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The Changing Emphasis of the Rosenwald Fellowship Program, 1928–1948

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In 1928, as part of a broad-based philanthropic agenda, the Julius Rosenwald Fund established a fellowship program that enabled hundreds of African Americans to obtain graduate and professional education. This article reviews the history of this program, the candidates chosen for fellowships, and their majors. It concludes that the program experienced three distinct stages that reveal shifting philanthropic priorities. The first stage reflected accordance with Booker T. Washington's Hampton–Tuskegee accommodationist model of industrial education. The latter stages evidence closer alignment with W. E. B. DuBois's noninstrumentalist emphasis on classical–liberal curricula and the production of an elite "Talented Tenth."

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Although the period from 1890 to 1920 was marked by rapid growth in the number of state normal (or teacher training) schools and other teacher education institutions, the need for Black teachers in the southern states during the 1920s and 1930s remained critical. In 1928, it was estimated that at least eight thousand new Black teachers were needed just to fill the vacancies in the region's public schools that year (Anderson, 1988). The supply of Black teachers was related to the need for Black local, county, and state school supervisors and for advanced training for already-certified Black teachers. It was also crucial to the further development of the nation's historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), and to the continued development of an African American educational leadership.

An early U.S. Bureau of Education survey of HBCUs confirms the interdependence of elementary, secondary, and higher education for African Americans (Klein, 1929). According to that study, Blacks' higher education affected their mass education by ensuring the proper training of elementary and secondary teachers, adding to the economic stability of the race, and augmenting the Black professional and technical class. A later survey executed by Fred McCuiston (1933), a field representative for the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (SACSS) regional accrediting agency, concurred, noting that the chief aim of graduate instruction in historically Black schools was the preparation of teachers for normal departments (McCuiston, 1933). However, under the segregation-era system of education in the American South there was little opportunity for Blacks to obtain graduate and professional training. Blacks were denied admittance to southern White schools, and few historically Black institutions during the 1920s and 1930s had the necessary resources of faculty, library holdings, and laboratory facilities to support graduate training.

One exception to this rule was Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College in Texas. The dual system of education in that state provided no local opportunities for

Black Texans to pursue advanced degree work, yet the state held Black teachers to the same certification standards as White teachers. To address the need for qualified Black teachers, a graduate department was established at Prairie View during the 1930–31 academic year. According to Frazier (1933), the purpose of graduate study at this institution was as follows:

. . . to give certain exceptional students an opportunity to do advanced study. . . with a view to making more effective teachers for the Secondary Schools and Junior Colleges, and to provide, at least, a general training in the use of the more simplified instruments of research and investigation of a practical nature. (p. 333)

Indeed, chief among the reasons for Blacks' increased demand for graduate opportunities were the advanced requirements for teacher certification set forth by SACSS and other regional accreditation agencies in the late 1930s. Accordingly, Black principals of southern secondary schools seeking a "first" or highest rating were required to have a master's degree or its equivalent. Previously, the segregated system had often permitted Blacks who had less training than Whites to hold teaching certificates. As the accreditation movement gained steam, however, new standards related to conditions of rank and tenure at institutions of higher learning were established. The doctor of philosophy degree or its equivalent became the basic requirement for collegiate department heads and at least two years of graduate training were mandated for those aspiring to the rank of professor, associate professor, and assistant professor. Moreover, the same accreditation standards that were applied to White schools and colleges were newly imposed upon HBCUs, and all were increasingly evaluated and ranked on the basis of the qualifications of their teaching and administrative forces (Davis, 1933).

Further fueling the movement toward the equalization of graduate and professional opportunities for Blacks in the South in the 1930s were legal challenges that began to concentrate the force of the law on the doctrine of separate-but-equal and other barriers to advanced study predicated by the biracial system. These challenges attacked segregation in an area in which there was no possibility of making a case for the existence of equal facilities, services, or opportunities—namely, public graduate and professional education. Many of them were launched by the strategists of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which mounted a number of cases in border states that were designed to crack the color barrier at public colleges in the South.

The first such case to reach the United States Supreme Court was *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada* (1938). This case had its origins in 1921, when Missouri became one of the first states to authorize the establishment of out-of-state tuition scholarships, whereby Black residents were reimbursed for the difference in cost between the tuition charged by a northern school and that of an in-state institution. That year, Lloyd Gaines, an African American graduate of Missouri's historically Black Lincoln University, sued the University of Missouri for admission to its law school. In rendering its decision in favor of the plaintiff, the Court made the following claims:

The basic consideration is not as to what sort of opportunities other States provide, or whether they are as good as those in Missouri, but as to what opportunities Missouri itself furnished to white students and denies to negroes solely upon the ground of color. . . By the operation of the laws of Missouri a privilege has been created for white law students which is denied to negroes by reason of their race. . . the negro resident having the same qualifications is refused it there and must go outside the State to obtain it. That is a denial of the equality of legal right to the enjoyment of the privilege which the State has set up, and the provision for the payment of tuition fees in another State does not remove the discrimination. (p. 236)

In response to the Court's decision in *Gaines*, southern states generally made half-hearted attempts to provide makeshift separate-but-equal graduate facilities if Blacks requested them. In some cases, these attempts consisted of as little as the construction of a separate

classroom for Black students adjacent to those housing their White counterparts. Some states made no provisions whatsoever (Pierson, 1947).

McCuiotion's (1939) systematic study of Blacks' attainment of graduate education in the South confirmed the difficulties involved in that process. Among his findings was that no HBCUs were able to offer study beyond the master's degree level. He further noted that Blacks were enrolled as graduate students in only 7 Black colleges in the South and in only 82 colleges outside the South. Of the 1,398 African American students enrolled in professional programs and courses nationwide, McCuiotion reported, 363 were matriculating at the graduate level. More than half of these (148) were studying medicine at Meharry Medical College in Tennessee, 90 were pursuing social work at the Atlanta University center, and the remainder were pursuing professional degrees in dentistry, law, and nursing.

McCuiotion's report also revealed that Blacks in the North did not necessarily escape racial discrimination in their pursuit of graduate education. In professions where Blacks had to work in close proximity with Whites (e.g. medicine, social work, and teaching), he notes that northern schools often relegated Blacks to alternative experiences. For example, some northern medical schools advised Black medical students to take at least two years of their medical training at HBCUs in order to avoid the racial prejudice that frequently surfaced when Blacks were placed in integrated clinical situations. This finding corroborates Frazier's (1933) claim that Black education majors in the North were discouraged from engaging in practice teaching experiences upon advice of White advisors who claimed that "Negro teaching problems were 'different' " (p. 330).

Against this backdrop of denial and limitation, the broad-based agendas of several of the educational philanthropic foundations established by northern industrialists sought to address the production of a Black educational leadership in two ways: (a) through an instrumental program, whereby a foundation subsidized the activities of persons connected to Black colleges, hospitals, and state agencies in which it had an interest; and (b) through noninstrumental means, by investing in promising individuals apart from the general interests of the foundation (Rosenwald Fund, 1928a). Two of these foundations, the General Education Board (GEB) and the Julius Rosenwald Fund, established fellowship awards during their tenure in an effort to promote "the development of higher education through grants that discover potential leaders" (Hollis, 1938, p. 161). The present article traces the Rosenwald program's impact on African American participation in graduate and professional education through three distinct stages of the program's evolution. It highlights the shifting philanthropic priorities of the program, reflecting its change in emphasis from instrumentalist to noninstrumentalist objectives, and sheds some light on the reasons for this shift.

THE ROSENWALD FUND AND THE EDUCATION OF AFRICAN AMERICANS

Chartered in 1917, the stated purpose of the Rosenwald Fund was "the well-being of mankind" (Embree & Waxman, 1949). Descended from German Jews who had immigrated to the U.S., Rosenwald was named president of Sears, Roebuck, and Company in 1906. His interest in the education of African Americans is attributed in part to his personal self-help philosophy and his association with northern industrial philanthropists William H. Baldwin, Jr., and James H. Dillard, both of whom advocated the Hampton-Tuskegee model of industrial education for Blacks put forth by Booker T. Washington. Rosenwald made personal visits to Tuskegee Institute and was in agreement with Washington's philosophy of racial uplift, which held that the disadvantages of race and class should be overcome through individual perseverance and self-reliance rather than by revolutionary

methods. Like Washington, Rosenwald was convinced that the fortunes of Whites were inextricably linked to those of Blacks. Indeed, Rosenwald's justification for his interest in the education of African Americans bears a striking resemblance to that espoused by Washington in his famous "Atlanta Compromise" speech. As Rosenwald (1925) maintained:

Because I am interested chiefly in white people I take an interest in the Negro. There are twelve million Negroes in America. They are here to stay. That's a tenth of our population. It's a question whether we want them to be vicious or decent. I prefer to have my children and grandchildren live where there is no ignorant, uncouth and vicious underprivileged class. If we would keep the Negro down we must stay down with him. It was this thought that first interested me in the Negro. Booker Washington said, "You can't keep a man in the ditch without standing in with him and you can't get out of the ditch without him climbing out too." (p. 23)

Backed by two hundred thousand shares of Sears stock worth approximately \$20 million, the Rosenwald Fund concentrated on four major areas: education, health, race relations, and fellowships (Embree & Waxman, 1949). One of its earliest initiatives, the well-known rural school building program launched in 1914, soon became synonymous with the Fund itself. When that program ended in 1932, Rosenwald money had contributed to the construction of 4,977 public schoolhouses, 163 vocational shops, and 217 teachers' homes in 883 counties throughout 15 southern states (Anderson, 1988).

By the mid-1920s, the trustees of the Rosenwald Fund recognized that although Blacks could obtain an undergraduate education from historically Black colleges in the South, graduate education and professional training was largely closed to Blacks. Thus, in an effort to produce a Black educational leadership, the Fund supported the creation of four university centers that offered graduate-level programs. These centers consisted of Howard University in Washington, D.C.; the Atlanta (Georgia) Confederation, which included Spelman and Morehouse colleges and the Atlanta University and School of Social Work; Fisk University and Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee; and Dillard University and Flint-Goodridge Hospital in New Orleans, Louisiana. During the course of the Fund's interest in these national centers from 1928 to 1948, it expended, in collaboration with the GEB, a total of \$2,789,312 on Howard University; \$542,258 on the Atlanta Confederation; \$920,175 on the Nashville center; and \$1,037,900 on the New Orleans center (Embree & Waxman, 1949).

In 1928, the Rosenwald trustees acknowledged the slow pace of the development of colleges and technical schools for Blacks in the South as well as that of the Fund's efforts to build up the southern university centers. That realization and the knowledge that other philanthropic funds had established similar programs persuaded the trustees to establish an informal scholarship program that would enable selected Blacks to pursue graduate study at universities located in the northern and western United States and Europe. That same year, the Fund was incorporated, and Edwin Rogers Embree became the president of its board of trustees.

Embree was the grandson of John G. Fee, the White abolitionist and founder of Berea College, who had been a great influence on his life. A liberal social scientist, he was educated at Yale and wrote extensively on race issues. Before joining the Rosenwald effort in 1927, Embree had served as director and vice-president of the Rockefeller Foundation. His tenure as president of the Fund until it closed in 1948 can be largely attributed to the fact that the Fund was headquartered in Chicago, and not in the South; and because Embree was not anti-Semitic, which placed him in good stead with the Fund's Jewish benefactor, given that Semitism, like racism, was rampant during the earlier part of the 20th century.

Under Embree's leadership, the Fund dispensed grants-in-aid for advanced training to a small number of Black nurses, physicians, and social workers from 1928 to 1936. Clearly reflecting an instrumentalist approach, the intention of these awards was to increase the number of Black staff members for state boards of health, local hospitals, or other agencies in which the Fund had a broader interest. Application forms for the awards also inquired whether or not candidates intended to return to the South upon completion of their studies. Candidates who received Rosenwald scholarship support were expected to study at northern colleges or universities, with two exceptions: library science majors were encouraged to attend the Hampton Institute's Library School, and public health nurses could obtain some training in southern institutions. Stipends generally averaged \$100 per month, in addition to money for tuition and travel expenses (Rosenwald Fund, 1928b).

Applications for Rosenwald grants were generally reviewed by a five-member Fellowship Committee comprised of Will Winton Alexander, Charles Spurgeon Johnson, and Henry Allen Moe (until 1941), with Embree serving *ex officio* (Rosenwald Fund, 1928a). The position of committee secretary and program administrator was held by several persons over time: George R. Arthur, Raymond R. Paty (the first director of the Division of Fellowships, established in 1937), George M. Reynolds, and William C. Haygood. Notable African Americans such as Harvard economist Robert C. Weaver, poet and novelist Arna Bontemps, and educator and *Journal of Negro Education* founder Charles H. Thompson would later serve on this committee, yet their influence on the formation and philosophy of the grant program never approached that of the original committee members.

Will Alexander was a White southerner who became executive director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation in 1938 and was eventually chosen by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to head the Farm Security Administration of the United States Department of Agriculture. In his view, the idea that Blacks should be educated and the belief that segregation, both *de facto* and *de jure*, must be maintained represented a conflict between professed democratic ideals and daily practices in the United States. In the social science tradition, he attacked segregation as wasteful, expensive, and economically unsound; he did not, however, censure the practice on moral grounds. He believed instead that well-educated Blacks could effectively challenge the dual system. As he noted in 1945:

In subjecting Negroes to American education we have made them Americans. So completely American are they that they will not submit passively to being pushed around as they are under segregation. Educational opportunity for the common man is a part of the American way of life. In giving it to Negroes, we have let them in on the meaning of democracy. Their unrest under their special limitations is the result not of sinister influence from the outside, but of our education, which, with all its faults, is the best thing in our democracy. The education of Negroes in America has not been a mistake. Here we see American faith and American idealism at their best. Segregation, on the other hand, is rooted in fear and in doubt as to whether or not our faith in democracy is strong enough to overcome our fears as to what may be some of its consequences. (Alexander, 1945, p. 179)

Charles S. Johnson was in the vanguard of what Stanfield (1985) has dubbed "Negro problem social science." A sociologist by training, he was one of the most influential African Americans in philanthropic circles during the 1930s and 1940s. Johnson studied with the pioneering sociologist Robert E. Park at the University of Chicago during the period of the Chicago race riots. In 1922, he co-founded (with Eugene Jones) the publication *Opportunity*, the political organ of the National Urban League. He later headed the Social Science Institute at Fisk University and was named Fisk's first African American president in 1947. Rosenwald was greatly impressed with Johnson's work as a member of Chicago's race relations commission and offered to provide the financial backing for the Fisk institute. He later asked Johnson to serve on the Fellowship Committee. Johnson became Embree's closest friend at the Rosenwald Fund and subsequently exerted a strong influence on

Embree's, and thus the Fund's, increasingly integrationist attitudes. Though a liberal, Johnson was also solidly middle-class, leading some writers to suggest that he did not identify with the southern African Americans he wrote about in such books as *The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy* (1935; with Embree and Will Alexander), and that he was often swayed by his White philanthropist friends who thought his views on the race issue too radical (Stanfield, 1985).

Minnesota-born Henry Moe was associated with the Rosenwald Fellowship Program's activities in an advisory capacity practically since its inception in 1928. A former Rhodes Scholar who had attended Oxford University during the early 1920s, Moe was known for his perfectionism, a trait that did not lend itself to his personality meshing well with those of the other members of the Fellowship Committee, particularly Embree's. He subsequently resigned from the Rosenwald committee in 1941. However, as director of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship Program, a position that he assumed concurrent with his years of association with the Rosenwald Fund, Moe frequently drew upon the resources of the former to arrange for juried evaluations of Rosenwald fellowship candidates in the field of fine arts.

Embree, Johnson, Alexander, and Moe were gradualists who believed in moderate, evolutionary change in race relations. Nonetheless, as these individuals charted a path of quiet intervention in their efforts related to the Rosenwald Fund, the evidence—namely, the persons they selected as recipients of fellowship awards—reveals an increasingly integrationist, noninstrumentalist stance over the course of the Fund's existence.

THE ROSENWALD FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Stage One: 1926–1935

Most of the early Rosenwald scholarships, such as that awarded to Velma Bell, subsidized short-term training at levels below graduate work. Born in Mississippi in 1910, Bell was a junior at Beloit College when she wrote to the Fund for assistance in finishing her undergraduate degree. Rosenwald President Embree's written response to Louis Edward Holden, the Beloit official who supported Bell's request, reveals the instrumentalist focus of the Fund at the early stages of the program:

We are prepared to provide a scholarship of two hundred (\$200) to Miss Velma Bell for the remainder of this year. The question of what we might do further we should like to postpone until she has gone further with the work of this year and until we learn something more of her plan for the future. Social work for her race is a very general purpose. . . . It occurs to me that she might care to go into library work which is a crying need in Negro institutions. These are merely suggestions of the kind of thing that we are interested in helping students prepare for. (Embree, n.d.)

Despite Embree's suggestion, Bell went on to receive her bachelor of arts degree from Beloit in 1930 and later to pursue graduate work in social sciences at the University of Wisconsin, eventually returning South to become an instructor at historically Black Bennett College. Upon her graduation from Beloit, Holden noted the following in a letter sent to Julius Rosenwald:

I think that I owe it to you to send a thesis written by the colored girl, Velma Bell, whom your Foundation has helped during the Junior and Senior years at Beloit College. This young woman is the first colored woman, as far as I know, that has ever been elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She has won her "spurs" in competition with the choicest young men and women graduates of high schools of Illinois and Wisconsin. (Rosenwald Fund, 1930)

Another grantee was Mary E. Hunter, born in Alabama in 1889. After receiving her bachelor of science degree in home economics from Prairie View College, Hunter worked as a home demonstration agent in that institution's home city. She requested and received

a fellowship for the 1930–31 academic year to study home economics at Iowa State College. Hunter was the first Black woman to earn a master of science degree in home economics at Iowa State. While there, upon hearing prejudicial remarks from a White Iowa State faculty member, she wrote to the Fund:

The college [Iowa State] is 73 years old and until this year they had never had a Negro woman who completed any kind of course in the school of home economics. Attempts have been made but each time the party was successfully defeated by some tactful method or accusation by some member of the home economics faculty. Regardless of what is said of the shortcoming of the people of the South, I am happy to tell you the Negroes did as well in every subject that was carried by them as did the White students. (Hunter, 1931)

Embree was thrilled by this news and noted in the margin of Hunter's letter:

This is real stuff. When Negroes have the ability (beyond question) they sweep aside all barriers. It may be as well that Negro students have to be extra good. That forces a selection process.

Hunter went on to become director of the division of home economics at historically Black Virginia State College. She wrote to the Fund again in 1936 and noted that her institution "had developed a very good course in home economics. . . the primary object of which is to train young women for more efficient service as teachers in public schools and in home demonstration work" (Hunter, 1936).

By 1932, the year of Julius Rosenwald's demise, the Fund's scholarship program had evolved from its original, informal practice of awarding grants-in-aid to that of a more formal fellowship program. The term "fellowship" was early defined by the Committee spearheading the initiative as "investments in men who expect to devote their lives to teaching or some other type of leadership in the racial group" (Rosenwald Fund, 1928a). Specifically, fellowship awards were intended for persons who possessed an undergraduate degree or its equivalent, if not the master's degree, in the following areas: (a) medical and nursing personnel, (b) teachers of vocational and industrial subjects, and (c) librarians and teachers in other specialties such as music. A fourth category was reserved for persons with demonstrable talent in the area of fine arts. By supporting individuals in this category, however, the Fund was venturing beyond its instrumentalist agenda and contributing to the production of a new faction of Black educational leadership: the establishment of a Black social and cultural elite.

Undoubtedly influenced by the literary and artistic excitement generated by the Harlem Renaissance, the Rosenwald Fund justified its support of Black writers and artists by claiming that "achievement in the arts gains recognition for the individual concerned and for the Negro race as a whole" (Rosenwald Fund, 1929). Roland Hayes, Paul Robeson, Countee Cullen, and James Weldon Johnson figure prominently as examples of fellowship recipients during this period. According to a memo sent to Julius Rosenwald from Embree in 1929:

In the sheaf of suggestions that came to us from Dr. [Anson] Stokes attention was called by several writers including James Weldon Johnson and Charles Johnson to the brilliant work of Negroes in music, literature and the fine arts to the effect that this was having in making people realize that the Negro was capable of creative work of as high a quality as anyone else. The Johnsons seemed to feel that this expression in the arts is about the only thing that has made a favorable impression in the North to counteract in part the offence [sic] which so many Northerners have taken of Southern migration of large numbers of Negroes into the Northern cities. (Embree, 1929)

The economic depression of the early 1930s decimated the value of the Rosenwald Fund's Sears stock. As a result, its board of trustees decided in 1934 to concentrate their fellowship resources "on a relatively small number of persons of distinctive or unusual promise who may be able to exert leadership in Negro life" (Rosenwald Fund, 1934). As the trustees concluded, "A few score superior persons thoroughly educated are likely to have more influence upon Negro progress and race relations than that number of average

students and teachers, however worthy and indigent" (Rosenwald Fund, 1934). Thus, the Fellowship Committee began in earnest to search for fellowship candidates who could meet a standard of excellence, leadership, and superior performance that invited comparison, although seemingly unacknowledged by the Committee members, to that proffered by W. E. B. DuBois's (1903) concept of a "talented tenth" cadre of African American intellectual and professional leadership.

It is entirely possible, however, that the trustees did not discern a philosophical conflict between the Fund's early adherence to Washington's philosophy of industrial education and the Fellowship Committee's increasingly noninstrumentalist agenda. By the mid-1930s, northern philanthropists and southern school reformers were less threatened by the strategy of affording upward mobility to Blacks through education. Increasingly, they saw that Black advancement contributed to the southern economy by producing efficient and compliant Black workers and professionals who could serve as leaders within a segregated social sphere. Thus contained, the Black elite who were emerging from the HBCUs in the South and going on to attend graduate schools in the North posed no threat to White professionals or laborers. For these reasons perhaps, the Rosenwald trustees did not view the shift in emphasis of the fellowship program as inconsistent with the accommodationist position that its benefactor and other foundation officers embraced with such enthusiasm.

Stage Two: 1936–1942

The second phase of the Fellowship Program began to take shape during 1936. Up to this point, the Fund had not yet conducted a formal follow-up study of the approximately four hundred Fellows who had received its aid. In March 1936, at the direction of the board of trustees, the Fellowship Committee sent questionnaires to every person who had received a Rosenwald Fellowship between July 1, 1928, and June 30, 1935. These surveys requested information about fellows' academic or professional fields, the dates and amounts of their awards, and their current positions. They evoked a remarkable rate of response. Out of a total of 372 fellows who received awards over the seven-year period that the program had been in operation, 342 or 92% completed and returned their questionnaires.

Survey findings revealed that for the period under review, the Rosenwald Fund had expended a total of \$389,708 on fellowships. Two hundred-thirty-four awards had been made to African Americans in the following five areas:

- (1) home economics majors and vocational/agricultural demonstration and field agents attached to HBCUs and industrial high schools (76 fellows), who sought financial support for training that would improve their teaching effectiveness;
- (2) medical professionals, including doctors, nurses, and public health workers (54 fellows), who had requested funds for the purpose of obtaining specialized or advanced training;
- (3) undergraduate social science, sociology, and social work majors in pursuit of the graduate degree (38 fellows), including several who were recommended by Fellowship Committee member Charles S. Johnson and who later joined him in the Department of Social Science at Fisk University or went elsewhere to study problems related to the Black race;
- (4) college and university librarians and library administrators (35 fellows); and
- (5) musicians and artists (31 fellows) (Rosenwald Fund, n.d.-a, n.d.-b).

Consistent with the priorities articulated by the trustees in 1934, the results of the 1936 evaluation positioned the Rosenwald Fellowship Program for its most active and

influential period commencing in April 1937. As noted in the Fellowship Committee's 1938 report to the trustees,

... [the Rosenwald Fellows] were the subject of much favorable comment in the news and editorial columns of southern papers. The fact that the same high standards were applied in the selection of Negro candidates as in the choice of White fellows was a matter of surprise to many commentators and may be a means of calling attention to recent achievements by Negroes. (Rosenwald Fund, 1938)

During this second stage of the fellowship program, a total of 131 Blacks and 101 Whites were awarded fellowships. The dominant fields of interest for Blacks were:

- (1) sociology (20 fellows),
- (2) language and literature (16);
- (3) fine arts (13); and
- (4) economics and history (12 each) (Rosenwald Fund, n.d.-c).

The majors of the 49 fellows selected from 850 applicants in 1937 represented a distinct shift toward the liberal arts and away from the fields supported earlier. Among the ranks of African American recipients of Rosenwald Fellowships during this stage were the mathematician W. W. Schieffelin Claytor, social scientists Bonita and Preston Valien, dramatist Fannin S. Belcher, and sociologist E. Horace Fitchett. Others included researcher-educators W. E. B. DuBois and Horace Mann Bond, sculptor Augusta Savage, economist Abram Harris, anthropologist St. Clair Drake, and biologist Charles Wesley Buggs. However, it would be misleading not to mention the achievements of lesser-known fellows, who constituted the majority of awardees. Among them was Carl McClellan Hill.

Born in Virginia in 1907, Hill received his bachelor of science degree from Hampton Institute in 1931 and his master of science degree from Cornell University in 1935 after having been denied admission to the University of Virginia. He applied for a Rosenwald Fellowship in 1936 to complete the requirements for the doctor of philosophy degree in chemistry at Cornell, with the goal of becoming an instructor of chemistry at the postsecondary level. Awarded \$1,500 by the Fellowship Committee, Hill received his doctorate in 1941 and eventually became the president of Kentucky State University, a historically Black institution (Rosenwald Fund, n.d.-c).

As further evidence of its shifting priorities, the Fellowship Committee offered the following statement in its assessment of the fellowships awarded to Blacks for the 1938–39 academic year:

It is interesting to note that this year as well as last the Negro grants cluster around Howard, Atlanta, and Fisk. These are the places that are developing the promising men and are in turn offering careers to the emerging scholars. Of this year's thirty-four Negro Fellows, five had taken either college or graduate work at Fisk. Six of this year's fellows are members of the faculties of the Atlanta Group of colleges; three at Atlanta University, two at Spelman, and one at Morehouse. (Rosenwald Fund, n.d.-a).

The report continued:

No awards were made either last year or this to the large groups of workers at the historic institutions, Tuskegee and Hampton. We have had many applications from Tuskegee but the men simply do not stand up to the competitors elsewhere. We have discussed the matter frankly with [Tuskegee] President [Frederick D.] Patterson, who is most anxious to improve his faculty but agrees that it would be a disservice for the Fund to make awards on anything but individual merits. A few more years of Patterson's vigorous leadership is likely to show a very different picture in the Tuskegee group. Hampton seems unaware and complacent in the midst of its present mediocrity. (Rosenwald Fund, n.d.-a).

It is not surprising that Fellows hailing from three of the four university centers would be chosen in 1938, but the application of the term "workers" to faculty members at Hampton and Tuskegee, institutions which had historically advocated an industrial-vocational curriculum, reveals the Committee's evolving bias toward candidates from institutions that offered classical-liberal curricula. Indeed, the insistence of Embree, Alexander, and Johnson during this stage on a meritocratic selection of candidates who were qualified

to be added to the fellowship's "honor roll of great distinction" served to further separate the Rosenwald program from its earlier instrumentalist agenda (Rosenwald Fund, n.d.-a). The activities of the Committee increasingly reflected a firm commitment to the development of "persons of unusual promise" regardless of the Fund's other interests. The number of awards to medical personnel, farm demonstration agents, agricultural and industrial teachers, librarians, and social workers greatly diminished in favor of an emphasis on awards to students of the liberal arts.

Stage Three: 1942–1948

The third and final stage of the Rosenwald Fellowship Program spanned the years from 1942 to 1948 and was directly affected by World War II. Several of the candidates chosen to receive fellowships during this era were serving in the armed forces or taking advantage of employment opportunities offered by the United Service Organization (USO) and wartime industries. Faculty advisors began to prevail upon the Fund for fellowship reappointments to enable fellows to remain in graduate school. Moreover, the decline in enrollments had caused retrenchment at many institutions, leading to bitter fights over faculty positions and limiting the placement opportunities for former fellows. Consequently, the 258 applications received for the 1942–43 cycle were a far cry from the 840 received in 1937. There was, however, an increase in applications from women, up from 28% to 50%; and a rise in the average age of applicants, from 28 years in 1942 to 34 in 1943. In a return to a trend noted during the earliest years of the program, education emerged as the declared major field of choice for the largest category of candidates competing for 1942–43 awards (44 out of 258) (Haygood, 1942).

With the advent of wartime rhetoric, racial segregation in America was increasingly perceived as inconsistent with democratic values. The labor shortages and softening of segregationist attitudes caused by the war allowed Blacks to take advantage of opportunities that had previously been closed to them. In assessing the effect of military service as a means of significant social change for Blacks, Rosenwald President Embree speculated that it was too late to "ever again keep Negroes 'in their place.'" "If we wanted that," he added, "we should never have drawn them into war production or called them to the tremendous education of the armed forces" (Embree, 1944, pp. 15–16). Included among Rosenwald fellows during this last stage were prize-winning African American novelists James Baldwin and Ralph Ellison and journalist Roi Ottley.

In his final evaluation of the Rosenwald Fellowship Program, Committee member Charles S. Johnson suggested that the program "as a by-product did even more than improve the educational institutions" with which it worked and to which it sent the recipients of its aid (Rosenwald Fund, 1948). An unintended consequence, he noted, was the leadership cadre of African Americans that resulted despite the Fund's early instrumentalist approach:

By careful selection of candidates for these awards, the program over the years helped to develop a new group of superior mentalities who went far in opening new opportunities for Negroes in hitherto untried fields. The opportunity for advanced study in the fields of physics and chemistry developed advanced specialists, not only for teaching, but for pure research in the larger universities and for advanced posts in industry and government. (Rosenwald Fund, 1948, p. 1)

Johnson may have had a Rosenwald fellow such as Allison Davis in mind when he wrote the above memorandum. Davis's curriculum vitae included a doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Chicago, additional study at the London School of Economics, and three Rosenwald Fellowships. In 1942, he became one of the first African Americans appointed to a tenure-track position at a northern research institution (University of Chicago). The author of numerous and noteworthy publications and books, including

Children of Bondage (1946; with John Dollard), Davis received more than one grant from the Rosenwald Fund. He first applied in 1931 when he was an instructor at Hampton Institute, receiving \$2,000 for anthropological studies toward the master's degree at Harvard. In 1937, he was given \$600 from the Fund for continuation of social and racial studies. In 1939, while teaching at Dillard University, he got another \$2,400 to study anthropology at the University of Chicago. This grant was renewed in 1940 for \$2,000, to help Davis complete the doctoral work that launched his stellar career in academe.

CONCLUSION

By 1945, the Rosenwald Fund's resources were nearly depleted. Following the directions specified in its founder's will, the trustees had expended principal as well as interest. However, by the time the Fund officially ceased operations in 1948, it had dispensed a total of \$1,832,830 in fellowship awards to 1,537 individuals, including 999 Blacks and 538 Whites (Embree & Waxman, 1949).

The history of the Rosenwald Fellowship Program illustrates the changing emphases of U.S. philanthropic initiatives over time in response to external and internal factors. Evolving from an informal dispensation of grants-in-aid and scholarships consistent with Julius Rosenwald's preference for "education to fit Negroes for those opportunities open to them and which they might develop among themselves" (Werner, 1939, pp. 115–116), the fellowship program's focus shifted to facilitate the production of not only a generation of Black educational leadership, but also that of a Black social and cultural elite—a new group of African Americans of "superior mentalities" and "unusual promise" who pursued and opened new opportunities for Blacks in artistic, scientific, and intellectual fields.

In a 1947 report that reviewed the Rosenwald Fund's scope of activities over the course of its existence, its board of trustees and officers raised the following questions: (a) Is aid to talented and promising young people a major means of promoting social progress? (b) Is it wiser to select persons of exceptional promise, regardless of their field of interest, or to help build personnel for specific institutions or special fields? and (c) Is it wiser to offer fellowships generally or to select certain areas or groups for special attention? There would be no resolution to the debate as to which strategy would leave "the greater impress on society" (Rosenwald Fund, 1947). Yet both the lesser-known fellows, who were chosen to further the early accommodationist stance of the Fund, and the later awardees, who helped to raise the aspirations of Blacks to new heights, would make an indelible mark. With help from the Rosenwald Fund, they would advance the ranks of Black educators, educational administrators, and researchers, strengthen the nation's historically Black colleges and universities, and expand the pool of Black educational leadership. By example, they challenged the very rationality of racial segregation. Whether unintended or not, the Rosenwald Fellowship Program's African American awardees, and the Fund itself, were instruments of social progress.

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