The Civil Rights Movement: The Dallas Way

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Abstract:

In order to analyze the transition of Dallas, Texas from a conservative and segregated city to a city providing equality and guaranteeing African Americans their Civil Rights, I focus on the actions of Civil Rights leader Juanita J. Craft, Mayor Earle Cabell, Bob Cullum, and Stanley Marcus. More specifically, I look at their actions and how they impacted the desegregation of Dallas. Additionally, I look at the Dallas community's reaction to Mayor Cabell's choice to desegregate this southern city. Looking at the non-violent process of desegregating public education and public spaces has been one of the key pieces of evidence in showing Dallas's transition into a progressive city. Also, by examining letters sent directly to Mayor Cabell along with anti-segregation pamphlets, which compared desegregation to communist and anti-Christ ideals, this shows that Dallas, Texas was on its way to moving forward far before the rest of the lower south during the late 1950s and early 1960s

Introduction:

The Civil Rights Movement was a defining movement in the United States of America and shaped the country we know today. Before the Montgomery Bus Boycotts, Rosa Parks, and Emmett Till, segregation in the southern states was a constant reminder of the inequalities that African Americans had to endure. Traditionally, Dallas, Texas has been a conservative city and was against the Civil Rights Movement, but in the 1960s the city shifted towards desegregation. From 1960 to 1965, the transition of Dallas, Texas from a conservative and segregated city to a city providing equality and guaranteeing African Americans their Civil Rights is an area of history that has not been extensively studied. While there has been separate accounts of some individuals and the events that took place in Dallas during the early 1960s, this paper will bring them together and show how they were all integral in the desegregation of the city. The four main characters that spearheaded this transition were Mayor Earle Cabell, Civil Rights leader Juanita J. Craft, local grocery-store owner Bob Cullum, and Stanley Marcus, high-end department-store owner. These men and woman greatly impacted the desegregation of Dallas and its communities. There was both opposition and support for Mayor Cabell's reforms and Craft, Cullum, and Marcus's push for desegregation. By comparing the reactions from the people of Dallas on both sides of the Civil Rights Movement, one can gauge how the city was able to handle the Civil Rights Movement. Two of the more surprising supporters of integration in Dallas were Cullum and Marcus, because they were wealthy, white businessmen. However, they played a key role in making Dallas a unique area of study in the Civil Rights Movement. Through analyzing letters sent directly to Earle Cabell about desegregation, along with anti-segregation pamphlets, which compared desegregation to communist and anti-Christ ideals, one can see how Dallas, Texas transitioned from a conservative city to a more progressive

one. While there was certainly opposition to Mayor Cabell, Craft, Cullum, and Marcus, there were those, both black and white, who also called for an end to segregation in the city.

Background:

There is a significant amount of scholarly sources on the Civil Rights Movement and the major figures involved, such as Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and Emmett Till. There are further works on the events that transpired all throughout the Deep South. These include writings on the Montgomery Bus Boycotts, the marches in Selma, Alabama, the sit-ins in North Carolina, and the Little Rock Nine in Arkansas. While the Civil Rights Movement in these states has been explored thoroughly by historians, there has been little work done on the events that took place in Texas. This paper adds to the vast amount of work that has been done on the Civil Rights Movement by including Dallas as an area of study and brings to light the events and people involved in improving life for African Americans.

African Americans made up roughly 19 percent of the 951,527 citizens of Dallas, which was significantly lower than most southern cities. That being said, the 180,791 African Americans living in Dallas still faced the same oppression that blacks from Selma, Little Rock, and Montgomery had to endure.[1] For example, the poll taxes that were required meant that people with very little money to spend were usually unable to cast a vote. While this affected both poor African Americans and whites, there was a disproportionate number of African Americans would were subject to this requirement. Because of their inability to vote, black schools and communities often had inferior facilities and supplies because they were not able to make their voices heard. Blacks in Dallas were not allowed to use the same restrooms, water

[1] "United States Census Bureau." *Census of Population and Housing*. U.S. Census Bureau, n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2014.

fountains, or eat in the same restaurants as whites. There was certainly a need for change in this community but unfortunately there had not been many actions taken to secure Civil Rights for African Americans, until Juanita J. Craft came to the forefront of Dallas's Civil Rights Movement in the 1940s.[2]

Juanita J. Craft was the woman who first brought the fight for Civil Rights to Dallas, Texas. In 1942, she appointed as the chairwoman of Dallas's chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and was also responsible for 182 branches throughout the state of Texas. Craft helped to tackle the segregation of both public schools and higher education facilities.[3] After the landmark Brown v. Board of Education case, Craft decided it was time to bring the fight to her city and demand equality in the classroom by ending segregation. During 1964, she started the Dallas Youth Council of the NAACP an organization consisting of teens that Craft helped lead and advised ways to protest in Dallas. After tutelage from Craft, the teens were eventually able to work on their own and organize sit-ins throughout the city. Craft found an ally in Mayor Earle Cabell when he was elected in 1961. Cabell's first action was to push for the desegregation of public schools in the Dallas Independent School District (DISD). He was the first politician who suggested such racial equality in the city and helped influence the course of the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas. Not only did Mayor Cabell put his plan into action, he was able to do so with minimal violence. When compared to the Little Rock Nine, this stands out as quite the accomplishment.

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[2] United States National Park Service, *We Shall Overcome – Juanita Craft House*, 2014 (Washington, DC), 1.

[3] David Stricklin and Gail Tomlinson, *Oral History Interviews of Juanita Craft*, (Transcripts, Dallas Public Library: 1984), 17. "Texas Women: A Celebration of History" Archives, Texas Woman's University, Denton. Chandler Vaughan, ed., *A Child, the Earth, and a Tree of Many Seasons: The Voice of Juanita Craft* (Dallas: Halifax, 1982).

Cabell reached out to the citizens of Dallas to gain a better understanding on their views of race and desegregation during his time as mayor from 1961 to 1964. This was accomplished by asking the people to write to his personal office and explain to him where they stood on the issue. While there was a majority that opposed integration in the city and its school, but there was a growing number of people who supported it. Those who did not approve of integration often justified their views with religious reasons and quoting scripture. Many traditional religious leaders actively fought against integration. Three of these leaders are Joe Walton, Reverend Carey Daniel, and Judge Tom P. Brady, who wrote and distributed pamphlets that explained their point of view and went as far as to claim that those who asked for integration were communists. The strong religious following and fear of communism during this time plays an important role in influencing people's opinions on integration.

Cabell started the desegregation of the city with the first grade in 1961, seven long years after the Brown v. Board of Education decision in 1954.[4] By the end of Cabell's term in 1965, all elementary grades in the DISD were desegregated and the rest of the school system would soon follow. In 1966, junior high schools were desegregated, and in the following year, 1967, high schools were also officially desegregated.[5] The next task was to get the rest of the city to follow suit and finish Mayor Cabell's work, which was assisted by influential members of the business sector. One such individual was Stanley Marcus, the owner of the Neiman-Marcus department store, who would become the first business owner to desegregate his stores and help influence others to follow suit.[6] Another business leader who took charge was Bob Cullum, a

[4] Walter J. E. Schiebel, Ed.D. (1966) *Education in Dallas: Ninety-two years of history 1874–1966*. Dallas: Dallas Independent School District, 45.

[5] Ibid., 67-75.

[6] Bill Minutaglio and Steven L. Davis, *Dallas 1963* (New York: Hachette Book Group, 2013), 17-32.

grocery-store owner who helped convince pro-segregation leaders, like Joe Walton, to allow for integration. Walton tried to prevent the desegregation of public schools in the DISD and mobilize violent protests, but Cullum was able to help prevent violence against African American children trying to attend schools. These businessmen were worried that violence in Dallas would be seen by the rest of the country. They did not want to be associated with the same violence towards the Civil Rights Movement that was so prevalent throughout the south, because it would have been bad for business and given the city a bad reputation.

Historiography:

Most of the existing literature focusing on the Civil Rights Movement focuses on the commonly known events and information that took place in the southern United States during the 1950s and 1960s. These secondary sources provide the general knowledge and basis of the movement in states like Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Arkansas, etc., and stand as the model to which I compare Dallas, Texas. In, *Blacks in East Texas History: Selections from the East Texas Historical Journal*, author Bruch Glasrud explores the injustices blacks faced throughout Texas, mostly in Dallas, and what measures were taken to end them. The main selections of this source that have proven useful for this analysis of Dallas revolve around Juanita J. Craft and her establishment of a NAACP chapter in Dallas; other useful sections explain and analyze the inequalities that persisted in Dallas, and the rest of the state, since the end of slavery:

> "some people overlook the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas because it appeared to lack the deep segregation of other Southern cities. A *Texas Monthly* article in 1991 claimed that the movement bypassed Dallas. But blacks in Dallas experienced the same discrimination as African Americans in other parts of the South."[7]

[7] Brian D. Behnken, *The "Dallas Way": Protest, Response, and the Civil Rights Experience in Big D and Beyond*. *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* (Southwester Historical Quarterly, 2007), 14,http://works.bepress.com/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1001&context=brian_behnken (accessed 16 Oct. 2015).

Glasrud's stance is similar to my own: that there was an unprecedented need for blacks to fight back against oppression and demand their Constitutional rights.

Brian D. Behnken's *The "Dallas Way": Protest, Response, and the Civil Rights Experience in Big D and Beyond* states that while the most generally accepted view of the Civil Rights Movement in America is that of peaceful Civil Rights protesters being attacked by whites with, "fire hoses, billy clubs, and German shepherds."[8] While these events are true, they were not the reaction in every instance of protests:

> Many communities witnessed a great deal of protests and black activism that did not generate a violent white response. The emphasis on violent confrontation has all but obscured the roles that many local people played in bringing Civil Rights to blacks across the country. Such a focus has skewed the larger picture of the struggle and left many heroes unsung. The Civil Rights Movement in Dallas, Texas, serves as an example of this phenomenon.[9]

Behnken's writings help support my argument that Dallas was part of a unique phenomenon in terms of the Civil Rights Movement. His analysis of the events that transpired show the significance in Dallas's ending of segregation but it leaves out some key evidence needed to fully grasp the city's Civil Rights Movement.

The Dallas Myth: The Making and Unmaking of an American City, by Harvey J. Graff, and *Make Haste Slowly: Moderates, Conservatives, and School Desegregation in Houston*, by William Henry Kellar, help to fill in some of the gaps left by Glasrud and Behnken. These writings discuss more specifically how business leaders like Bob Cullum, founder and owner of Tom Thumb grocery stores, and Stanley Marcus, co-founder and co-owner of Neiman-Marcus department stores, played a pivotal role in the end of segregation in Dallas.

Make Haste Slowly: Moderates, Conservatives, and School Desegregation in Houston, by William Henry Kellar documents and analyzes Juanita J. Craft's establishment of the Dallas

[8] Ibid., 23-27.

[9] Ibid., 32-36.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chapter, and 182 others throughout many rural parts of the state.[10] The NAACP is an organization that seeks to, "ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination.[11] Kellar explores how influential Craft was and how pivotal her role was in ending segregation in Dallas. He states that she was responsible for drawing attention to the inequalities these blacks faced in the public schools. Keller also looks at how Craft's establishment of the Youth Council was an effective method in the fight to end segregation in Dallas. Her methods and tactics were so effective that "both Lyndon B. Johnson and Martin Luther King Jr. visited her to discuss the future of the Civil Rights Movement."[12]

These sources also document the hardships that African Americans had to endure in Dallas, Texas and their fight for equality. They also explore to what degree the Civil Rights Movement was opposed, what measures were taken to prevent blacks from enjoying their Civil Rights, and blacks fought back against the inequalities they suffered using nonviolent protests. These secondary sources help determine whether or not Dallas was unique in its involvement in the Civil Rights Movement. In a time when women still had to overcome gender inequalities, Craft also had to fight against the race barrier; this woman was able to lead the younger generation against racism and segregation.

Biography of the Pivotal Players:

In order to understand the events that played out in Dallas, Texas during the Civil Rights Movement, it is important to first understand the people involved. Juanita J. Craft, Earle Cabell, and Stanley Marcus all come from different social, economic, and political backgrounds, yet

[10] William Henry Kellar, *Make Haste: Slowly Moderates, Conservatives, and School Desegregation in Houston* (Texas: Texas A & M UP, 1999), 79.

[11] "NAAC: Our Mission," last modified 2015, http://www.naacp.org/pages/our-mission

[12] United States National Park Service, *We Shall Overcome – Juanita Craft House*, 1.

during the 1960's they end up in the same place. Not only do these people end up in the city of Dallas, they are found at the forefront of the Civil Rights Movement taking place in the city. Looking at the moral, political, and economic factors that influence each of these people helps to explain the events that play out.

Juanita J. Craft:

http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/civilrights/buildings/craft2.jpg

The granddaughter of slaves, Craft was born on February 9, 1902 in Round Rock, Texas. She moved to Austin with her mother at a young age, where she grew up in poverty. She was subject to discrimination as a black person in the south, which would ultimately lead her to joining the NAACP. However, an even more important event in her life came at sixteen, when her mother passed away in 1918. Her mother passed away from tuberculosis and was denied treatment in hospitals all around the state, all because she was black and there were no black hospitals in the state.[13] After her mother's passing, Craft moved to Dallas and worked as a maid and dressmaker; although she had earned a college degree, she was still stuck with a blue-collar jobs and low wages. She joined the NAACP in 1935 and in just seven years she was able to become the Dallas NAACP membership chairman, and then in 1946 she was appointed as the Texas NAACP field organizer.[14] Through her position she was able to spread the NAACP's reach throughout the state and give financial and legal aid to those who needed it. Craft's presence was especially strong in Dallas, where she was hard at work mobilizing young black men and women to join her cause. With seemingly no stop to the growing support, Craft looked to open state institutions like the University of Texas and North Texas State College to African American

[13] "Texas State Historical Society," last modified August 21, 2013, http://www.womenintexashistory.org/bios/
[14] Ibid., 1.

students.[15] She understood the importance of education and wanted everyone to be able to seek out knowledge, regardless of their skin color. This belief would transfer over to her fight in the DISD, where she would fight for the desegregation of schools. Craft was an effective and charismatic leader, as evidenced by her twenty years as a Democratic precinct chair in Dallas County from 1952 to 1975.[16]

Mayor Earle Cabell:

Earle Cabell was born on October 27, 1906 and raised in Dallas and he never went very far from home. He studied by nearby Texas A&M University and finished his higher education at Southern Methodist University, right in downtown Dallas. He opened up a successful ice cream and convenience stores in town, but also worked in the large banking industry that Dallas was built upon.[17] Cabell's election as Mayor of Dallas seemed destined, as both his father and grandfather had previously served terms. The only dark spot on his résumé is that his brother was the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) deputy director during the Bay of Pigs attack on Cuba.[18] While he was only in office from 1961 to 1964, he had a profound impact on the city and helped the Civil Rights Movement in the city and tried to cast of the shadow of President John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963. Some people in Dallas believed that those who supported either President Kennedy or desegregation were communist-sympathizers, and when Cabell stood up for both of those causes, it was not surprising that the

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/6c/Earle_Cabell.jpg/87px-Earle_Cabell.jpg

st modified 2015, https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fcr59

[16] Ibid., 1

[17] "Biographical Directory of the United States Congress," last modified 1972, http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=C000002

[18] Ibid., 1.

"city of hate" sent death threats to the mayor and his wife.[19] Cabell recounted an incident he and his wife faced after showing their support:

> "An anonymous tip, or call, had come through the city hall switchboard…[My wife and I] were under [the FBI's] protection starting with four men on each shift, three shifts a day, and that gradually was reduced to two men on each shift. And then…New Year's Eve night, [my wife] picked up the phone in the bedroom and…he said, 'This is the night, a good night to get that blank-ity blank mayor, and I'm going to do it now.'"[20]

These bully techniques did not scare Cabell away from supporting the changes that were coming during the Civil Rights Movement; rather they helped strengthen his belief that what he was doing was the right thing.

Bob Cullum:

One of the most successful businessmen in the city of Dallas, Cullum was involved in almost every important event and corporation in the city. He co-owned a large grocery store chain with over one hundred stores with his brother. Also, he had many executive positions in a variety of business varying from electric companies, banks, the American Red Cross, the Dallas Zoological Society, and even Dr. Pepper. Like Mayor Cabell, Bob Cullum was a Southern Methodist University alumnus, where he graduated with a journalism degree. Born on May 10, 1912, when he finished college the Great Depression was in full effect and there was nowhere to get a job, so Cullum went back to work for his father. This humble beginning of a great businessman starts in a small family store where they sold food to larger companies, namely Toro Food Stores. When Toro Food Stores went under and they had borrowed all they could, they took off to South America in order to avoid paying the Cullum's their debt of $200,000.

[19] Alice L. George, *The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: Political Trauma and American Memory* (New York: Routledge, 2013_ 12-15

[20] "Dallas Mayor, Earle Cabell, receives death treaths following the Assassination Weekend," YouTube video, 2:56, posted by "HelmerReenger," Nov 28, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okGNb78YUEo.

This would come to personify who Bob Cullum was for the rest of his life, instead of giving up after losing so much money, he and his brother took over Toro Foods and turned it into one of the most recognizable grocery and pharmaceutical stores in the state. Not letting his wealth go to his head, Cullum started to help out his community and the members in it because he knew the difficulties life can throw at a person. He was given the Linz Award for civic service to Dallas and Brotherhood Citation of the National Conference of Christians and Jews in 1962 for his outstanding service to his community, regardless of their differences. Eventually, Cullum became involved in the Civil Rights Movement alongside other business leaders, and together their influence was profound and unique during the 1960's, as support did not usually come from wealthy white men. [21]

Stanley Marcus:

Harold Stanley Marcus, born on April 20, 1905, has been commonly referred to as "America's Merchant Prince" and is a successful retailer in Texas. His father, aunt, and uncle opened up the department store Neiman Marcus in 1907, which Stanley would later own. Stanley's role in the Civil Rights Movement relates back to the anti-Semitism he faced throughout much of his life, it got so bad that he had to drop out of the college he was attending in Massachusetts after just one year. Instead, he transferred to Harvard University in 1925, and would go on to Harvard Business School. After completing his higher education, Marcus returned back home to work for his family, just like Bob Cullum, and was hired on as the secretary and treasurer of the family business. Marcus used his business savvy to entice the wealthier citizens of Dallas to come buy their high-end, fashionable, and expensive clothing,

[21] Cecil Harper, Jr., "CABELL, WILLIAM LEWIS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fca02), accessed December 18, 2015. Uploaded on June 12, 2010. Modified on January 18, 2013. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

changing the company's direction towards a luxury department store. Not only was he a smart businessman, but he was also a patriot. Although he was declared too old to enlist in the active military during World War II, he was able to help by creating a new way to create textiles and use fewer materials. "He described his work with the War Production Board as 'one of the most enlightening experiences of [his] career.'"[22] After the passing of his father, Stanley was elected as the next president by the board of the company. Later, he would sell the company to a Californian hotel corporation and focused more of his time in humanitarian efforts within the Dallas community. He was involved in: Easter Seal Society Drive for Crippled Children and Adults of Texas and the American Council to Improve our Neighborhoods (A.C.T.C.I.O.N.).[23] Politics was another interest of his; he was friends with President Eisenhower and Lyndon B. Johnson. When the nation was rocked by President Kennedy's assassination in 1963, Marcus tried to plead with the people of Dallas to be more accepting of others by publishing works like: *What's Right With Dallas, Minding the Store, Quest for the Best, and His and Hers*. The prejudices he faced in his youth and the ability to help others with the wealth he gained were two of the factors that pushed him towards the Civil Rights Movement and helping end desegregation.[24]

Support and Opposition of Integration:

In 1965 the first African American, C.A. Galloway, was elected into the newly integrated City Council, and public schools and spaces were Earle Cabell's next area of focus. [25] Cabell

[22] Crystal Taska, "MARCUS, HAROLD STANLEY," *Handbook of Texas Online* (http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fmabz), accessed December 18, 2015. Uploaded on April 10, 2012. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

[23] Ibid., 1.

[24] Ibid., 1.

[25] Andy Galloway, "Galloway, Cleophas Anthony", Texas State Historical Association (2013): 1-3, accessed September 19, 2005.

was able to do this, but not without some opposition from conservative citizens. He asked the people of Dallas to write in to his office to gauge the public's opinion of the Civil Rights Movement. Unsurprisingly, there was a large amount of hate mail and those calling for the removal of Cabell for allowing African Americans to enroll in white schools. There is a common misconception that all white people in the south outright hated the end of segregation, but the fact of the matter is, there were a great deal of supporters. One supporter of the integration of school was one Richard M. Smith, a working class white citizen, who actually went as far to call for equality in job opportunities regardless of skin color.[26] For a working white man to call for such equality is a departure of the stereotypes of southerners and shows that not every southerner fit into these stereotypes of being a racist in the mid-20th century. Cabell's office was flooded with the letters of Dallas citizens that gave their support to Cabell finally bringing an end to segregation and the hardships that African Americans had to endure for so many years. This was yet another way that the city stood out in its role in the Civil Rights Movement. To be in a traditionally conservative state in the south and have so many people trying to push forward and bring equality to people of all colors was nothing like the events in Little Rock.

Unfortunately though, there were people who reinforced stereotypes. This was the case with Ruth David Smith and Lloyd S. Riddle of Dallas. In her letter, Mrs. Smith describes her distain for integration and claims that it goes against the will of God and that anyone who believes otherwise is an anti-Christ. Smith goes on to state that she feared for her husband because he went swimming in the community pool after a couple of "nigger boys" had been in

[26] Richard M. Smith, letter to Mayor Cabell, 24 May. 1961, folder 16, box 8, Archives and Special Collections, Southern Methodist University Libraries (Dallas, Texas).

there the day before. She worried her husband would pick up a venereal disease simply from being in the same water a day later.[27] This view of African Americans was still present throughout much of the south and goes to show how prevalent racism was and how many prejudices still existed in the 1960s in Dallas. Mr. Riddle simply believed that blacks and whites should stay in their own areas and not mix, let alone be a part of Dallas's City Council.[28] Riddle's letter expresses his desire for life to remain the same because, "they have been working well so far." He does not care about the lives of African Americans and does not believe that they need more than what they are being given.[29] Many of those who opposed integration sighted religious reasons for keeping blacks and whites apart. Influential religious leaders were able to convince their flocks that segregation was the will of God. People like Reverend Carey Daniel and Judge Tom P. Brady published pamphlets that outlined why God believed the races should be separated.[30] Claiming that the Bible stated so in its text, these pamphlets said that white women and children could only be safe through segregation.

Another overarching theme in many of them was that those who wanted integration were communists. In a time where being accused of associating with the Communist Party and the Reds/Russians was one of the most dangerous things, people did whatever they could to avoid such accusations.[31] Both Daniel and Brady's claims that people were communists for supporting the Civil Rights Movement was enough for many whites to jump on their bandwagons and

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[27] Ruth David Smith, letter to Mayor Cabell, 23 May. 1961, folder 10, box 8, Archives and Special Collections, Southern Methodist University Libraries (Dallas, Texas).

[28] Lloyd S. Riddle, letter to Mayor Cabell, 21 May. 1961, folder 19, box 8, Archives and Special Collections, Southern Methodist University Libraries (Dallas, Texas).

[29] Ibid., 2

[30] Tom Brady, *Segregation in the South*, 1955, pamphlet, folder 4, box 8, Archives and Special Collections, Southern Methodist University Libraries (Dallas, Texas).

[31] Carey Daniel, *God the Original Segregationist*, 1955, pamphlet, folder 4, box 8, Archives and Special Collections, Southern Methodist University Libraries (Dallas, Texas).

actively support segregation. Thankfully, there are people like Richard M. Smith who sympathized with the African American community and supported the Civil Rights Movement, but, unfortunately, he was one man who could only do so much on his own. There would be other influential, upper-class, whites that would be able to use their power and prestige to assist in the transition from segregation to integration.

Call for Integration, the Dallas Way:

Mayor Earle Cabell came into office calling for the integration of Dallas's public schools. He recognized that conditions were not fair for both blacks and whites, and that something had to be done immediately. Cabell came into a city that had been using Black Codes and Jim Crow laws that were meant to keep African Americans in their "place" ever since the end of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery.[32] Overcoming this history would be a daunting task but he still pushed for an end to segregation in public schools, as the difference between white and blacks schools was astonishing. One fear he had was that there might be violence against the black community as a result, as there was still deep-rooted racism throughout much of the south, and it certainly existed in Dallas. Still, Cabell called for the end of segregation in Dallas, not only in school and public spaces but in businesses as well. Dallas was city founded by and essentially owned by business. The owners of big businesses had a great deal of influence on the city and were a main cog in ending segregation. These businessmen listened to Cabell's call for integrating schools, public spaces, and businesses and were successful in making sure that Dallas was one of the most non-violent integrations during the Civil Rights Movement.

Business leaders feared that if there was a violent resistance to the integration of schools and public spaces that the rest of the country would see Dallas, Texas as just another Little Rock,

[32] Henry Hampton, Steve Fayer, and Sarah Flynn, *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s* (New York: Bantam, 1990), 136-142.

Arkansas. The Little Rock Nine who tried to enter their new high school were met with a great deal of violence on the schools steps and eventually had to run away in fear of their lives. The Governor even called in the National Guard in defiance of the Supreme Court allowing blacks and whites to go to school together.[33] This was precisely the kind of thing that business leaders and Mayor Cabell were hoping to avoid in Dallas. In order to prevent the degradation of their city, these wealthy store owners worked together to put down opponents of the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas.

http://www.parkcitiespeople.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Brothersinstore.jpg

Obviously there was opposition to ending segregation, and it came from members of the Dallas school board and religious leaders in the city. One of the leaders of the opposition was Joe Walton, a high ranking member of the school board. Walton argued that, "God's law stood above human law, and God's law was that the races were to remain apart. Mixing in schools would lead to miscegenation; miscegenation would lead to mixed children. Mixed children would lead to America's doom at the hand of an angry God."[34] Business owner, Bob Cullum, founder of Tom Thumb, decided to set up a meeting because he feared that Walton would fight back against integration and use mob tactics to attack African American protesters. Cullum set up a meeting between Walton and three black preachers from Dallas, in which Walton attempted to explain his position over lunch at a well-known fried chicken restaurant, Elsie's.[35] Walton honestly believed he could convince preachers to see his point of view and began to explain how God wanted there to be segregation. Obviously, these

[33] Ibid., 96-110.

[34] Harvey J. Graff, *The Dallas Myth: The Making and Unmaking of an American City* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota, 2008), 99-103.

[35] Ibid., 125-136.

men of scripture had their own argument and shot down his arguments by reading scripture of their own. Accompanying Cullum and the priests was Cullum's banker and another close friend of his who believed in their cause, John Stemmons.

Cullum and Stemmons wanted integration to go off without a hitch because he was concerned that the rest of the country would turn on their TVs and radios to see and hear about Dallas, Texas being the next Little Rock, Arkansas. He believed that the majority of Dallas citizens would be more than accepting of the transition of integration and that a minority of very outspoken individuals like Walton gave the city a bad reputation. In trying to prevent a repeat of the violence seen in Little Rock, Stemmons leaned across the table and said, "The United States of America has told us we've got to integrate our schools, and by damn, that's just what we're going to do. We will not let Dallas show up on national television because of some commotion. You try it, and I will run you down."[36] Walton sat there in Elsie's, his face covered in fried chicken grease and sweating on a hot summer day and simply nodded in agreement and the meeting was over.[37] Once outside, Stemmons asked Cullum why they had just had an important meeting regarding the future of the city over a meal at a fried chicken joint. To this Cullum simply responded, "Elsie makes the greasiest fried chicken in Dallas. Have you ever heard a man argue for segregation to three black preachers while sweating like a pig with grease all over his face?"[38]

Stemmon's threat was as far as the violence would get during the integration of public schools. On September 6, 1961, there was no national attention on Dallas, Texas and black students sat in

[36] Ibid., 128.

[37] Crystal Taska, "MARCUS, HAROLD STANLEY," *Handbook of Texas Online* (http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fmabz), accessed December 18, 2015. Uploaded on April 10, 2012. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

[38] Ibid., 1.

classrooms alongside of white students. Intimidation over a delicious meal in order to get your point across is referred to as the, "Dallas Way," to this day. Thankfully, Cullum was able to stifle Walton's efforts against the integration of the city, but there were still others that would get in the way of progress. In order to reach a wider range of people, Cabell needed to change his tactics, as not everyone could be convinced over a fried chicken lunch.

Stanley Marcus and the Integration of His Stores:

One man at the forefront of Dallas's integration was Stanley Marcus, owner of the Neiman-Marcus department stores. Marcus immediately desegregated his stores once there was an organized boycott of downtown stores in the 1960's by the black community. Other store owners regarded this as a rash decision because no other high-end department store was going to give into the demands of the black community. Marcus was already more progressive than most as he was one of the only stores that would even hire African Americans. His empathy for the persecution that blacks faced stemmed from similar circumstances he faced as a Jewish man. In order to prevent Dallas from being yet another city that reacted violently to integration, Marcus led other business leaders to end segregation in their stores. The combination of the hardships he faced as a Jew in Dallas and the pride in his city and its people helped Stanley Marcus in his decision to support the Civil Rights Movement. He was quoted saying, "My brothers were in complete concurrence with me, but the store manager, a fine man, said, 'Stanley, you're going to destroy your store.

http://dfwstyledaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Stanley-Marcus-2.png

People will close their accounts. They'll abandon the store.'"[39] Even with this warning, Marcus desegregated his stores and allowed African Americans who could afford the high-end retail to shop alongside whites. Marcus's choice to integrate was pivotal in getting more businesses owners and upper- class whites to desegregate their stores, helping bring the city to a newfound sense of progressivism that was unheralded for a southern city.[40] Few cities in the United States saw their economic and political leaders lead the desegregation movement with as little opposition or violence from its citizens. Marcus is one example of a white business owner who was able to fight back against the racism in Dallas and assist in the Civil Rights Movement and African Americans fight for equality. There were many more people like Marcus who stand as a better representation of how people in Dallas handled the integration and showed their support.

Juanita's Teens:

Craft joined the NAACP in 1935, and is most notably responsible for starting another 182 chapters in rural areas across Texas. She had many tours around the state to speak about the Civil Rights Movement and would sit in whites only sections and refuse to move.[41] Her tenacity during her travels helped amass a large following and call to action by rural African Americans who were fed up with being treated as second-class citizens. Along with Antonio

[39] Minutaglio and Davis, *Dallas 1963*, 40-47.

[40] Ibid., 52-56.

[41] Ibid., 1.

Maceo Smith, Executive Secretary of the NAACP, Craft was able to make the Dallas chapter of the NAACP the center of operations in Texas. Eventually Craft and Smith were able to, "integrate the University of Texas, overturn the Democratic primary, and equalize teachers' salaries."[42] Craft and the Dallas NAACP fought for the equality of African Americans throughout the 1960s using many tactics including sit-ins and picketing. Believing it was finally time to take action and integrate the city, Juanita, Mayor Cabell, and the rich, white business leaders' actions helped make the dream of integration become a reality. She and her, "Youth Council turned their attention in 1961 to the desegregation of lunch counters. The young people developed a simple tactic. The NAACP lawyers told them that they could not be denied service unless the owners displayed a sign stating 'No Negroes Allowed.' The majority of stores in Dallas did not display such sings."[43] The teenagers would go into a store and order food, then go up to the counter and ask for a Coke, knowing they would be refused, and ask for a manager. After the first group of teenagers left another set of teenagers would come in and repeat the exact same process. Others were instructed to call a food establishment and inquire about their food, prices, and policies. This ingenious tactic that Juanita concocted drew attention to businesses' discriminating practices against African Americans. It also brought white-owned restaurants to a screeching halt. This tactic was successful and in July of 1961 "thirty-six restaurants and lunch counters peacefully desegregated."[44] Craft was so influential that she was visited by President John F. Kennedy, who wanted to discuss the future of race relations in not only Dallas, but

[42] Ibid., 1

[43] David Stricklin and Gail Tomlinson, *Oral History Interviews of Juanita Craft*, 17.

[44] Ibid., 16.

across the country as well.[45] Craft worked closely with Dallas's recently elected Mayor, Earle Cabell, who was trying to integrate the city and needed support in this fight.

Public Schools:

After business leaders were able to assist in limiting the violence, outrage, and the disruptions during the integration of public schools, Mayor Cabell was left with the challenge of actually following through with the integration. Fearing that there would be backlash from white citizens who opposed the integration, Cabell devised a plan to ease people into this new way of life and looked to the Dallas Police Chief, Jesse Curry and Sam R. Bloom, an advertising executive for assistance. The three were able to put their heads together and come up with a plan that they hoped would making the process of desegregation a peaceful process that people could sympathize for. Their idea was to implement a, "behavior modification program that included a production of a film, *Dallas at the Crossroads*, narrated by Walter Cronkite of CBS News and produced by NBC News photographer Morris Levy." This film appealed to the people of Dallas through their patriotism, while at the same time teaching them to accept this change, "Officials showed the film nearly one thousand times to small groups of citizens, members of various church groups, civic clubs, neighborhood groups, and lodges. A local television station broadcast the program to the entire community the day before desegregation began.[46] This program was exceptionally successful at helping the citizens of Dallas make the transition to integrated schools quite well. They helped prevent the violence and anger that had become all too commonplace in southern communities when whites were forced to have their students go to school with African Americans. The main reason the programs were so successful in convincing

[45] United States National Park Service, *We Shall Overcome – Juanita Craft House*, 1.

[46] Kellar, *Make Haste Slowly*, 68.

people to support integration was because they targeted the main factors that led to violence and anger towards integration:

> "Community leaders presented the issue as primarily one of 'law and order versus civil disorder and violence.' They did not want Dallas residents to think of the desegregation as strictly a racial issue. Second, city officials publicly 'reinforced' the plans of civic leaders. Dallas's new mayor, Earle Cabell, made it clear to all parties, black and white, that anyone instigating violence or disorder would be incarcerated."[47]

By showing the horrible conditions that black students had to endure in their second-class public schools, Cabell was able to get the support of those who saw past racial issues and recognized that a child's education should not be taken away from them or lessened simply because of the color of their skin. These tactics were able to help the white community blend together with the black community with no violence as their compassion brought others to see the good of the Civil Rights Movement:

> Clearly, the diligence of Dallas business and community leaders, both blacks and whites, and their willingness to work together for the common goal of preparing the community for peaceful school desegregation, resulted in a successful outcome. Although planners directed much of the public service advertising, the pamphlets, and the film toward a white audience, hopes for a peaceful transition also depended upon the black community's ability to be calm and patient with the slow pace of change. The generally peaceful desegregation of restaurants provided a clear demonstration of 'good faith' to the African Americans and helped encourage their patience and cooperation.[48]

This goes to show just how unique and unusual the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas, Texas truly was. It was an unprecedented idea that a southern city could so seamlessly transition from the traditionally conservative views and morals they had into a progressive city that stood above the rest of the south.

Integration in Dallas:

[47] Ibid., 47-51

[48] Bruce A. Glasrud and Archie P. McDonald, *Blacks in East Texas History: Selections from the East Texas Historical Journal* (Texas: East Texas Historical Journal, 2008), 62-71.

Through the efforts of individuals like Earle Cabell, Juanita J. Craft, Bob Cullum, and Stanley Marcus, Dallas was able to make the transition from a segregated society into an integrated one in the 1960s. Cities like Montgomery, Selma, Little Rock, Birmingham, and Washington, D.C., saw the societal changes brought on by Civil Rights Movement, but Dallas had an especially unique experience that has not been studied and discussed as much as other cities.[49] In cities across the nation, the end of segregation was fought both in and out of the courts. The streets were littered with violence, protests, and police brutality on non-violent protesters.[50] Meanwhile, Dallas was the sight of one of the most non-violent integrations of schools and public spaces, but this could not have happened without four very important people. Juanita J. Craft's fight for equality and her amazing work for the NAACP were pivotal in the struggle for Civil Rights in Dallas. Without her work and the establishment of the Youth Council sit-ins, the Civil Rights Movement would have taken much longer to come to Dallas.[51] The contribution of both Juanita Craft and Mayor Cabell's was another key factor in ending segregation. Cabell's integration of the City Council and his television program with Walter Cronkite, were able to sway the people's opinions and show them why integration was needed and why it was right.[52]

The supporting casts of white business owners were also integral to ending segregation in Dallas. Cullum, owner of a chain of grocery stores, helped put an end to Joe Walton's protests before they even had a chance to get started. Walton's flawed religious reasoning for keeping segregation was promptly put down over a lunch of fried chicken, and he agreed to allow

[49] Stewart Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom: The Montgomery Bus Boycott* (North Carolina: University of North Carolina, 2007), 86.

[50] Ann Bausum, *Freedom Riders: John Lewis and Jim Zwerg on the Front Lines of the Civil Rights Movement* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2006), 132.

[51] David Stricklin and Gail Tomlinson, *Oral History Interviews of Juanita Craft*, 17.

[52] Kellar, *Make Haste Slowly*, 94.

integration to go off without a hitch.[53] Marcus was one of the most wealthy business owners in the city, and when he chose to desegregate his stores, others followed suit. He stands as an important figure for leading the charge against racial discrimination in stores and opened his, and other businesses', doors to the African American community.[54] Cullum and Marcus's desire to keep Dallas from becoming the next Selma, Little Rock, or Montgomery fueled their support of the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas.[55]

Together these people were able to put an end to segregation in Dallas, Texas. After almost 100 years of living in a city that kept African Americans down, blacks were finally making strides towards equality for all people, regardless of race. Black children were able to go to school with white children and use the same books and supplies that were previously not provided because they attended all-black schools.[56] Dallas finally became a desegregated city, and not a single stone was thrown or hose turned on. This is what makes Dallas, Texas an intriguing city, and why it is was so unique during the Civil Rights Movement. By looking at people like Mayor Cabell, Juanita J. Craft, Bob Cullum, and Stanley Marcus, one can understand how each city in the south has its own unique story to tell and their own way of doing things, and this was the "Dallas Way." The city was lucky to have sympathetic business owners, a politician who made it his goal to see equality in schools, and a Civil Rights leader who had worked her entire life to unite African Americans and take the freedom they deserve. With all these characters working together to overcome the inequalities in a city that had always pushed back

[53] Graff, Harvey J. *The Dallas Myth*, 108.

[54] Minutaglio and Davis, *Dallas 1963*, 69-74.

[55] Martin Luther King Jr., *Stride Towards Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), 108-116.

[56] Glasrud and McDonald, *Blacks in East Texas History*, 83-96.

against the idea of racial equality, it stands as one of the brighter silver linings of the racially tense Civil Rights Movement era.

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