC) (sixth quotation); Cotten to My Dear Friend, August 11, 1900, Folder 1, Box 1, *ibid.* (seventh and eighth quotations); Sallie Southall Cotten, *History of the North Carolina Federation of Women’s Clubs, 1901–1925* (Raleigh, 1925), 1–3; “2nd Address to Winterville Mother’s Club,” Folder 20A, Box 2, Cotten Family Papers; Chautauqua Records, December 1894 to February 1896, Box 70, Gertrude Weil Papers P.C. 1488 (NCSA); Dana Seidler, “Unnatural Selection: Mothers, Eugenic Feminism, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s Regeneration Narratives,” *American Quarterly*, 55 (March 2003), 61–88; Kline, *Building a Better Race*.

Winston's behalf in the fight between "'the old' and 'the new'" to "take hold here + run the machine." At the alumni banquet that followed Winston's election, the "progressive spirit that pervaded the majority of that body" led them to cheer the election of "that able, progressive and popular" George Winston, "instead of some old-line politician." Immediately Winston sought to reshape the faculty. Particularly important was his hire of Horace Williams, a former Winston student who had studied at Yale Divinity School, at Harvard, and in Germany. When Methodists schemed to place an old clergyman in the philosophy department, George Winston and his former students mobilized in Williams's behalf. "You may form as many alumni associations as you please, may plaster the state with them," one young alumnus wrote to outgoing president Kemp Battle, "[but] you will never get a healthy enthusiasm for the University if the sectarian bigots are pandered to, and the young alumni and their wishes are absolutely ignored." Once hired, Williams transformed what had been the department of Christian philosophy into the department of philosophy (mocking those who criticized this by asking if they meant to teach "Christian mathematics") and nudged the university "out of its formal orthodoxy into a Liberalism." Winston for his part gave Williams total freedom. "Change anything except the number of hours in class," Winston wrote. Williams mostly used that freedom to talk about Hegel. Frequently assigning his mentor Charles C. Everett's *The Science of Thought*, Williams urged his students to cast off their limited understandings of truth rooted in southern traditions, the Democratic Party, or Christian churches. Williams also lectured on Benjamin Kidd's *Social Evolution*, supervised a master's thesis on Herbert Spencer, preached evolution as an established fact at a local Methodist service, and was denounced as a "heathen." At first Williams's notions of rationality, state power, and the limits of democracy seemed to confirm white supremacy's goals, and many of its leaders utilized his Hegelian language in support of their ideas about the transformative power of the state. They also took inspiration from his definition of freedom as the right to subordinate oneself to a virtuous society or, in Aycock's language, "the liberty" only to "do right." Over time, Williams's concepts opened up other pathways. His friend Robert Winston eventually retired from law to study under him, and Winston devised strange solutions for the race problem, calling (in an essay reprinted by black nationalist churches) for massive self-governing reservations for African Americans. Most famously, Williams's unorthodoxy would influence his favorite student, future

UNC president Frank Porter Graham, who in the mid-twentieth century would emerge as an icon of southern moderation.²³

To find new professors in geology and biology, Winston toured northern universities, including Johns Hopkins University, Cornell, and Harvard, and consulted with leading figures like geologist and racial theorist Nathaniel Southgate Shaler. The new geology professor whom Winston hired from Harvard, an “evolutionist from turret-stone to foundation-stone,” lectured extensively in class about ethnology and physical anthropology, tracing the distinctions between different human races. Whites’ “advanced” culture, “thought[,] and imagination” grew from “inherent traits fixed at a very early period” through a combination of heredity and adaptation, this teacher claimed. Applying these concepts to sociology was a task Winston first reserved for himself. For pedagogy he hired his old protégé Alderman, who would later take over Winston’s classes in sociology.²⁴

Along with overhauling the university’s teaching, George Winston worked to extend its influence across the state. In part this was simple necessity. For decades jealous Methodists and Baptists had tried to slash the university’s state funding, driven by suspicion of Episcopalian and Presbyterian dominance on campus, questions about the university’s secularism, and a desire to build up their own private colleges. During the 1890s, these anti-funders found allies among the base, although not the leadership, of the Populist and Democratic Parties. In legislative sessions in 1893, 1895, and 1897, sectarians seemed to be on the verge of cutting public funding for the university. Forced to defend it, previously

²³ Mrs. George T. Winston, “Cornelia Phillips Spencer,” November 22, 1904, Folder 96, Box 10, Spencer Papers, SHC (first quotation); George Winston to McIver, March 19, 1891, Folder 5, Box 1, McIver Records (second quotation); Cornelia Spencer to James Love, June 7, 1891, Folder 42, Box 4, Spencer Papers, SHC (third quotation); Clinton (N.C.) *Caucasian*, June 11, 1891, p. 1 (fourth, fifth, and sixth quotations); Haywood Parker to Dear Doctor, June 2, 1890, Folder 1, Box 1, Henry Horace Williams Papers #1625 (SHC) (seventh and eighth quotations); Henry Horace Williams, *The Education of Horace Williams* (Chapel Hill, 1936), 5 (tenth quotation), 11–14, 62 (ninth quotation); George Winston to Williams, June 12, 1890, Folder 1, Box 1, Williams Papers (eleventh quotation); Robert Watson Winston, *Horace Williams: Gadfly of Chapel Hill* (Chapel Hill, 1942), 44–45 (twelfth quotation on 45); Charles B. Aycock, *Why Prohibition Should Prevail: Indisputable Argument by Ex-Gov. Chas. B. Aycock at the Academy of Music, Wilmington, N.C., Thursday, April 2nd, 1908* (Wilmington, N.C., 1908), 10 (thirteenth and fourteenth quotations); Jas. O. Carr, “Philosophy Lectures by Prof. H. H. Williams, U.N.C., ’94–’95” (North Carolina Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill); Williams to George Winston, February 27, 1890, Folder 611, Box 18, UNC Papers; Charles C. Everett, *The Science of Thought: A System of Logic* (Boston, 1869); Benjamin Kidd, *Social Evolution* (1894; rev. ed., New York, 1920). There was competition for the progressive laurels in 1891, and some young alumni preferred Alderman, who would go on to a brilliant academic career.

²⁴ “Organic Evolution,” June 17, 1924, Folder 208, Box 6, Cobb Family Papers #4008 (SHC) (first quotation); “Types or Races of Men,” undated, Folder 214, *ibid.* (second, third, and fourth quotations); Thesis, February 14, 1887, Folder 225, *ibid.*

apathetic alumni (including Populist and Republican leaders) coalesced into a far more coherent and self-conscious force. George Winston, who led the 1893 and 1895 fights in the legislature, found Raleigh “full of old Uni students, of all ranks + professions . . . They all stood close for [Chapel Hill] . . . clapping him on the shoulder . . . betting on him at every turn.” After securing continued funding from the legislators, Winston contrasted North Carolina to South Carolina, where reactionary leaders like Ben Tillman shared Winston’s commitment to white supremacy but not to reform or education. The “influence of the University . . . has prevented our state from becoming ‘Tillmanized’” and handed over “to pigs + pigmies,” he wrote in characteristic language.²⁵

This generation of university men had largely wandered away from the Democratic Party or from politics altogether during the reactionary 1880s and the turbulent early 1890s, but between 1896 and 1898 they coalesced into a political machine. They shared commitments to building a modern regime of white supremacy, public education, and state expansion. Henry Connor exemplified this trend. In the mid-1880s he had abandoned a flourishing political career in the legislature and state judiciary for private practice. By 1894 Connor, like many Progressives, did not “want to have anything to do with politics” because “insidious influences” corrupted the “hearts and minds of the people.” Four years later, however, Connor was elbows-deep in politics, helping run the white supremacy campaign, serving as Speaker of the House in the 1899 disenfranchisement legislative session, and ascending first to the state supreme court and then to the federal bench. This shift was extreme but not unusual. Robert Winston, Charles Aycock, and Frank Winston had all drifted away from politics into private law practices in the 1880s. Shut out by the reactionary Democratic leadership, this young generation of reformers had turned their attention to education, to their private lives, and to their intellectual development. As 1898 approached, however, they drew together, finding purpose in their joint project to wrest control from the state’s governing coalition of mostly white Populists and mostly African American Republicans.²⁶

²⁵ Spencer to June, February 26, 1893, Folder 55, Box 6, Spencer Papers, SHC (first quotation); George T. Winston to Spencer, April 9, 1895, Box 2, Spencer Papers, NCSA (second and third quotations); Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, II, 516–26; Spencer to George T. Winston, March 26, 1895, Folder 23, Box 3, Robert W. Winston Papers; Frederick A. Bode, *Protestantism and the New South: North Carolina Baptists and Methodists in Political Crisis, 1894–1903* (Charlottesville, 1975).

²⁶ Connor to Howard, August 20, 1894, Folder 33, Box 3, Henry G. Connor Papers (first quotation); Connor to William Bynum, August 6, 1894, Folder 11, Box 1, William Preston Bynum Papers #117 (SHC) (second and third quotations); Connor to Howard, November 11, 25, 1898, Folder 40b, Box 3, Henry G. Connor Papers.

During the campaign, state thinkers worked with unprogressive party leaders like Furnifold Simmons to reshape first the Democratic Party and then North Carolina. At times, these campaigners sounded like their schoolboy selves even as they appealed to some of the least literate voters in the nation. On the stump Locke Craig quoted Menzel's history of the "royal" Teutonic race to prove that the white supremacy campaign was the culmination of a natural evolution in human society in which "North Carolina too is the Anglo-Saxon's heritage." Blocking its forward movement "will be like attempting to drive back the ocean's waves with a straw broom," wrote a reporter paraphrasing Craig. In lectures during and after the campaign, Frank Winston, "Danton of the North Carolina revolution" for "Blut und Rasse," frequently credited whites' "sway" to the gendered nature of Anglo-Saxon superiority, rooted in Englishmen's unwillingness to breed with "savage women" and their commitment to racial purity, shown by their bringing white women to North America. Like Sallie Cotten, he gave a eugenic, evolutionary cast to oft-repeated valorizations of white womanhood. During the campaign, white women in white dresses played prominent roles in public events, standing on platforms and waving signs that said "Protect Us." These public performances of white women not only spoke to rape fears, white virility, and white male control; they also suggested that white supremacy was a reproductive politics to make a healthier society.²⁷

These appeals to Anglo-Saxon pride resonated during the summer of 1898 as the United States' war with Spain escalated. Because war propagandists quickly turned to racist portrayals of the Spanish and celebratory declarations of Anglo-Saxon progress, war rhetoric reinforced and naturalized statewide oratory. The "great conquering, civilizing, dominating, colonizing, educating, humanizing White Race" had been "reunited" by a war against a "race of blood-thirsty savages." A much-quoted editorial by North Carolina's leading Presbyterian minister aligned white supremacy at home and abroad as a simple product of the "Anglo-Saxon race instinct." Speakers described a global struggle in which the Anglo-Saxon would not submit "in Carolina or

²⁷ Reidsville *Weekly Review*, July 14, 1899, p. 2 (first quotation); May F. Jones, ed., *Memoirs and Speeches of Locke Craig, Governor of North Carolina, 1913-1917: A History—Political and Otherwise, from Scrap Books and Old Manuscripts* (Asheville, N.C., 1923), 29 (second quotation); *Charlotte Daily Observer*, May 13, 1898, p. 4 (third quotation); Archibald Henderson, "Francis Donnell Winston," [UNC] *Alumni Review*, November 1942, p. 13 (fourth and fifth quotations); Roanoke Island Oration, undated, Folder 61, Box 4, Francis Donnell Winston Papers (sixth and seventh quotations); *Raleigh News and Observer*, June 27, 1900, p. 1 (eighth quotation); Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*, 91-118.

in Massachusetts, in India or China or Africa or the Philippines.” They also revived a proudly exclusionary strand of American political philosophy, one that celebrated disenfranchisement of Puerto Ricans and Filipinos abroad and African Americans at home as a “necessary abandonment of our French revolution philosophy that all men are fitted for self-government.” Defining exclusion as “the very central idea upon which the Republic is founded,” newspapers proclaimed that “no man has a right to vote” and proved it by mocking the notion that “all could take part—women, children, idiots, lunatics, foreigners, the [im]moral and the vicious.”²⁸

Many orators also appealed to vernacular strands of racism. If North Carolina’s white supremacy was an intellectual movement behind the scenes, on the stump it was often crude and raw. Aycock, an adept cultural translator, spoke the language not only of evolutionary progressivism but also of the blood-cult of white violence. As Aycock proclaimed, true whiteness was evident in the determination to punish opponents, including by lynching. (Later, as governor, the statist Aycock would move to reduce lynchings and impose rule of law.) “You white men of Cabarrus don’t even wait for the law when the negroes have dishonored your helpless, innocent women,” Aycock told a cheering crowd. “It was like a thunderbolt,” the reporter wrote. “The room went wild. Men sitting rose unconsciously to their feet! The thunder of the cheering rose and fell and rose again.” Although Aycock claimed that he was “tired of strife and bloodshed,” his words “made the faces of women whiten with fear while the cheeks of men burned red with anger and indignation.” During one speech, attorney George Rountree “started to endeavor to inflame the white men’s sentiment” and found “that they were ready to kill all of the office holders and all the Negroes.”²⁹

White supremacy’s leaders coalesced around ideas, but they triumphed at the polls through violent intimidation. In scripted performances during the campaign, so-called Red Shirts claimed ownership of public space for Democrats and wrote Republicans and African Americans out of political life. At meetings across the state, Red Shirts chased Populists away from parades amid “rioting and bloodshed,”

²⁸ *Wilmington Messenger*, October 25, 1898, p. 2 (first quotation); Thomas Dixon Jr., *The Leopard’s Spots: A Romance of the White Man’s Burden—1865–1900* (1902; new ed., New York, 1906), 412 (second quotation); *Reidsville Weekly Review*, March 18, 1898, p. 2 (third quotation); *Raleigh News and Observer*, October 29, 1898, p. 3 (fourth and fifth quotations); *ibid.*, October 23, 1898, p. 4 (sixth quotation); *ibid.*, June 10, 1900, p. 12 (seventh, eighth, and ninth quotations).

²⁹ *Charlotte Daily Observer*, September 13, 1898, p. 8 (first through fifth quotations); George Rountree, “Memorandum of My Personal Recollection of the Election of 1898,” Folder 41, Box 3, Henry G. Connor Papers (sixth and seventh quotations).

egged Populist speakers, tore them from their stands, and dragged them away. In Pender County, the Red Shirts “marauded the county at least three times a week at the dead hours of midnight, with Winchesters and pistols,” and told whites to “fall in ranks with them if they wanted to be respected any more by decent white people and that it was no use to vote against them.” When terror did not keep African Americans away from the polls, Democrats resorted to force. In one contest, Red Shirts stationed “men and boys” at “street crossings” to “turn back or run off every colored man.” In Lexington, “they had 47 armed officers—armed with clubs on election day.” Democrats also took control of the election returns, hiding unfavorable ballots and manufacturing useful ones. “The truth is we had no election in this county,” a Hertford County Populist wrote. “The Democrats voted their own way but refused to let the other side vote.” In the infamous Wilmington massacre, an army of prominent white men, laborers, and members of the Naval Reserves staged an attack on African Americans and a coup against city officials. “We are just shooting to see the niggers run,” one white man said.³⁰

The division between their high-minded belief in progress and their reliance on violence produced an intense anxiety among the thinking class. In a series of surprising and sometimes self-serving letters, disenfranchisement mastermind Henry Groves Connor and his mentor Judge George Howard worried about their support for Red Shirts and for the Wilmington massacre. Connor called the campaign “in many ways distasteful” and “full of complications.” Howard did not “see how it could be otherwise yet I feel uncomfortable about us.” As Connor fought “to destroy” African American political power in the state, he feared that he and his allies had stirred “the minds and feelings of the people more deeply” than intended. Connor and Howard’s sometime ally George Rountree called it a “transition period,” in which “we see through a glass darkly; the future presents a vista baffling and confusing to my mind.” The “vile ambitions and low instincts of men of our race” posed an “awful” problem, Howard wrote to Henry Connor, “with so many tendencies to the degradation of both races.” With his fears of degradation, Howard raised the possibility that the electoral

³⁰ Charlotte *Daily Observer*, August 2, 1900, p. 2 (first quotation); Raleigh *Caucasian*, September 20, 1900, p. 1 (second and third quotations); *ibid.*, June 15, 1899, p. 2 (fourth, fifth, and sixth quotations); *ibid.*, August 9, 1900, pp. 1, 3 (seventh, eighth, and ninth quotations); *ibid.*, August 16, 1900, p. 1, September 20, 1900, p. 1; Desk Book (“File Account of the Race Riot in Wilmington, 1898”), Box 21, Cronly Family Papers (Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University) (tenth quotation).

violence might reverse the evolutionary process and nudge whites back into savagery.³¹

More telling than these intellectuals' anxiety was the way they resolved it. Conflicted by their commitment to white supremacy and their valorized concept of progress, they turned for solace not only to their Bibles but also to sociology and cultural anthropology. Even as Howard fretted, he also began to "feel hopeful that our Christian civilization will be able to master it." He found this hope in a now-forgotten but once-famous book of popular sociology by British civil servant Benjamin Kidd, a defender of education and imperialism. Less than a week after the 1898 election and its accompanying violence, Howard deciphered his friends' "underlying motives" and relieved his "perplexities" by reading "again Kidd's *Social Evolution* (the most comforting book to me outside the Bible) and in its light, the 'late unpleasantness' was simply natural evolution—an evil preventing a much greater evil." Before and after the campaign, Connor also turned to the "fresh and interesting" Kidd for support in reconciling his beliefs in evolutionary progress, Christian altruism, and white supremacy. In speeches celebrating rationality and expertise, Connor warned that advancement depended on maintaining the political power of the progressive race, the "saner citizenship," or "the Teutonic." That race alone had "developed the power of self-government" and "transmitted" this capacity to their offspring. In his growing conviction that he was part of a global struggle against regression, Connor discovered "something divine" in his work to protect African Americans' schools and eliminate their votes. In a speech to the Trinity College Historical Society, Connor claimed that "the healthy laws of political life have not been permitted to operate" through "want of a healthy-minded citizenship." Solving the racial problem required not just "the subordination of an inferior race" but also the elimination of "constant antagonism and struggling for supremacy" that brought the "worst of both races . . . into play." Although he felt "dread" about political compromises "before me," Connor came to believe he led a "campaign of which I shall never be ashamed."³²

³¹ Connor to Howard, November 11, 1898, Folder 40a, Box 3, Henry G. Connor Papers (first, second, and fourth quotations); Howard to Connor, October 18, 1898, *ibid.* (third quotation); Connor to Howard, November 25, 1898, *ibid.* (fifth quotation); Geo. Rountree to Dear Judge, n.d., Folder 115, Box 8, *ibid.* (sixth and seventh quotations); Howard to Connor, October 29, 1898, Folder 40a, Box 3, *ibid.* (eighth, ninth, and tenth quotations).

³² Howard to Connor, October 29, 1898, *ibid.* (first quotation); Howard to Connor, November 14, 1898, Folder 40b, *ibid.* (second, third, and fourth quotations); Connor to William P. Bynum, August 6, 1894, Folder 11, Box 1, Bynum Papers (fifth quotation); Henry G. Connor, "A Saner Citizenship," in *An Annual Publication of Historical Papers: Published by the Historical Society of Trinity College*, ser. IV

In quoting from Howard's and Connor's letters, historians have cited their shame but not its resolution, using the correspondence more to damn the pair than to illuminate their thinking. In part this is due to the obscurity of the writer they discussed that fall, Benjamin Kidd. Although Kidd sold more than 250,000 copies of *Social Evolution* and was hailed as a "social prophet," he is now remembered as a conservative because of his intense opposition to socialism. A self-taught civil servant, Kidd was a protégé of Lord Alfred Milner, high commissioner for Southern Africa during the Second Boer War. Writing in the metaphors of reform Darwinism, Kidd in his 1894 book *Social Evolution* revised Herbert Spencer's teleological view of the future. Like many other 1890s social scientists, Kidd argued that human civilization was a product of artificial, not natural, selection and found evolutionary justification for state intervention, not laissez-faire, "a period beyond which we have progressed." Kidd especially supported educational reform to create, in a phrase he coined, "equality of opportunity" to widen the pool of competition. Kidd posited a "*slow but steady degeneration*" that could only be averted by strict governmental intervention, thus adding a dash of pessimism to Spencer's more hopeful account. Kidd also attempted to reconcile the atheistic Spencer with Christianity through the concept of altruism, the evolutionarily selected religious concern for others that made it possible for society to function not as an aggregate of individuals but as a unified social organism. Kidd emphasized the role of competition among groups, especially societies and nations, rather than among individuals. Although an autodidact, he had a sharp eye for scientific developments and traveled to Germany to investigate August Weismann's new germ-plasm theory, which Kidd then introduced to English-language audiences. During 1898, at the urging of expatriate North Carolinian Walter Hines Page (a friend of several of the university men), Kidd toured the United States to promote the Spanish-American War as one stage in an Anglo-American alliance based on shared racial "social efficiency" to control the world's resources, an idea he published in his 1898 *The Control of the Tropics*.³³

(Durham, N.C., 1900), 33–36 (eleventh quotation on 34; twelfth quotation on 33; thirteenth quotation on 35; fourteenth and fifteenth quotations on 36), 44–46 (tenth quotation on 46); Raleigh *News and Observer*, January 29, 1899, in Folder 44, Box 3, Henry G. Connor Papers (seventh, eighth, and ninth quotations); Connor to Howard, November 11, 1898, Folder 40b, *ibid.* (sixteenth and seventeenth quotations); Connor to Howard, October 28, 1898, Folder 40a, *ibid.* (eighteenth quotation).

³³ D. P. Crook, *Benjamin Kidd: Portrait of a Social Darwinist* (New York, 1984), 3 (first quotation); Kidd, *Social Evolution*, ix (fifth quotation), 39 (fourth quotation), 252–53 (second and third quotations), 254; Kidd, *The Control of the Tropics* (New York, 1898); Theodore Roosevelt, "Degeneration and Evolution. II—Kidd's *Social Evolution*," *North American Review*, July 1895, p. 109.

To manage this crisis of degeneration, Henry Connor, Rountree, Josephus Daniels, and Frank Winston settled on a disenfranchisement plan that favored not only white politicians but also particularly those politicians who appealed to the educated class. The constitutional amendment disenfranchised African Americans and many poorer whites by a literacy test, a poll tax, and a grandfather clause that gave a temporary seven-year reprieve to illiterate whites whose ancestors had been eligible to vote in January 1867. In the campaign for the ratification of the amendment in August 1900, university men did their most impressive work when they defended this clause as science, not prejudice, by drawing directly from George Winston's old classroom talks. Like Winston, they quoted Menzel's history of the "royal" Teutonic race to prove that white North Carolinians, "though sometimes unlettered," had inherited the right to vote "from their ancestors," in Locke Craig's phrase. Or, as Aycock said, white men "had a right to vote by inheritance" of the "blood of the dominant race." Connor assigned an assistant to read up on Aryan scholarship that Connor could use to justify the grandfather clause. "Of course none of us regarded it as perfect, but it was the best that could be done," he later wrote to reformer Edgar Gardner Murphy. After the amendment passed, voting retracted dramatically, by about one-third, or a hundred thousand ballots, between 1900 and 1904. The extent of the disenfranchisement surprised Connor, who believed a minority of twenty-five thousand African Americans would still vote.³⁴

Their antidemocratic, racist claims were by no means peculiarly southern or anti-intellectual. Many North Carolinians argued that their Jim Crow program was "not the slightest different" from Massachusetts's efforts to "protect the state from ignorant foreigners." By treating suffrage as a "privilege not a right," national intellectuals were together trying to prevent regression and antagonistic competition by keeping "all those immigrants" and "a large number of stupid negroes" from taking control of the government, a North Carolina disenfranchisement leader wrote. In February 1899, as North Carolina's public thinkers crafted the disenfranchisement amendment, American Anthropological Association founder and president W. J. McGee told the Washington

³⁴Reidsville *Weekly Review*, July 14, 1899, p. 2 (first, second, and third quotations); Charlotte *Daily Observer*, July 1, 1900, p. 7 (fourth quotation); Hugh Talmage Lefler, ed., *North Carolina History Told by Contemporaries* (Chapel Hill, 1956), 409 (fifth quotation); Connor to Edgar Gardner Murphy, n.d., Folder 10, Box 1, Edgar Gardner Murphy Papers #1041 (SHC) (sixth quotation); Connor to Howard, November 3, 1902, Folder 67, Box 5, Henry G. Connor Papers; Connor to My Dear Bishop, February 7, 1907, Folder 98, Box 7, *ibid.*; Thomas Ruffin Jr. to Henry G. Connor, January 15, 1900, Folder 44, Box 3, *ibid.*

Academy of Sciences that “viewing the human world as it is, white and strong are synonymous terms.” Although southern politicians were by far the most successful at disenfranchisement, their efforts paralleled what the leading historian of American voting called the “Redemption of the North,” a national retraction of suffrage through efforts to bar resident aliens and paupers from voting, require Australian or secret ballots, and implement de facto literacy tests. These northern and western efforts had roots in transatlantic exchanges like United States senator and former Harvard history professor Henry Cabot Lodge’s 1895 discovery of sociologist Gustave Le Bon’s *Psychology of Peoples* during a vacation in France. Fired by his reading of Le Bon’s racial theories, Lodge began a long campaign as a “scientific modern historian” to reduce the influx of Asians and eastern and southern Europeans. For Lodge and his supporters in the Immigration Restriction League, race included not merely physical characteristics but also acquired intellectual and moral ones, “an indestructible stock of ideas, traditions, sentiments, modes of thought, an unconscious inheritance from their ancestors, upon which argument has no effect.” As with Progressives across the country, North Carolinians tied their narrow view of who should vote to a broader conception of what voting should mean. Their three signal achievements, disenfranchisement, Prohibition, and local school taxes, each became law through a Progressive tool, popular referendum. In their beliefs, North Carolina’s university men largely tracked their most successful friends, Princeton University professor Woodrow Wilson, editor Walter Hines Page, and minister and novelist Thomas Dixon, each of whom learned a version of evolutionary progressivism at Johns Hopkins University and fled North Carolina in part because of the fossils who ruled it in the 1880s.³⁵

State thinkers supported Jim Crow segregation partly as a eugenic program to prevent antagonistic competition and racial regression. The 1899 legislature passed laws requiring railroads and steamboat companies to provide separate accommodations by race, and education laws passed in 1901 and 1903 explicitly reinforced the exclusion of any child

³⁵ Raleigh *Caucasian*, February 23, 1899, p. 1 (first and second quotations); George Rountree, “Memorandum of My Personal Recollection of the Election of 1898,” Folder 41, Box 3, Henry G. Connor Papers (third, fourth, and fifth quotations); McGee, “Trend of Human Progress,” 446 (sixth quotation); Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* (New York, 2000), chap. 5 (seventh quotation); Henry Cabot Lodge, *Speeches and Addresses, 1884–1909* (Boston, 1909), 247, 251, 252 (eighth quotation), 262 (ninth quotation), 263; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1955), 142–54; Matthew Pratt Guterl, *The Color of Race in America, 1900–1940* (Cambridge, Mass., 2001), 95–109, 39–47.

with a remote strain of African American ancestry from white schools. In 1907 the legislature mandated segregated streetcars and established the first state-supported (rather than locally funded) public schools with the provision that they be segregated. Eventually, the state segregated textbooks themselves in a measure likely designed to prevent contagion or contamination. The most remarkable segregation law, however, may have been the separate beds bill put forward by Frank Winston in 1899. The act would have prohibited sexual relations between the races. The bill gained some support in early readings, perhaps because legislators did not want to be on record against it, but it was tabled before it could pass. While it is simple to dismiss this law as an absurdity, and in fact it met with mockery and laughter among the press and Winston's peers (some of whom believed Frank Winston had conducted a long-term affair with an African American woman), the proposal nonetheless illuminates the striking gap between selectionist white supremacy and older patterns of racism. Earlier racism did not denigrate but often celebrated white male access to black women. By drawing a legal line against sexual congress, Winston pushed the rationalizing and eugenic nature of his cause to its limit. If intermixture between whites and blacks threatened degeneration to both races, then white power alone would not be enough to save society. Instead, the health of the society depended on the state's medical intervention to separate the races entirely, a point reinforced by Thomas Dixon in *The Sins of the Fathers*, in which a white man kills himself for shame at having fathered a mixed-race child. At this point, however, the overlap between popular and intellectual white supremacy collapsed, and Frank Winston's solution was greeted with scorn and confusion.³⁶

The theory of eugenic separation grew from ethnological claims that African Americans were a child race, capable of degrading not only themselves but also whites and yet perhaps not relegated to extinction. This was no North Carolina peculiarity, but the idea was fully on display in a regional context in the spring of 1900, between North Carolina's disenfranchisement legislative session and the summer

³⁶ Charlotte *Daily Observer*, January 29, 1899, p. 8; Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*, 71; Thomas Dixon Jr., *The Sins of the Fathers: A Romance of the South* (New York, 1912); C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (3rd ed.; New York, 1974), 97, 100–102; Pauli Murray, comp. and ed., *States' Laws on Race and Color* (Athens, Ga., 1997), 329–38; Edmonds, *Negro and Fusion Politics*, 88, 95, 189; Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill, 1996), 3. On rumors of Winston's affair, see "Winston File," Henderson Papers. The file contains undated notes about gossip at the 1904 Democratic State Convention that Winston had a black mistress named Lucy Cooper.

ratification election. At a major conference on southern race problems at Montgomery, Alabama, reformer Edgar Gardner Murphy and a series of scientists and politicians led open-ended discussions on the future of race relations in the South. The problem of the South, the opening speaker proclaimed, was how to provide justice for all races “without placing a shackle on progress, or weakening a civilization which is solely the work of the dominant race.” For some speakers, the answer lay in leaving African Americans to extinction, “the death of the unfit” that one called “some modern work of hygiene.” Although Cornell statistician William F. Willcox scolded his southern colleagues for their terminology—telling them to abandon the archaic “Anglo-Saxon” for the more scholarly “Teutonic”—he did not disagree with their conclusions. Other participants, however, applied science to support coexistence. The closing speaker, New York congressman W. Bourke Cockran, told the conference that African Americans were not on a path to extinction but instead on a slow, four-thousand-year journey to equality. In the interim period, however, the “barbarism” of African Americans threatened to draw whites back into “savagery.” Therefore, as another speaker said, social progress depended on disenfranchisement and “SEPARATION.”³⁷

While radical Carolinians argued for extinction, North Carolina’s university men relied on education and segregation to forestall their fears that African Americans might degenerate and take the state with them. Defending funding for African American education even while insisting that those schools be segregated, these white men made a case for African American schools based on ethics, class interest, and soft eugenics. They did so at some political risk. In the aftermath of the vicious 1898 campaign, many white legislators saw no reason to contribute anything to African American schools. Treating governance as race war, these radicals tried in 1899 and again in 1901 to slash African American school funding dramatically by limiting it to tax revenues drawn from African Americans. In 1899 and 1901, Henry Connor led the fight against “that danger.” Selectionists’ support for education had its limits; many of them assumed inferior African American schools would guide pupils into industrial work. “The negro is yet a child,

³⁷ *Race Problems of the South: Report of the Proceedings of the First Annual Conference Held under the Auspices of the Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South at Montgomery, Alabama, May 8, 9, 10, A.D. 1900* (Richmond, 1900), 24 (first quotation), 25–28, 30–31, 38, 44, 49, 56 (eighth quotation), 149, 153 (fourth and fifth quotations), 156, 178–85 (second quotation on 185), 188–94 (sixth and seventh quotations on 188; third quotation on 189), 206, 216.

grown up in body and physical passions, weak in judgment, foresight, self-control and character," George Winston told the Fourth Conference for Education in the South. "It will take several centuries yet to make him a man The white race . . . must be his teacher and guardian." In unrestrained, antagonistic competition, the "most highly developed, the most masterful, the all-conquering Anglo-Saxon race" would almost certainly grind the "childlike and helpless" African Americans "to powder." Although Winston expressed skepticism about the "the savage negro," he held open the possibility that managed, emulative competition could in the long run lift African Americans to stand "side by side with the white man, his equal, if God has so decreed."³⁸

Excluding African Americans from white schools grew not only from a hygienic concern with intermixture and degeneration but also from selectionists' view of schooling. In office, they at first expanded schools within the locally dispersed system, creating new taxation districts, consolidating inefficient ones, and campaigning in referenda to increase local school taxes. In 1901 the state made its first-ever direct appropriation of tax money for public schools. In 1907 North Carolina established its first rural high schools, and in 1913 legislators passed the state's first compulsory attendance law. Education served reproductive ends. The state university, by combining "sons of poor men" and "old family stocks," promoted "good ancestor material" by teaching "some pride of race" to "ungainly" boys and fitting them to "beget children," Alderman wrote. Embracing the idea that the "white man . . . shall rule in the South, because he is fittest to rule," Alderman claimed that uneducated "plain people" could be a progressive force because they inherited "the English temperament." Along with maintaining racial hygiene, education also encouraged social efficiency by lifting more people into competition. In a speech at the University of Texas, George Winston argued that public schools lifted "plain people" into rigorous competition, in which "one-third will die ruined by over-study . . . one-third will die of disease contracted by vice and dissipation . . . [and] the other third will rule the world." In his many speeches on education, Aycock relied on analogies with horse races, since anything "good for plant life and for animals" was "good for humanity."

³⁸ Henry Connor to Murphy, n.d., Folder 10, Box 1, Murphy Papers (first quotation); George T. Winston, "Industrial Training in Relation to the Negro Problem," in *Proceedings of the Fourth Conference for Education in the South: Held at Winston-Salem, North Carolina, April 18, 19 and 20, 1901* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1901), 104–7 (second through eighth quotations on 106–7); Williamson, *Crucible of Race*, 6, 274–75; George T. Winston, "The Influence of Universities and Public Schools on National Life and Character," June 17, 1896, Folder 23, Box 3, Robert W. Winston Papers.

To avoid a “scrub race,” Aycock wanted the schools “to put these strongest and best in competition one with the other until the fullest power of each shall be developed.” All along, Aycock and his peers waged public war against deeply entrenched resistance to taxation. Connor mockingly claimed that voters saw the word *tax* as “the quiver of the serpent’s tail[,] . . . the glitter of his sparkling eye,” and the “venomous breath” of his “wicked tongue.” Beset by those political realities, the university men cobbled together a modern state piece by piece.³⁹

Over the next decades these university men and their successors implemented a wide range of reforms that transformed North Carolina into one of two models of southern Progressivism; the other was Georgia, whose white supremacy campaign had been led by Hoke Smith, the son of a University of North Carolina professor and a friend to several of North Carolina’s university men. Tracing further the long-term influence of selectionism in North Carolina—the “Wisconsin of the South”—is a longer project, but early eugenic ideas continued to play a role in public life. The work of university men in public health posed no inherent paradoxes or complex reconciliations of progress and tradition but was a natural extension of their work for segregation and disenfranchisement. Progressives immediately expanded the regulation of public water and in 1905 established a state hygiene laboratory. In 1908 the state opened its first tuberculosis sanatorium to treat patients and segregate them from society. In Charlotte white supremacy leader Alexander J. McKelway led doomed, eugenically motivated efforts for child labor laws to prevent white racial degeneracy. With the help of a million-dollar donation from John D. Rockefeller, the state in 1910 commenced the North Carolina Campaign against Hookworm Disease. Although North Carolina like other southern states was slow to follow the national trend toward hard eugenics and sterilization, after World War I North Carolina would become a leader in other eugenic programs, such as encouraging breast-feeding and birth control, and later

³⁹ To the Board of Trustees, December 31, 1898, Folder 674, Box 20, UNC Papers (first, second, and third quotations); Edwin A. Alderman, “The University of Today; Its Work and Needs,” *University Magazine*, June 1900, pp. 288–90 (fourth, fifth, and sixth quotations on 290); “Obligations and Opportunities of Scholarship,” Folder 53, Box 1, Alderman Papers (seventh, eighth, and ninth quotations); George T. Winston, “The Influence of Universities and Public Schools on National Life and Character,” June 17, 1896, Folder 23, Box 3, Robert W. Winston Papers (tenth and eleventh quotations); *Raleigh News and Observer*, April 18, 1908, p. 5 (twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth quotations); Untitled speech, n.d., Folder 437, Box 28, Henry G. Connor Papers (fifteenth through eighteenth quotations); “Inauguration of President Alderman, January 27, 1897,” Folder 38, Box 1, Alderman Papers. Although Joel Williamson defines Alderman as conservative and Winston as radical, their racial thought was closely related through the 1890s and early 1900s.

in the twentieth century the state would forcibly sterilize 6,700 women in the nation's longest-lasting eugenics program.⁴⁰

The state's broadest selectionist intervention was the prohibition of liquor, which first spread in local measures and then was passed in a state-wide referendum in 1908. Partly a moral campaign waged by Baptists and Methodists and partly a women's campaign led by a new class of activist reformers, Prohibition in North Carolina was also grounded in early eugenics. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) particularly dedicated itself to the hereditary consequences of alcohol abuse, arguing that drinking caused deviations among offspring but that quitting saved both the man and his descendants. In the group's *Union Signal* journal, writers during the 1908 North Carolina Prohibition campaign quoted Darwin and the WCTU's founder, Frances E. Willard, on "the law of descend of inheritance, of pre-natal influence, of the determining of destiny before a human being has ever known an independent heartbeat." Writing in a state WCTU newspaper, Elizabeth Ivey called alcohol "race suicide." Prohibition speakers carved out special roles for women in society as reproducers and transmitters and demanded that the state protect these pure women from the evils of liquor: "the future of the country" depends "upon the girls." Roused from semiretirement, Charles Aycock quoted Thomas Huxley and dusted off the old horse-race analogies to declare that "this would be a better race if everybody about that child was made strong. . . . Be the true North Carolinian that your ancestry calls upon you to be." If Carolinians trailed their northern and western allies in most areas of state building, in Prohibition they and their southern compatriots led the way. North Carolina followed closely behind Georgia and Mississippi in banning alcohol statewide and sparked enthusiasm among other southern states. Together, southern selectionists and religious leaders reinvigorated a faltering Prohibition movement and spurred the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment.⁴¹

⁴⁰George B. Tindall, "The Significance of Howard W. Odum to Southern History: A Preliminary Estimate," *Journal of Southern History*, 24 (August 1958), 285–307 (quotation on 289); William A. Link, "Privies, Progressivism, and Public Schools: Health Reform and Education in the Rural South, 1909–1920," *ibid.*, 54 (November 1988), 623–42; Link, *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880–1930* (Chapel Hill, 1992); Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South, 1913–1945* (Baton Rouge, 1967), esp. 1–32, 219–54; Dewey W. Grantham, *Southern Progressivism: The Reconciliation of Progress and Tradition* (Knoxville, 1983); Grantham, *Hoke Smith and the Politics of the New South* (Baton Rouge, 1958); Greenwood, *Bittersweet Legacy*, 230–36; Johanna Schoen, *Choice and Coercion: Birth Control, Sterilization, and Abortion in Public Health and Welfare* (Chapel Hill, 2005); Katherine Castles, "Quiet Eugenics: Sterilization in North Carolina's Institutions for the Mentally Retarded," *Journal of Southern History*, 68 (November 2002), 849–78.

⁴¹Chicago *Union Signal*, February 20, 1908, p. 5 (first quotation); Greensboro *North Carolina White Ribbon*, February 1908, p. 7 (second quotation); Charlotte *Daily Observer*, February 23, 1908, p. 1 (third and fourth quotations); Aycock, *Why Prohibition Should Prevail*, 9–10

North Carolina's place in the national conversation on race and progress changed in the 1920s and 1930s. Led by Franz Boas, anthropologists at first slowly and then quickly transformed their discipline into one that questioned, rather than reaffirmed, notions of racial distinction. Sociologists and anthropologists also narrowed their focus, turning toward empirical questions about social processes and away from broad stories of social evolution. Over time, northern and western state politics changed, too, in part because of the influence of immigrant populations who clung stubbornly to their voting power. By contrast, North Carolina's white supremacy leaders were the victims of their own success. Made rigid by their near-absolute triumph in state politics, they calcified while their national contemporaries were forced into broadening alliances. Both the Carolinians' standing at the turn of the century and their future trajectory were evident in a fascinating conference in April 1901, seven months after North Carolina voters passed the disenfranchisement amendment. The American Academy of Political and Social Science gathered in Philadelphia for a discussion on "America's Race Problems." There, George Winston addressed arguably the broadest audience of his career, alongside eminent sociologist Edward A. Ross and the young W. E. B. Du Bois.⁴²

The most immediately effective speech was Ross's plenary address titled "The Causes of Race Superiority." In it he introduced his theory of the "race suicide" that followed prosperity, as the most evolutionarily fit people had the fewest children. Sounding a natalist alarm that would be picked up enthusiastically by Theodore Roosevelt, Ross helped inspire a new stage in selectionist politics. Ross, who would go on to serve as president of the American Sociological Society and who helped found the American Association of University Professors, outlined two key fallacies that troubled racial science. One was the error of equality, the other the mistaken belief that all race differences were

(fifth quotation); Carol Mattingly, *Well-Tempered Women: Nineteenth-Century Temperance Rhetoric* (Carbondale, Ill., 1998); Jack S. Blocker Jr., *"Give to the Winds Thy Fears": The Women's Temperance Crusade* (Westport, Conn., 1985); Ian R. Tyrrell, *Sobering Up: From Temperance to Prohibition in Antebellum America, 1800–1860* (Westport, Conn., 1979); Tyrrell, *Woman's World/Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880–1930* (Chapel Hill, 1991); Ann-Marie Szymanski, "Beyond Parochialism: Southern Progressivism, Prohibition, and State-Building," *Journal of Southern History*, 69 (February 2003), 107–36; Ruth Bordin, *Frances Willard: A Biography* (Chapel Hill, 1986); Daniel Jay Whitener, *Prohibition in North Carolina, 1715–1945* (Chapel Hill, 1945).

⁴² "America's Race Problems: Addresses at the Fifth Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, April 12–13, 1901" [title of the issue], *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 18 (July 1901); Elazar Barkan, *The Retreat of Scientific Racism: Changing Concepts of Race in Britain and the United States Between the World Wars* (New York, 1992).

caused by heredity and not condition. This openness to environmental explanations perhaps foretold Ross's future transformation. By the 1930s he critiqued racial science and repudiated some of his earlier work. In 1901, however, Ross plunged back into ephemeral racial distinctions and their relationship to progress. For Ross, "progressiveness" itself was a racial trait, defined by "the spirit of adventure, migrancy," the "disposition to flock to cities," "a courageous confidence," the preference for ideas over sensual pleasure, and the "*pride of blood*" that prevented "hybridism." *Race* and *progress* were not precise synonyms, but the concepts mutually defined each other in his thinking, making white qualities inherently progressive, even if progressive qualities were not inherently white.⁴³

In "The Relation of the Whites to the Negroes," George Winston blamed emancipation for African American reversion. Winston illustrated this degeneration with vicious phrases about the "black brute . . . lurking in the dark, a monstrous beast, crazed with lust. His ferocity is almost demoniacal. A mad bull or a tiger could scarcely be more brutal." Winston paired this description with violent images of whites gathering for a lynching. This disconcerting start seemingly transformed racist propaganda into science while also suggesting (as propaganda did not) that whites were in danger themselves of reversion. After this beginning, Winston settled down, asking whether African Americans were "capable of development" and seeming to answer in the affirmative. As a "child race," African Americans needed "tutelage" to acquire positive characteristics that they could pass on to their offspring and thus "aim at white civilization." Without assistance African Americans would be buried under antagonistic competition. But with industrial training and guidance into proper competition, African Americans could "grow from childhood into mature manhood; and in the providence of God may yet" move "from barbarism to civilization." Winston spoke within the framework of evolutionary progressivism, but his talk was crude and sketchy even by the standards of the day. In his time as a university president, he had lost track of scholarship and fallen behind the times. At his new university in Raleigh, he would drift into sycophantic admiration of millionaire mill owner and rigid Spencerian Daniel A. Tompkins. By the time Winston died in the

⁴³ Edward A. Ross, "The Causes of Race Superiority," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 18 (July 1901), 67–89, esp. 67–70 (second through fifth quotations on 68) and 85–89 (first quotation on 88; sixth and seventh quotations on 85); Lovett, *Conceiving the Future*, chap. 4; Sean H. McMahon, *Social Control and Public Intellect: The Legacy of Edward A. Ross* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1999).

1930s, he would be, in his brother Robert's words, a "partial invalid . . . shattered and bed-ridden," raving about the evils of politician Al Smith, alcoholic immigrants, and the New Deal government's self-defeating efforts to annul "Herbert Spencer's rule of the survival of the fittest and the perfectibility of man."⁴⁴

Du Bois's speech was acknowledged as the finest of the conference, and it would be easy and perhaps reassuring to portray it as a scientific rebuttal to Winston's inappropriate conflation of bias and anthropology. The story, however, is murkier. As Adolph L. Reed Jr. and others have argued, Du Bois drew heavily on notions of civilization and social transformation he had learned at Harvard and in Germany, ideas rooted deeply in ethnology, Hegelian philosophy, German rationalist historicism, and ethnological ideas about race. The narrow terms of the disagreement between Du Bois and Winston suggest that North Carolina's university men were close to the intellectual mainstream of the moment. Du Bois admitted that wide gaps might exist, at least temporarily, in "race psychology," a phrase likely taken from *Le Bon*. Therefore, Du Bois accepted "that a partially undeveloped people should be ruled by the best of their stronger and better neighbors for their own good." He critiqued not the idea that African Americans were a child race but the duration of their passage to adulthood. Du Bois also favored "purg[ing] the ballot of ignorance, pauperism and crime" as long as these restrictions were "legitimate." Rather than arguing against the primacy of selection, Du Bois offered a theory of empirical, "honorable" selectionism that turned "the survival of the fittest" into "the triumph of the good, the beautiful and the true." Du Bois contrasted that to the South's perverted selectionism, in which "weak and despised" freedpeople had been cheated thoroughly by "stronger, richer and more resourceful fellows." Worse, "the personnel of the successful class is left to chance and accident, and not to any intelligent culling or reasonable methods of selection." Even here, Du Bois blamed not the "best" southern men but poor whites, "thrifty and avaricious Yankees," and "shrewd and unscrupulous Jews" for the situation in the South. In an insight that eluded Winston or Ross at the time, however, Du Bois recognized the limits of statist reform, noting that statism was simultaneously the best method of solving problems and a nearly irresistible "temptation" to tyranny. Over the next few years, Du Bois worked to push ethnology toward

⁴⁴ Winston, "Relation of the Whites to the Negroes," 105–18, esp. 105, 109 (first quotation), 115–18 (second and third quotations on 115; fourth and fifth quotations on 116; sixth and seventh quotations on 118); Winston, *It's a Far Cry*, 328–32 (eighth quotation on 332; ninth quotation on 329).

“a conscientious study of the phenomena of race contact,” launching a massive and hopeless study of Lowndes County, Alabama, and writing a novel that deployed evolutionary language to show African American progression. By trying to differentiate the notion of progress from its association with whiteness, Du Bois attempted to rescue the concept from its own linguistic associations, to orphan it from its discursive heritage. In defining the problem, however, Du Bois fell into the very vocabulary he seemed to be critiquing. The “characteristic of the age,” he said, was the often-murderous contact of “European civilization” with the “world’s undeveloped peoples.” In associating whites with “civilization” and other races with a lack of development, Du Bois found himself trapped in a web of words around race, progress, and development, a web it would take him a decade to escape. Even though he pointed in a different direction, in 1901 he and George Winston were still speaking the same language.⁴⁵

⁴⁵W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, “The Relation of the Negroes to the Whites in the South,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 18 (July 1901), 121–40, esp. 121–27 (first, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth quotations on 121; fifth, sixth, seventh, and fifteenth quotations on 122; twelfth and thirteenth quotations on 126; tenth and eleventh quotations on 127), 130–32 (third and fourth quotations on 130; second quotation on 131; eighth, ninth, and fourteenth quotations on 132), and 139; Mia Bay, *The White Image in the Black Mind: African-American Ideas about White People, 1830–1925* (New York, 2000), 201; Maria Farland, “W. E. B. Du Bois, Anthropometric Science, and the Limits of Racial Uplift,” *American Quarterly*, 58 (December 2006), 1017–45; David Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868–1919* (New York, 1993), 139–40; Reed, *W. E. B. Du Bois and American Political Thought*, 39–45, 91, 119–24; Keith E. Byerman, *Seizing the Word: History, Art, and Self in the Work of W. E. B. Du Bois* (Athens, Ga., 1994), 55; Arnold Rampersad, *The Art and Imagination of W. E. B. Du Bois* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), 27.